Win Awenen Nisitotung

November 18, 2026
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Bahweting Bidajimowin • Official newspaper of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Sault Tribe medical team bolstered by new staff

SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich. — Dr. Thilak Chander has joined the medical team at Sault Tribe Health Center in Sault Ste. Marie. Chander will begin offering primary care services at this location in the very near future.

Before joining the Sault Tribe Health Center, Chander was an internist affiliated with MyMichigan Medical Center, also located in Sault Ste. Marie. He received his medical education from Madras Medical College and the University of Illinois and has been in practice for more than 20 years.

Chander is highly recommended by his patients and "we are lucky to have him," Health Division Acting CEO Joel Lumsden said.

Dr. Kevin Connolly, who has already been practicing at the Sault Tribe Health Center as a locum, recently accepted the role of Medical Director. Connolly previously served as Chief of Staff for multiple Veterans Affairs Health Care Systems in Mississippi, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio. Connolly is also a retired U.S. Air Force (USAF) Colonel with decades of experience in military and medical leadership. Clinically, he is trained in Family Medicine, Aerospace Medicine, and Occupational Medicine, serving as a chief flight surgeon, and flying in numerous USAF aircraft. His education includes a Doctor of Medicine degree, a Master of Public Health from Harvard University, and two additional master's degrees.

"Providing qa lity, accessible health care for our tribal citizens remains one of the tribe's highest priorities. Dr. Chander has been a trusted physician in our community for decades, and we're thrilled to welcome him to the Sault Tribe Health Center. His addition helps ensure his experience and commitment to patient care remains right here in Sault Ste. Marie," Sault Tribe Chairman Austin Lowes said. "We're also grateful to have Dr. Connolly step into the role of Medical Director and thank Dr. Styer for his time as director and continued service to our tribal citizens."

Dr. Lowell Styer will continue to work as Medical Director during the transition, and then increase his hours as a primary care physician at the Sault Health Center. Styer is a board-certified family medicine physician with over 45 years of experience in the medical field and continues a long favorable tenure at the Sault Tribe Health Center.

The health center also welcomes Kim Cushman and Cary Espinoza as new physician assistants, Suzanne Caldwell as a Certified Medical Assistant II, Scarlett Krichbaum as a new Optician I, Kendra Baskowski as a new Dental Assistant II and the Health Divisions' new health recruiter, Connie Manning.



Dr. Thilak Chander, Chairman Austin Lowes, Medical Director Dr. Kevin Connolly, and Dr. Lowell Styer.

Alger County Commission on Aging gets 2% boost

By Scott Brand

Under the 2% agreement between the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and the state of Michigan for gaming revenue sharing, the tribe is reqi red to disburse 2% of its slot revenue to local units of government.

In the latest round of funding, the Alger County Commission on Aging (ACCA) received $,000 to help sustain its Home Delivered Meal Program.

"We are very grateful for the assistance we get from the tribe," said Project Supervisor Kristine Lindqi st. "They are so nice to work with and almost every year we receive some funding."

The ACCA provides assistance to older adults to help them remain in their homes safely and comfortably, according to Lindqi st, and in October 2024 that mission expanded to include the Home Delivered Meals Program. Recipients receive meals, prepared at Munising Memorial Hospital on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The hospital staff purchases food and other items needed, such as tray containers and film to seal the meals having everything ready for the drivers on delivery days.

The drivers pick up the hot and frozen meals in the morning and have most of them delivered to 60-some homes by lunch time. The recipients get more than just a meal, however, as the drivers inherently provide periodic wellness checks and social interaction three days a week.

"Our regular check-ins and friendly interactions with our meal delivery drivers reduce social isolation" noted Lindqi st. "We are glad to help our residents maintain independence and dignity, when they may otherwise struggle to prepare meals for themselves."

In the most recent calculation, the ACCA delivers nearly 1,000 meals and logs roughly 3,500 miles each month visiting homes from Grand Marias to Kiva.

The average cost to prepare a meal is $.50. The ACCA recovers some of that cost by reqe sting a $ donation from their clients through a monthly letter, partial funding from the Upper Peninsula Commission for Area Progress, their own fundraising activities and generous community donations.

"We are proud to have this program in place, however, if we do not secure some additional funding, we will be in the red approximately every May," wrote Lindqi st in making the 2% funding reqe st. "We rely heavily on donations to supplement funding for the program."



Photos by Scott Brand

The team that helps facilitate the Home Delivered Meals Program includes, from left to right, Patty Aho, Patty Willson, Kristine Lindquist, Savana Mosier and Linda and Leonard Martin.



Patty Aho gets a hug from Sault Tribe member Shirley Petoskey.

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Sugar Island veterans memorial faces vandalism

Correction I n heO ctob ri ssa ofW in Awea n N isitotE rin s am ew ass pelled a orrectly.

By Brenda Austin

Community members are asking for an enjhd to repeated littering and vandalism at the Sugar Island Veterans Memorial on South Brasser Road.

The memorial, known locally as the "Stoneman," has been marked with graffiti and had trash intentionally discarded in front of it over the past several years, according to information provided by Sugar Island resident Randy Menard.

The memorial was erected in the early 1990s by Bill Montgomery of CCMS Construction during construction of the Emergency Road Project, which later became South Brasser Road.

Menard said tribal members Chip MacArthur, Darrel Menard, Tony Willis and Joe Menard also contributed to the Stoneman's history in the late 1990s when they gave him a hat.

The property where the memorial stands belongs to the Jennette family. Its caretaker, 89-year-old Harold Belanger, is a lifelong Sugar Island resident and Army veteran who has been among those cleaning debris from the site.

Several residents and veterans have helped care for and maintain the memorial over the years, including Bernard "Bunz" Germain, veterans Erin Mikolowski, and Randy Menard, who recently completed cleaning and repainting the memorial.

According to the information provided, Michigan State Police indicated littering could result in a $00 f ine and possible jail time. Anyone who witnesses further vandalism or littering at the memorial is asked to contact the Michigan State Police post in Sault Ste. Marie.



Bernard "Bunz" Germain (left), and veterans Erin Mikolowski and Randy Menard all recently cleaned and repainted the memorial.

VETLIFE - after the military

By Scott Brand

VETLIFE is built on one core belief, life after the military should be safe, healthy and full of purpose.

Founded in 2018 by veteran families for veteran families, the VETLIFE mission statement reads: To provide veterans with sustainable solutions while promoting a safer, healthier, and more prosperous civilian lifestyle.

Every program, resource and event VETLIFE offers is offered free of charge.

Founders Joshua and Cortnie Parish believe their platforms provide veterans with access to trusted resources, guidance and support right from their phone or tablet and that technology helps reduce isolation, encourages self-advocacy and connects veterans with the help they need when they need it most.

Joshua, a 1997 graduate of Brimley High School and member of the Bay Mills Indian Community, went into the Michigan National Guard in 2000 and was deployed to Iraq in 2003.

"When I came home I couldn't find the benefits the government said I was eligible for," said Joshua and he began to realize he was not alone. "In 2019, less than 18 percent of veterans were utilizing their benefits."

Since that time, more than 311,000 veterans have utilized the VETLIFE resources connecting them with VA health care and benefits, financial assistance, housing and employment services, mental health care and community support, according to the website.

VETLIFE was also recently awarded a $750,000 grant through the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs Staff Sergeant Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program to support an upstream suicide prevention model focused on reaching rural, disconnected and at-risk veterans before an emergency occurs.

"The goal of this grant is to use a holistic, whole-body approach," said Joshua. "Here are your benefits let us help you connect to them."

Joshua noted that Native Americans are the highest serving demographic in the military, but the 2020 census shows less than 4,000 tribal veterans in Michigan, a number he believes should be much higher.

"What I'd like to do in this grant is have Sault Tribe veterans contact us," he said. "I want an accurate reflection of how many Sault Tribe members are veterans."

Online services can be found at www.vetlifetoday.org.



Left: Founders Joshua and Cortnie Parish.





Committee vacancies — Sault Tribe volunteers needed

The following Sault Tribe committees have vacant seats or upcoming vacancies. Sault Tribe members interested in filling these vacancies should submit one letter of intent and three letters of recommendation (forms available online or contact Lona) from other tribal members to Lona Stewart at lstewart2@saulttribe.net, 523 Ashmun Street, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783, or call (906) 635-6050 with any questions.

Anishinaabe Cultural Committee – Two vacancies – male – one 4-year term, one term expires October 2028

Elder Advisory Committee

Unit I – Sault – One regular vacancy (4-year term); two alternate vacancies (4-year term)

Unit II – Hessel – One regular vacancy (4-year term)

Unit II – Naubinway – One alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Unit II – Newberry – One regular vacancy, term expires July 2029; one alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Unit III – St. Ignace – One regular vacancy – term expires October 2029; two alternate vacancies (4-year terms)

Unit IV – Escanaba – One alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Unit IV – Manistique – One regular vacancy (4-year term); one alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Unit V – Marquette – One regular vacancy (4-year term); one alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Elder Subcommittees

Unit I – Sault – Two regular vacancies – one term expires September 2029, one 4-year term

Unit II – Hessel – One alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Unit II – Naubinway – Two regular vacancies – one term expires May 2027, one 4-year term; one alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Unit II – Newberry – One regular vacancy (4-year term); one Alternate vacancy, term expires Aug. 2028

Unit III – St. Ignace – One alternate vacancy – term expires March 2028

Unit IV – Escanaba – Four regular vacancies (4-year terms); one alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Unit IV – Manistique – Two regular vacancies (4-year term)

Unit V – Munising – Three regular vacancies (4-year terms); one alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Unit V – Marquette – Two regular vacancies (4-year terms); one alternate vacancy (4-year term)

Enrollment Committee – One vacancy (4-year term)

Food Sovereignty Committee – Three vacancies (4-year terms)

Health Board – Two vacancies – one term expires May 2027, one term expires Sept. 2027.

Sault Tribe Election Commission – Four vacancies, three terms expiring Nov. 2030 and one term expiring Nov. 2028 (please indicate which length of term you are seeking).

Tribal gas, cigarette discount locations

The following gas stations are offering the discount to Sault Tribe members.

Tribal gas stations offering gas and cigarette discounts:

MidJim Convenience Store
2205 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

MidJim Convenience Store
3045 Mackinac Trail
St. Ignace, MI 49781

White Pine Lodge and Convenience Store
7889 E. W. M-28
Christmas, MI 49862

Tribal owned gas station offering gas discount only:

MidJim University
301 W. Fair Ave.
Marquette, MI 49855

Not tribal owned stations offering gas discount only:

Kinross BP
4440 Tone Road
Kincheloe, MI 49788

Cedar Pantry
159 W M-134
Cedarville, MI 49719

Sunoco
13975 M-28
Newberry, MI 49868

Shell
401 Cedar Street M-28
Munising, MI 49862

Manistique Oil Company
216 Deer Street
Manistique, MI 49854

Carnes Eco Fuels
2300 Ludington Street
Escanaba, MI 49837

Food Distribution online application

Below is the link to submit an application for the Sault Ste Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Food Distribution Program:

https://saulttribe.ifdp.io/kiosk/online-application

Contact the Food Distribution Program at (906) 635-6076 or (888) 448-8732.

Membership liaisons work to assist membership

Membership liaisons work to assist with membership issues and concerns. The liaisons will also respond to and follow up on membership issues to ensure they are resolved.

Sault Tribe members are encouraged to contact liaisons when they need help with tribal issues by emailing membersconcerns@saulttribe.net or individually at the contacts below. Please note that although the liaisons are located at sites across the seven-county service area, they serve all tribal members.

Michelle Moore

Available for in-person meetings at Sault Tribe Administration.

Phone: (906) 635-6050 Ext. 26359

Cell: (906) 259-3862

mmoore@saulttribe.net

Clarence Hudak

Lambert Center, St. Ignace, (906) 643-2124

chudak@saulttribe.net

Mary Jo Manierou

Manistique Tribal Center, (906) 341-8469

Munising Tribal Center, (906) 450-7011

mjenerou@saulttribe.net

Advocacy Resource Center is seeking information about Missing and Murdered Sault Tribe Members:

In an effort to maintain the Sault Tribe MMIP database for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP), the Advocacy Resource Center is seeking information regarding missing and murdered individuals who are members of the **Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians**. Please message or call the ARC at 906-632-1808 with information that can be entered into the database. The information provided does not have to be current information. The ARC is seeking information for ALL missing or murdered tribal members including the seven county service areas and tribal members across the world. Please ask for Community Educator Jess Gillotte-King (extension 73104) when calling the ARC. If messaging the ARC Facebook page, please leave the following information:



First/Middle/Last Name
Date of Birth
Date of Death
Murdered/When/Where
Perpetrator Name if known:

If Missing:
Nickname/Alias
Date Last Seen/Went Missing
Physical Description
Distinctive Physical Features
Vehicle Information

Any information would be appreciated.
Thank you for your participation in this matter. Please feel free to share this information. Miigwech!

Sault Tribe Member Newspaper Subscription Form

To receive a FREE tribal newspaper subscription in the mail, tribal members under 60 are asked to complete the form below and send it to: Win Awenen Nisitotung, 531 Ashmun St., Sault Ste. Marie MI 49783, or email it to slucas@saulttribe.net. **Those 60 and over do not have to fill out this form.** Those who prefer to get their newspaper online do not have to complete this form.

❑ new subscription
❑ change of address

❑ digital subscription
OR
❑ print subscription

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Email: _____

DOB : _____
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(red # on your card)

Membership liaisons answer your questions

Q: I just received my membership through open enrollment, and I would like to apply for the Inland Harvest Card. Will I be able to hunt my farm in Hillsdale County with it?

A: No, the Sault Tribe Inland Harvest Card is only valid within the boundaries of the ceded territory of the Treaty of 1836.

Detailed maps of the ceded territory can be found on the tribe's website saulttribe.com posted on the Natural Resource Division page.

Members can also call the Law Enforcement Department at (906) 635-6065, and the permit coordinator can provide information on the boundaries.

Q: I live in Luce County and will have to enroll in Medicare coverage this fall. Is there someone who can help me with this?

It's very confusing to me.

A: Yes, members can contact the Community Health Access Coalition (CHAC) and request assistance with several health insurance related questions. CHAC can help members through the process of signing up for Medicaid, Medicare and the Marketplace. They also can assist with enrollment for financial assistance at certain health centers in the Eastern Upper Peninsula.

CHAC is located at 143 Arlington Street in Sault Ste. Marie, (906) 635-7483. In Newberry call (906) 293-8355 and in St. Ignace (906) 643-7253.

WAN is online

Tribal members and subscriber's receiving the print edition of the tribe's newspaper, Win Awenen Nisitotung, can switch to digital to receive the "early" digital edition. Read your paper at least six days early!

Write to slucas@saulttribe.net to switch or get details.

Win Awenen Nisitotung

The official newspaper of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

November 18, 2026
Frozen Moon
Mshka'odin Giizis

Jennifer Dale-Burton.....Editor
Sherrie Lucas.....Secretary
Brenda Austin.....Staff Writer
Scott Brand.....Staff Writer

Win Awenen Nisitotung welcomes submissions of news articles, feature stories, photographs, columns and announcements of American Indian or non-profit events. All submissions are printed at the discretion of the editor, subject to editing and are not to exceed 400 words. Unsigned submissions are not accepted.

Please note the distribution date when submitting event information for our community calendar. Submissions can be mailed, faxed or e-mailed. The distribution date is the earliest the newspaper can arrive in the seven-county service area.

Win Awenen Nisitotung is funded by the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and is published 12 times a year. Its mission is to inform tribal members and the public about the activities of the tribal government, membership programs and services and cultural, social and spiritual activities of Sault Tribe members.

Win Awenen Nisitotung, in Anishinaabemowin, means, "One who understands," and is pronounced "Win Oh-weh-nin Nis-toe-tuhng."

See our full, online edition at www.saulttribe.com.

Subscriptions: The regular rate is $18 per year, $11 for senior citizens and $30 to Canada. Please call for other foreign countries. Subscribe by sending your name and mailing address to the address below with your check or money order made out to the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Or, call (906) 632-6398 to pay by credit card.

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E-mail: slucas@saulttribe.net or jdale-burton@saulttribe.net.

Tribe begins deployment of $28.7M broadband network

SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich. — After years of planning, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians is helping bring citizens on trust lands easier access to essential services and a high-speed internet service thanks to a new fiber broadband network that is currently being deployed.

Work on the new broadband network began in Aug. 2026 with funding coming from the first of two United States Department of Agriculture ReConnect grants the tribe is receiving.

Work from the second ReConnect grant is also underway and is expected to continue into Spring 2028.

The network is 100% funded through USDA grants. Together, the two grants total $28,686,648 and will provide internet services from the Sault Ste. Marie area through Kincheloe to St. Ignace.

For tribal households, reliable broadband will improve access to healthcare, education, employment, and the services and connections that increasingly dependent on secure and reliable internet access.

"We are pleased to see these projects moving into construction," said Sault Tribe Chairman Austin Lowes. "Our citizens have waited a long time for dependable, high-speed internet service in these areas. This network will help connect families to opportunities and essential services while creating infrastructure that can service our communities for years to come."

The Sault Tribe will own the grant-funded network. The Sault Tribe Enterprise Development Corporation (EDC), through its Broadband Enterprise, will work with Cherry Capital Connection (CCC) on operations and executing the market strategy. The partnership between CCC and the Sault Tribe began with a development agreement in 2024.

The project also creates an economic opportunity beyond the initial grant-funded connections. The fiber network will provide a foundation from which EDC and CCC can extend service to additional residential and business customers under a commercial operating model, after meeting the requirements of the federal grants. The development agreement provides for revenue to the tribe from network use and service beyond the funded areas.

"The ReConnect grants allow us to build the network backbone and establish a tribal asset that can support a scalable business platform," said Dan Doyle, CEO of the Sault Tribe EDC. "Working with an experienced operator like CCC aligns with EDC's long-term strategy of engaging strategic business partners to build platforms that meet community needs and creating lasting economic value for the tribe."

The USDA ReConnect Grant Program provides funds to build, improve, or acquire broadband infrastructure in eligible rural areas. Awardees must provide eligible households with download and upload speeds of at least 100 megabits per second (Mbps), known as symmetrical internet speeds. Unlike other internet connections available in the Upper Peninsula, which offer slower upload speeds, symmetrical fiber provides equally fast speeds in both directions, improving connectivity for remote work, online education, telehealth and other everyday internet needs.

In addition to the two ReConnect grants, the Sault Tribe has secured a separate Tribal Broadband Connectivity grant intended to provide approximately one year of internet service at no cost to eligible households connected through the ReConnect projects.

The Sault Tribe's Broadband Group, in coordination with CCC, manages its grant strategy and pursues additional funding opportunities to expand broadband infrastructure throughout the tribe's seven-county service area.

The group includes leadership from EDC, Sault Tribe Strategic Planning, legal and finance.

Sault Tribe Board meets in October, passes resolutions

Never again.

That was the message the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe's Board of Directors unanimously delivered at the Oct. 13 meeting in Escanaba after learning a patient was discharged from a Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program for non-payment and subsequently died from an overdose. The board passed a resolution to immediately suspend the practice of discharging or involuntarily terminating patients from MAT services solely due to an inability or failure to pay for services. The amended resolution also directed the Health Division to develop a policy reflecting this and report back within 60 days.

Additionally, the board took the following actions:

— Approved a Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget modification to Elections for an increase in Tribal Support of $17,077.96.

— Established a FY 2027 budget for John Hopkins Family Spirit with Other Revenue totaling $6,805.34.

— Established a FY 2027 budget for Rural Health Tribal Initiative with state of Michigan revenue in the amount of $665,878.

— Waived resolution 2024-205 allowing for the approval of FY 2026 budget modification to Purchases Referred Care increasing the transfer from Third Party Revenue to $1.3 million and made a similar waiver for FY 2026 to Marquette Administration for $51,272.22.

— Waived resolution 2024-205 allowing 2026 budget modifications in the Health Division decreasing the transfer of $588,339.29 for Medical Nursing from Third Party Revenue while increasing transfers to Pharmacy for $378,726.26; Lab for $170,000; Radiology with $16,500 and the Wellness Program totaling $23,113.03.

— Waived resolution 2024-25 for an increase to St. Ignace Administration from Third Party Revenue to $54,445.23 and took similar action for Sault Housekeeping and Maintenance at $51,614.08.

— Established a FY 2027 budget for Sault Ste. Marie Medical Nursing with Federal Indian Health Services Revenue of $1,573,591.94, and Third Party Revenue of $6,720,313.51 for a total budget of $8,293.905.45.

— Approved a FY 2026 budget modification to Governmental Human Resources to the personal page with no impact on wages or hours.

— Established a FY 2027 budget for Institute of Museum and Library with Federal Revenue in the amount of $52,870.72.

— Accepted $76,923 through the Tribal Opioid Settlement Fund.

— Authorized the Health Division to accept $47,279 from a Public Health Emergency Preparedness grant.

— Accepted a contract agreement from the state of Michigan for $275,000 earmarked for the Sault Tribe Stand Strong Youth Initiative.

See "Board meets," page 5



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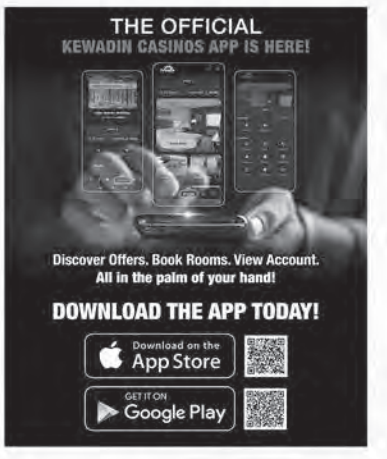
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Sault Tribe Board meets in October, November

From "Board meets," page 4

— Accepted a $100,000 sub award to utilize the Sault Tribe IT Department to assess current systems, infrastructure, and future organizational needs.

— Rescinded the Pay Advance Policy as it will no longer be an option under the newly-implemented ADP system.

— Approved up to $85,000 to implement recommendations with $93,000 from Tribal Support and $92,000 in other funds in an effort to address the shortcomings associated with the Blue Stone Group's 2024 recommendations.

— Rescinded resolution 2011-237 and authorized a new Residential Land Lease at 1955 JK Lumsden Way in Sault Ste. Marie.

— Amended Chapter 70 Criminal Procedure Code making it known that a defendant has a right to an attorney even if they cannot afford one with and deleting a lengthy provision to align the document with state and federal law.

— Amended resolution 2025-13 in the amount of $99,071 to authorize CCI Systems to provide engineering and design services associated with ReConnect4 funded broadband net-work award in the amount of $368,500.

— Established the recruitment and retention of qualified local healthcare providers as the preferred long-term staffing solution for the Sault Tribe Health Division.

— Accepted more than $21,000 for Tribal Victim Services from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and $62,804 in a Community Focus Service Grant for emergency housing.

— Amended resolution 2025-233 using $08, 100 from the Jewel Settlement and Opioid Settlement.

October 27 meeting

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors took the following actions during the Oct. 27 meeting held in Munising.

— Approved a Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget for emergency fire suppression with Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) revenue in the amount of $14,000 to purchase personal protective equipment in preparation for upcoming prescribed burns,

— Established a FY 2027 budget for deepwater fish assessment in northern Lake Michigan from BIA revenue totaling $ 1,770.94.

— Established a FY 2027 budget for the Sault Ste. Marie Walk-In Clinic with Indian Health Services revenue of $20,464.56, and Third Party revenue of $57,986.06, for a total budget of $,078.450.63.

— Authorized the Health Division to accept Rural Health Transformation Program funds through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. While the initial acceptance was recorded at $,000, that number merely serves as a placeholder as the grant moneys could total into the hundreds of thousands of dollars in FY 2027 funds.

— Awarded a contract to Northern Superior Property Services in the amount of $33,450.49 for the Sault Health Bathroom Remodel Project utilizing Indian Health Services Backlog of Essential Maintenance Alteration and Repair (BEMAR) funds to improve handicap accessibility and bring the bathrooms up to new standards.

— Approved a vacation payout for eligible Governmental and Housing team members who have accrued in excess of 160 hours. Team members can request the payouts in 8-hour increments, but cannot dip below the 160-hour threshold. This option is available for less than 100 team members, according to estimates, and totaled around $46,000 last year. An amendment to the resolution, as approved by the board, urged managers to encourage their employees to submit a vacation plan at the beginning of the new year.

— Approved an application to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, within the U.S. Department of Commerce, for membership portal development, digital navigators, and workforce development activities under the Native Entities Grant Program in the hopes of securing future grant monies through this mechanism.

— Approved minor tweaks to Tribal Code Chapter 21.503 allowing the use of infrared/night vision scopes for taking fox, raccoon, opossum, coyotes, hares and rabbits.

— A second approved change to Tribal Code Chapter 21.702 will extend the early deer season by nine days, effective immediately, with the season now running from the day after Labor Day until Nov. 9, instead of previous closure on Oct. 31.

— Tabled a resolution to authorize the redistricting/reapportionment to adjust unit boundaries on a 6-5 vote. Directors Robert McRorie, Bridgette Sorenson, Aaron Payment, Mike McKerchie, Sue St. Onge and Kim Gravelle were in the majority on this measure with Kimberly Lee, Ashley Gravelle, Cole Goudreau Lana Causley-Smith and Larry Barbeau falling one vote short.

— Authorized the tribe's CFO and the tribal Administration to create a process requiring powwow committees in receipt of tribal funding, regardless of source, to provide a reconciliation for such funds in the form of receipts, invoices, statements, orders, transaction logs and other records detailing the use of tribally-provided powwow funds. The board unanimously approved an amendment adding teeth to this resolution essentially declaring, "If you don't reconcile, you don't get money next year," and instructed Administration to develop policies to reflect this stipulation.

— Appointed Jared Hautamaki as chief judge for the Court of Appeals, and appointed Virginia Davis and Meghan Starling to the Court of Appeals.

— Approved a resolution naming Tribal Chairman Austin Lowes to serve a 2-year term on the Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (TIAC) established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

— Authorized the Administration to come back with a plan to allow any member of a tribal household to utilize the fitness centers, free of charge.

— Approved a resolution designed to advocate for the state of Michigan to adopt legislation that would require tribal consultation on any legislation that would affect tribal country.

— Tabled a measure that would authorize the creation of a Health Authority with a second measure addressing this question dying for lack of support.

Board meets November 3

A new Health Board, populated by members of the Sault Tribe Board of Directors and health professionals, will be created after a resolution was approved at the Nov. 3 meeting. The exact composition of the Health Board and the selection process for those who will serve on it has not yet been written in stone as the directors instructed the Legal Department to come back with a Health Authority Charter with hybrid governmental board structure within 30 days for final review and approval.

In other action the board approved the following resolutions:

— Approved the establishment of a Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget for YesRx with other revenue totaling $0,300 earmarked for cancer medication and comfort items to offset costs for those unable to afford them.

— Established a FY 2027 budget with federal Health and Human Services monies totaling $0,413, with that grant money to be used for child care subsidy payments.

— Established nine FY 2027 budgets with state of Michigan monies totaling $39,063 from the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential (MILEAP) in the following amounts: Escanaba, $7,263; Hessel, $0,971; Manistique, $1,974; Munising, $7,069; Rudyard, $7,450; Sault Ste. Marie, $5,486; St. Ignace, $3,437; Lake Superior Academy, $ 11,283; and JKL Bahweting School, $4,130.

— Approved the establishment of a FY 2027 budget for the Adam Walsh Grant with federal Department of Justice monies of $8,467.58.

— Established a FY 2027 budget for Nature Conservancy with Other Revenue totaling $5,932.60 to help support the whitefish hatchery and program.

— Established two new FY 2027 budgets of $7,508.89 and $6,46031 for PPG Brownfield with Federal Environmental Protection Agency money.

— Established a FY 2027 budget for Phase 2 of the Produce Prescription Pilot Program in the amount of $49,998 utilizing federal Health and Human Services money for a program to assist people with diabetes and pre-diabetes, residing in Chippewa and Mackinac counties, in getting access to health, and culturally-relevant traditional foods.

— Accepted $5,000 from the Delta Dental Foundation to pay mileage for Sault Tribe Dental Patients who must travel for specialty dental care.

— Issued tribal liquor licenses to Kewadin Casino Manistique; Kewadin Casino Hotel and Convention Center, Sault Ste. Marie; Kewadin Shores Casino, St. Ignace; Kewadin Casino, Hessel; Kewadin Casino, Christmas; MidJim Convenience Stores in St. Ignace and Sault Ste. Marie; Tanglewood Golf Course, Sault Ste. Marie; White Pine Lodge Convenience Store, Christmas; and Bear on the Mountain Golf Course, Hessel.

— Authorized initiating the process to obtain trust land status for the Roy Electric property lying east of M-129 in the City of Sault Ste. Marie.

— Approved submitting an application to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration for Broadband Infrastructure Deployment and declared any home or dwelling within the seven-county service area as a "tribal household" for the purpose of utilizing future funding under this mechanism.

— Accepted a transfer of $1 million from the Sault Tribe Enterprise Authority from the first Indian Energy distribution totaling $3 million. This allows the Sault Tribe government to recover a portion of its original $2.5 million investment in Indian Energy. Additional payments through this mechanism are anticipated in the future.

— And, approved a 2027 subcontract for administrative and biological services between the tribe and the Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority (CORA) with biannual payments of $58,556.

Up to date members' addresses sought!

Sault Tribe members whose addresses are not up to date have "bad addresses" with the tribe's Enrollment Department. Check the names on the list and if you see a friend or relative on the list let them know.

Go to saulttribe.com and scroll down Membership Services to Tribal Enrollment. Then go to the Information column on the left side of the Enrollment page and select "Up to date addresses sought." Call (800) 251 6597 or email Stacey Synett at: ssynett@saulttribe.net.





Anishinaabemowin 2026

First, Iwolud ehrbatu ifluawalkig arefulypom ypoe tryat thlloa liestmometn of an afternoohrhi rs tilldm patthea ckfromwashig tSs shludl wearigr ainoatanol da , idrtyfromot hvign oa yeng ort hc leaa rsSs willt akeouhrg assesatd hreitnhbok - store, shwillthn bverm y poemst hptu thbokbc kupoin tsshlfSs wills ayt ohrself;" For thtkidfm oa yI cag tm y rain oatc leaa d Adl hwill.

— Ted Kooser

Words make pictures in our minds. Choose some Anishinaabemowin words. They paint well.

Mshka'odin Giizis
Frozen Moon
by Susan Askwith



G'nawedimi. We are all related to each other.

Anishinaabek call deer "**Nisayenh"** (my older brother) or "**Nimisenh"** (my older sister). This is true in spirit and in the long life of **Shkagkimikwe** (Mother Earth) where deer walked here long before people. Still, we are alike in many ways.

Naasaap waawaashkesh,	**Just like deer,**
. . . mino-noodin n'da ndawendaan.	I need good air.
. . . n'ga bakade.	I get hungry.
. . . miijim n'da waabndaan.	I look for food.
. . . n'wiisin.	I eat.
. . . n'ga gaskanabaagwe.	I get thirsty.
. . . nibiish n'da minikwe.	I drink water.
. . . n'miizii.	I poop.
. . . n'zhiishiig.	I pee.
. . . n'baamase.	I walk around.
. . . nangodnang n'zegiz.	sometmes I am afraid.
. . . n'bmiptoo.	I run.
. . . n'ga yekoz.	I get tired.
. . . nda nbaa.	I sleep.
. . . nangodnang n'nishkaadiz.	sometimes I am angry.
. . . pane n'babaamendaan kina gegoo.	I always pay attention to everything.







Partridge = Ruffed Grouse

Bangii bakaan (a little different) way to accomplish the same end:

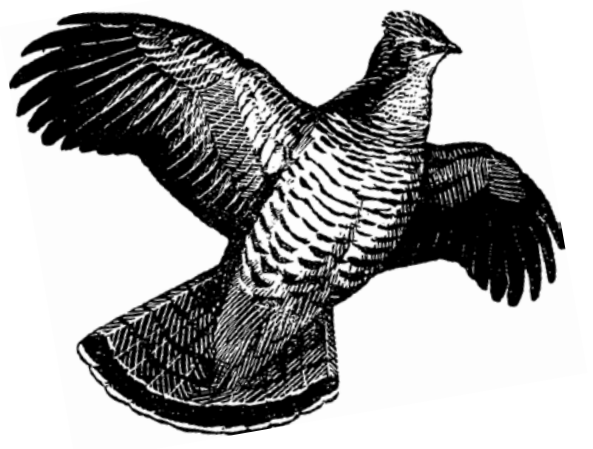
Bine gets her water from food: berries and insects.

Her pee is solid-ish and attached to her poop.

Running and flying both get you some-place faster and use a lot of energy.

Her anger shows up as aggression.

This month we celebrate Thanksgiving. If there is a hunter (**e-giiwosed**) in your relations (**gda nawemaaganak**), maybe you will have wild meat. Those hunters, then the cooks (**e-jiibaakwejig**), will prepare them in a good way. We say **Miigwech Gzhemanidoo** (Kind Spirit), **Shkagkimikwe** (Mother Earth), **miinwaa kina wesiinhak** (all the wild animals).



Talk to me in our language! Write our similarities with Bine.

Naasaab bine,	**Just like partridge,**
. . . _____	I get hungry.
. . . _____	I eat.
. . . _____	I poop.
. . . _____	sometimes I walk.
. . . _____	sometimes I am afraid.
. . . _____	I get tired.
. . . _____	I sleep.
. . . _____	I always pay attention to everything.

Making our Sounds Most letters sound like they do in English. Here are the exceptions.

aa sounds like the a in *awesome* **a** sounds like the a in *about*
ii sounds like the e in *be* **i** sounds like the i in *dip*
oo sounds like the o in *go* **o** sounds like the oo's in *book*
e sounds like the e in *Ed* **g** sounds only like it does in *go*

We underlined the syllables that get the emphasis.

Pronounce all the letters. Big deal: these combinations: **nh, ns**, **ny** in a word signal the previous vowel is said nasally. The n in these is *always silent* but you pronounce the second letter. It's only a sign to say the previous vowel nasally - as if you have a stuffed-up nose!

Aambe, baapin! (Come on, laugh!)



Did you know the white-tail deer can jump higher than the average house? This is due to its powerful hind legs and the fact that the average house can't jump.

A skunk, a deer and a duck went out for dinner. When it came time to pay, the skunk didn't have a scent and the deer didn't have a buck so they put the meal on the duck's bill.

What do you call a deer with no eyes? No eye deer.

Your clan is with you from the day you are born

In our culture the oral tradition is important.

We learn and are taught through stories. An Anishinaabe teaching on the clan system is an example of this...

A long time ago, before humans inhabited this world, it is said that the clans were already here. Before the humans arrived, the animals, fish and birds were told by the Creator that humans were coming and that these humans wouldn't have anything and would be pitiful. So, each of the animals, fish and birds said, "We will take care of them and show them how to live in harmony with all of Creation. We will sacrifice ourselves as food so they won't starve and we will supply them with our skins so they will be warm. We will teach them what medicines and ceremonies to use to heal themselves."



These clans are still with Native people today.

Your clan is with you from the day you are born. It is said that your clan walks with you and looks after you. Your clan takes care of you so that you don't have to go through life without help and protection. The spirit of your clan is for you to use because you are a member of that clan; you always offer tobacco when you ask your clan for help.

The Mohawks' family-oriented culture is based on the clan structure. Within the clan structure of the Six Nations, the clan is passed down through the women. Among the Anishinaabe, the children of the family are of their father's clan. The clans of a Nation are often the animals and other creatures that inhabit the region. In the Great Lakes area, the wolf, bear, turtle and deer are common clans. The Anishinaabe say that their clans may be almost any animal, fish or bird. Some of the clans of the Six Nations are the Turtle, Bear, Wolf, Rock, Snipe, Pipe of Peace and the Heron.

Within a clan there may be many different types of an animal, bird or fish. For example, the turtle clan includes different types of turtles, such as snapping turtles and painted turtles. Each clan has its own duties and responsibilities. You can consult the elder clan members for the teachings of your clans.

Among the Anishinaabe, the Crane clan, for example, is involved in leadership and the sharing of knowledge, particularly the teachings. Their role is one of leadership because the cranes were instrumental in establishing the clan system for the Anishinaabe. It is said that the cranes have a loud voice that can be heard for miles. When the crane gives a teaching, it can be heard far away in other parts of the world; people listen and learn when a crane teaches.

The Eagle clan represents the family unit; both parents protect and bring food to the eaglets. The eagle also teaches about respect, hunting, being a warrior and being in balance with the environment.



The Bear clan are like the guardians of the communities. They are also the protectors and carriers of the medicines.

Learning your clan

If knowledge of your clan is lost to your family and if your search through family, church, treaty, band or school records does not reveal this information, you can offer tobacco and make the reqe st to know what your clan is to a spiritual person who has the ability to find out what clan is watching over you.

Honoring your clan

To honor your clan is to be a brother, uncle, sister or aunt to all the people who are of your clan. When you meet someone of your clan who is younger than you, they are considered to be your nephew or niece. When you meet someone of your clan who is the same age, they are considered to be your brother or sister. It is your responsibility to take care of the relatives of your clan. When a clan member visits your community, you ensure that this person is taken care of. When you do this, you bring honor to your clan and yourself.



Depending on what clan you belong to, you may feast your clan monthly; once or twice a year; or four times a year at the change of the seasons. Many people will make their food and tobacco offering to their clan by leaving the offering outside on the ground or in the water. For example, a member of the Bullhead Fish clan puts their offering of tobacco and food on a raft which is sent onto the lake. In some communities all the members of a clan may gather to feast their clan and to hold clan ceremonies.



Many people put out a food offering for their clan in the fall, to give their clan strength and energy to survive the winter and in the spring to revitalize their clan's spirit after a hard winter.

Some Bear clan people feed their clan when the bear is going into hibernation and again in the spring when the cubs are born.

They might leave a food offering of strawberries, raspberries, salmon and other types of meats and berries a bear would like. Generally, a food offering will consist of any food your clan would eat. Members of the Bullhead Fish clan, the boss of all fish clans, feed the clan when the ice comes in and goes out.

In the past, clans were painted on warrior shields encircled with medicine bundles. Today clan markers, items which represent your clan such as antlers, skins, skulls, a painting or carving of the clan, may be hung in a respectful manner.

Referrals to Healers, Elders and Medicine People

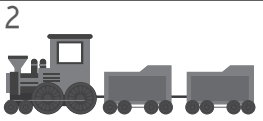
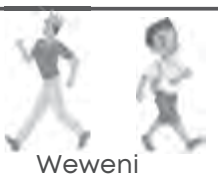
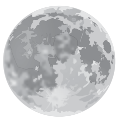
As our awareness and knowledge of our traditions and culture increases, so does our honor and respect for these ways. This has not always been the case in our communities.

There are always those who present themselves as Healers, Elders or Medicine People who have not earned that title and may use the teachings and medicines in the wrong way. It is important for everyone, especially young people, to be aware of this and to exercise caution when they seek healing, teachings or advice. It is advisable to consult with people whom you trust to get referrals to respected and recognized Traditional Healers, Elders and Medicine People.

Special acknowledgement is given to the following Healers and Elders who contributed their knowledge and understanding of the traditions and culture in the preparation of the brochures from which this article was taken: Jake Aguonia, Garnett Councillor, Harlan Downwind, Roger Jones, Rose Logan, Mary Louie, Dorothy Sam, Nelson (SugarBear) Shognosh, Geraldine Standup and Ella Waukey.

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MANIDOO GIIZOONHS - LITTLE SPIRIT MOON
DECEMBER 2026

NIIZHWAASO GIIZHIGAT	NTAM GIIZHIGAT	NIIZHO GIIZHIGAT	NSWO GIIZHIGAT	NIIWO GIIZHIGAT	NAANO GIIZHIGAT	NGODWAASWO GIIZHIGAT
		1  aagamag (snowshoes)	2  ishkode daabaanenhs (little train)	3 N'biingech! (I am cold!) 	4  daminawaagan (doll)	5  Niibaanamaa waaskonenjiganan (Christmas lights)
6  jigjigaaneshiinh (chickadee)	7  bkwaakat (ball)	8  zhooshk'jiwe daabanes (sleigh)	9  pkwezhgaanhsag (cookies)	10  segaajiganan (decorations)	11  Weweni baamasen. (Walk in a good way.)	12  nagamwinan (songs)
13  zigaabiiginige waawaashkesh (reindeer [leashed deer])	14 Niibaanamaa mdaas (christmas stocking) 	15  gwiizenhs dewe'iged (little drummer boy)	16 Niibaanamaa mitig (Christmas tree) 	17  ziisbaakadoonhs skowin (candy cane)	18  aankoosenh (sled [something linked to another thing])	19  wiigwebjibjigan mazinigan (wrapping paper)
20  Ntam Bibooni giizhgad (First day of winter)	21  taataagaansan (bells)	22  shkabijigaanhs (little package)	23  Mooshkaneshin Dibiki Giizis (It is a full moon.)	24  Niibaanamaam. (It is Christmas.)	25  Mino Niibaanamaan. (Have a Merry Christmas.)	26  **Gichi-miigwet** (Santa Claus [one who gives greatly])
27  maagweng (gift [something you are given])	28  zhengwenhsanan (jingle bells-round bells)	29  aazheniinhsag (little angels)	30  n'di nawe-maaganidoog (my relatives)	31  Gwawaan mitig. (S/he is cutting down a tree.)		

Calendar created by Sault Tribe Language & Culture Division

Epizootic hemorrhagic disease takes toll on deer

By Scott Brand

Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) has once again taken a toll on Michigan's deer herd including some downstate counties inside the 1836 ceded territory.

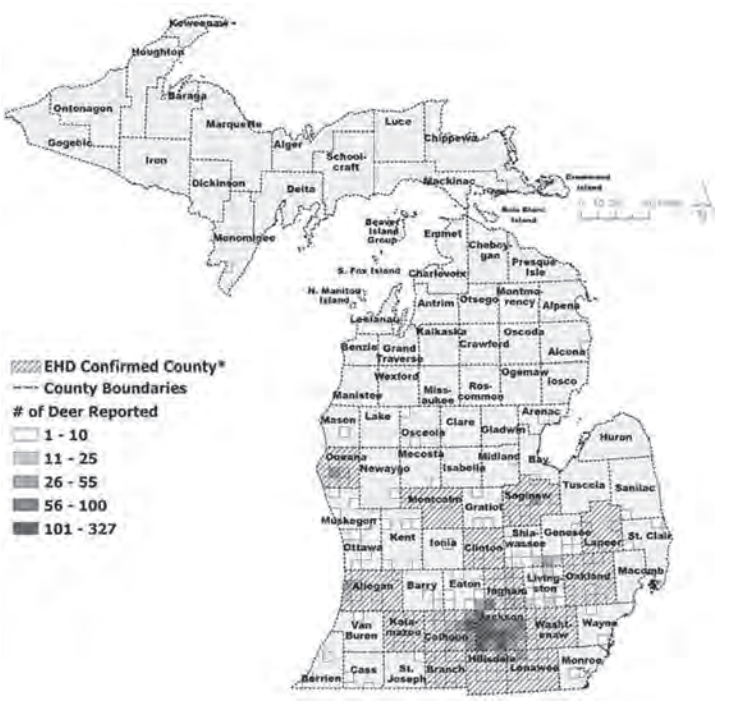
According to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), EHD is a viral disease spread by biting midges that typically occurs in late summer and early fall. The outbreaks generally end when the first hard frost sets in and kills the midges. The disease has been seen for decades in many areas of the United States and has cropped up in Michigan periodically since it was first detected in 2006.

"Small pockets of EHD can be unsettling to the public and can substantially reduce local deer numbers," said Brent Rudolph, deer, elk, and moose management specialist for the DNR Wildlife Division. "But it's important to remember that while mortality rates can be high in some localized areas, not all deer will contract EHD and not all deer that get EHD will die from it."

To date, the Upper Peninsula seems to have been relatively unscathed with less than 10 confirmed cases all confined to the southwest portion of Menominee County. In the ceded territory, Montcalm and Oceana counties have recorded far more deaths, while there are only pockets of less than 10 in portions of Kent, Ionia, Mason, Mecosta, Muskegon, Osceola and Ottawa counties.

The hardest hit area in 2026 was found in Jackson County where the confirmed deer deaths run into the hundreds. This is strongly reflected in the DNR's mandatory hunter harvest reports. As of Oct. 27, there had been 255 deer registered in 2026, compared to the Oct. 27, 2025, total of 772, a decline of 67% from year to year.

"We have heard from hunters who are concerned about deer losses in their hunting areas and want more information about where EHD is occurring," said Rudolph, instructing interested parties to visit michigan.gov/EHD for more updates. "Creating and updating this map as reports come in is one tangible way we can help hunters and the public be more confident about where EHD has been reported in their communities."



Quagga and zebra mussels: changing productivity in the Great Lakes

From Sault Tribe NRD

Since time immemorial, the Sault Tribe has maintained a strong, reciprocal relationship with the Great Lakes. Sault Tribe commercial and subsistence fishers rely on steady populations of Great Lakes fishes such as Atikameg (Lake Whitefish) and Nmegos (Lake Trout) to support and provide food for themselves and their families. However, the presence of dreissenid (Zebra and Quagga) mussels in the Great Lakes and in the surrounding watersheds is threatening that relationship.

The presence of these mussels has had detrimental effects on important commercial fish species for the tribe, particularly Atikameg. Dreissenid mussels have a diet of algae and phytoplankton that they pull from the water by filter feeding. However, *Diporeia*, tiny native crustaceans that are a staple of Atikameg diets, also eat phytoplankton. This causes competition between the mussels and *Diporeia*, causing a decline in the main food source of Atikameg. As such, Atikameg populations in Lakes Huron and Michigan have been in decline due to this decrease in their food source. As a result, Atikameg must turn to lower-quality food sources, including the mussels themselves. This has resulted in Atikameg being underfed and experiencing declines in health.

Additionally, since dreissenid mussels are such efficient filter feeders, their presence leads to clearer water. However, clearer water does not necessarily indicate a healthy lake ecosystem. When water is clearer, there is less food for the zooplankton that young whitefish rely on for food. When juvenile whitefish have less food, fewer of them survive to adulthood. And, when water is clearer, it allows for sunlight to penetrate to depths of the lake it could not normally reach. This leads to higher growth of bottom-dwelling algae and creates harmful algae blooms. These blooms can wash up onto shore and carry bacteria that is harmful to people and animals.

Together, we can all do our part to be mindful and prevent further spread of dreissenid mussels within 1836 Treaty Waters. Sault Tribe Fisheries biologists will continue to work to protect and restore Great Lakes Atikameg populations for the next seven generations.

For questions regarding zebra and quagga mussels, please reach out to the Natural Resources Division at naturalresources@saulttribe.net.

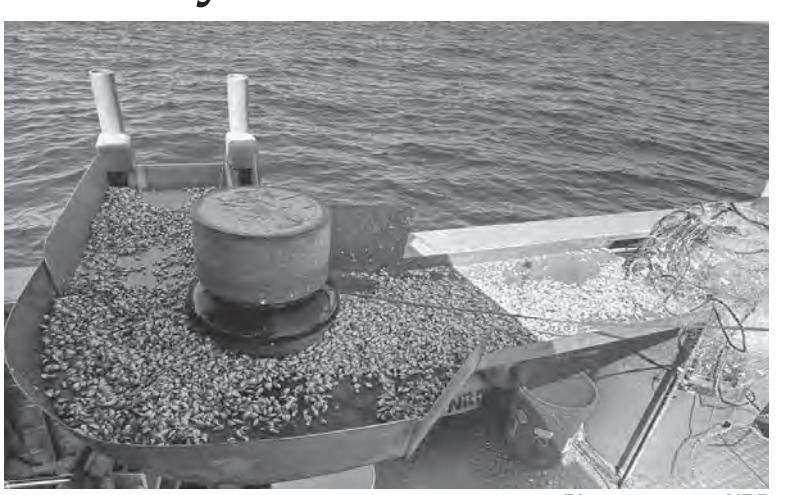


Photo courtesy NRD

Sault Tribe biologists were conducting gill net sampling in the Great Lakes when they pulled up a gill net loaded with dreissenid mussels.

Be in the know about carbon monoxide and learn signs of poisoning

By Carli Huhn, Sault Tribe Natural Resources Division Environmental Scientist

As the seasons change, our hunters are returning to their hunting blinds, and soon our ice fishermen are heading to their shanties. Almost everyone has their trusty heater to stay comfortable while enjoying all the Upper Peninsula has to offer. However, there are a few things to know before you go.

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless and colorless gas. It is produced by burning carbon-based fuels such as wood, propane, gasoline, or charcoal.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 400 Americans die each year from unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning. But what does this mean for you?

Before you leave your home, make sure you know the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning.

While in your shanty or blind, if you start to experience any feelings of headache, dizziness, shortness of breath, fatigue, or mental confusion, step outside of your shelter immediately and call 911.

These symptoms could be a result of your heat source emitting carbon monoxide, combined with the blind or shanty you are sitting in having inadeqa te ventilation.

Here are a few ways to prevent excessive exposure to carbon monoxide. First, choose a heater that will fulfill your needs, following the guidelines provided in the instructional manual. Second, if you are using the heater inside (i.e., a blind or shanty), make sure the heater is designed for indoor use. If your heater uses a large propane tank, if possible, try to keep the tank outside, as this will help mitigate any additional exposure to gas leaks in the shelter.

Double-check that your shelter has adeqa te ventilation. Ideally, have vents near the top and bottom of your shelter that snow or debris can't block.

Last but certainly not least, always take a carbon monoxide detector with you! Carbon monoxide detectors are fairly cheap and can save your life. Don't forget extra batteries because cold temperatures can drain the charge qi ckly.

If you have qe stions or would like a portable carbon monoxide detector of your own, the Sault Tribe Environmental Program is giving away 10 free portable CO detectors to the first 10 people who contact Carli Huhn.

Huhn is Sault Tribe's new environmental scientist focusing on air qa lity. You can reach her by email at chuhn@saulttribe.net or call (906) 632-5040, ext.73061.

Sault Tribe Natural Resources Division wishes you a safe and plentiful hunting and fishing season.

2027 Black Lake Sturgeon Lottery Application

Sault Tribe has an allocation for lake sturgeon harvest in Black Lake in Cheboygan County in 2027. Please fill out the following application form and return to: STNRD Fisheries, 199 West 3 Mile Rd, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783. Application must be received by 5:00 pm on December 31st, 2026. **Applications received after 5:00pm on December 31st, 2026** WILL NOT be accepted. One entry per applicant.

First Name _____ Middle Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zipcode _____

File Number (Red # on tribal ID) _____ STS # _____

Date of Birth _____ Sex _____ Phone Number _____ Email _____

Pharmacist serves tribal communities remotely

By Brenda Austin

Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians member Nicholas Cushman has moved back to Sault Ste. Marie after a pharmacy career that took him to New Mexico, Colorado and the Pacific Northwest.

Cushman works remotely as a senior area clinical program coordinator for the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board. He helps tribal programs strengthen pharmacy services, train health professionals and make care more accessible in remote communities. His wife, Kimberly, is a physician assistant at the Sault Tribe's walk-in clinic. "We're super happy to be back," Cushman said.

Cushman grew up on Sault Tribe lands and once pictured himself working at a neighborhood drugstore. He earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan and entered its doctor of pharmacy program. An Indian Health Service scholarship paid for his final three years, and in return he committed to working in the Indian health system.

He graduated in 2016 and also earned a master's degree in health administration. He worked as a staff pharmacist at the Albuqe rqe Service Unit in New Mexico and later as deputy chief pharmacist at the Ute Mountain Ute Health Center in Towaoc, Colorado. He joined the Portland board in November 2020.

Much of his work centers on Indian Country Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO), a virtual program that connects clinicians across the Indian health system with specialists to discuss clinical topics and patient cases. Since Cushman joined, it has grown to nearly 30 offerings. A major focus is helping primary care teams treat substance use disorders, hepatitis C, sexually transmitted infections and HIV, so clinics can offer care patients might otherwise travel to get.

He also helps programs with pharmacy policies, medication purchasing and reimbursement. He pushes for legislative and Medicaid policy changes to address coverage gaps and other barriers.

Cushman was lead author of a 2026 study of an eight- to 12-week substance use disorder mentoring program for pharmacists in Indian Country. From May 2024 to June 2026, the program enrolled 32 pharmacists from 13 states. On a follow-up survey where pharmacists rated themselves, 88% reported better opioid-related knowledge, 91% greater confidence and 69% stronger skills.





Nick Cushman manned a booth at the Sault Tribe Health Division Fall Health Fair at the Hessel Tribal Center on Oct. 9, promoting awareness of YesRX and its role in supporting access to healthcare resources. His grandmother and Hessel resident, Bridget Cadreau, stopped by to visit and say hi. According to the YesRX website, three out of every four patients in the U.S. worry about paying for their cancer treatment. YesRx connects donated medication with patients in Michigan who need treatment but can't afford or access it, protecting people and the environment at the same time. YesRx has put over $37 million in life-saving medication into Michigan hands at no cost.

In 2024, Cushman helped launch the Collaborative for Indigenous Resources in Care, Learning, and Excellence, or CIRCLE, at the University of Michigan College of Pharmacy. He and Emily Mackler, a clinical oncology pharmacist, were co-directors during its launch and early growth. Both have since stepped down as planned.

CIRCLE grew out of Cushman's experience watching researchers arrive in tribal communities with projects already designed. The collaborative starts by asking tribal health leaders what they need, and tribal partners keep authority over decisions.

Projects at several Michigan tribal health centers include improving pharmacy operations and preparing pharmacy technicians for certification.

Cushman is still an adjunct faculty member at the university, where he mentors pharmacy students. He credits the university with changing the direction of his life and his family's. He hopes Indigenous young people see that higher education and health care careers are within their reach.

St. Ignace tribal physician to move near family

By Christine Hamilton, Physician Supervisor, Sault Tribe St. Ignace Clinic

To all my patients, colleagues, and friends with the Sault Tribe: I would like to let you know I will be leaving the tribe as of Jan. 7.

It has been my privilege to serve with and for you in the St. Ignace Health Center. It saddens me to leave; I will miss all of you a great deal.

However, I have an opportunity to work in Muskegon, west of Grand Rapids. As many of you know, my children and grandchildren all live in that area. It seems as if I have been making the four-hour trek to be with them on more than half of the weekends. This move will allow me to be there and be with my family consistently, without eight hours of driving involved.

Everyone I have talked with about this has been encouraging and happy for me. That means a great deal to me. I hope to be able to visit occasionally, and see some of you. Meantime, stay well, everyone!











Above left, Hamilton's brother, older daughter, and grandkids; granddaughter and grandson-in-law; her grandson on the bike, Hamilton's older daughter on the laptop and grandson; and left, her younger daughter.

WIOA opportunities available to eligible applicants

The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Program has funding available for on-the-job training and short-term occupational training opportunities.

The program may be able to provide tuition assistance for skills training if it leads to an industry-recognized certification or under OJT, it may reimburse an employer 50 percent of your wage for a specified period.

Candidates must meet eligibility reqi rements and reside in the seven-county service area.

Applications may be picked up at WIOA at Big Bear in Sault Ste. Marie, or by contacting Brenda Cadreau at (906) 635-4767 or bcadreau@saulttribe.net.

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Brockman turns life experiences into books

By Brenda Austin

Craig A. Brockman took about 12 years to write his first book. His walk across Michigan's Upper Peninsula took more than two decades.

Persistence, it seems, has never been a problem for him.

The former Sault Tribe certified family nurse practitioner has spent much of his life pursuing interests that range from healthcare and music to writing novels and building miniature houses. Now retired and living in Tecumseh with his wife, Sally, Brockman has eight books to his credit and a ninth in the works.

Although his books explore different subjects, the Upper Peninsula and Lake Superior remain recurring influences, shaped by nearly two decades of living in Brimley and his years working for the Sault Tribe.

Brockman's interest in Native communities began long before he entered the healthcare profession. He grew up on a cranberry marsh in central Wisconsin, where his family's property bordered Ho-Chunk and Potawatomi settlements. Native people worked in the family cranberry business, and two Potawatomi children adopted by his uncle became his cousins.

As a boy, Brockman spent considerable time hunting, trapping and exploring the surrounding forests, streams and marshes. Those childhood experiences would eventually influence his writing, particularly his 2023 novel, "Delirium Wilderness," a partly autobiographical story inspired by the friendship he shared with his Potawatomi cousin, John.

His journey into healthcare was less direct.

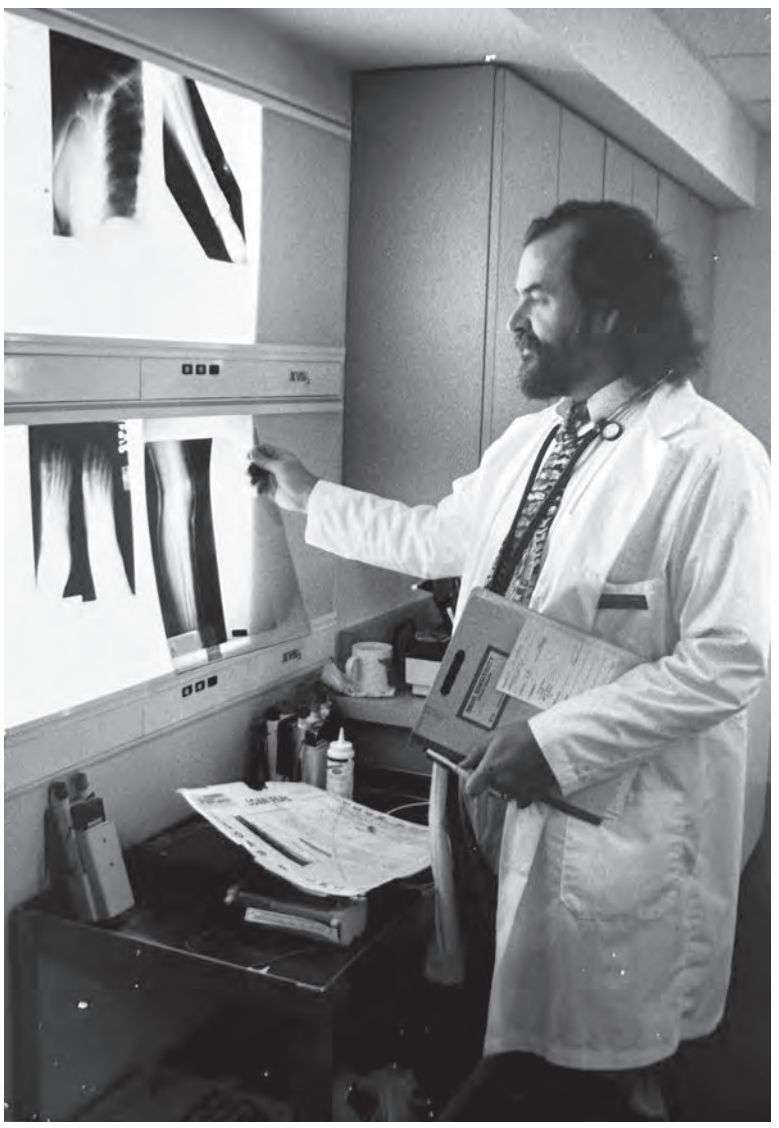
Although he had wanted to work in the healthcare field since childhood, Brockman struggled in high school. By 23, he was married, had two children and needed a stable career after experiencing layoffs.

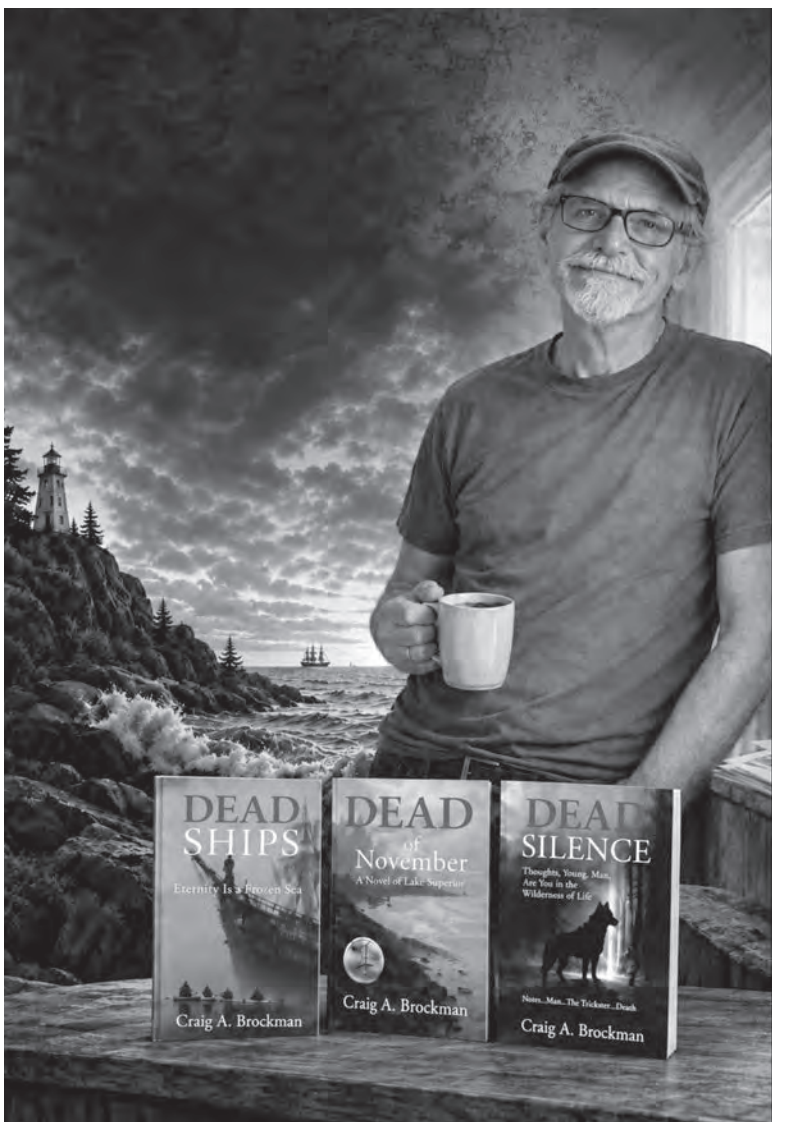
He returned to school, where he met a fellow student who planned to become a nurse.

"I didn't even know that men could be nurses!" Brockman recalled.

With encouragement from an aunt who was a nurse and an instructor who recognized his potential, Brockman continued his education, eventually earning a master's degree and becoming a nurse practitioner.

His first assignment was at the Red Lake Reservation in Minnesota, where he served in the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service. After a year, he transferred to the Sault Tribe, beginning a relationship with the community that would span much of his professional life.





Above: Craig Brockman, CFNP, in the late 1990s at the Sault Tribe Health Center in Sault Ste. Marie. Right: Brockman published Dead of November in 2020, Dead Silence in 2024 and Dead Ships this year. You can find all his books on Amazon by doing a search for "author Craig Brockman."

Brockman worked at the tribal health center from approximately 1984 to 1990. He also taught at Lake Superior State University and worked in private clinics around Sault Ste. Marie before returning to the tribal health center when it moved into its new building. He remained there until 2002, when he and Sally moved downstate to be closer to their grandchildren. He continued practicing healthcare until retiring in 2014.

Looking back, Brockman believes his years in healthcare provided something invaluable to his writing: an understanding of people. He estimates that over his career he listened to the personal experiences of 15,000 to 20,000 people in examination rooms, hearing about their joys, struggles, fears and hardships.

His interest in storytelling, however, began with music.

Brockman started playing guitar when he was five or six, and began writing songs as a teen. He later performed at coffeehouses before turning his attention to Christian music, playing at churches, conferences and Indian Health Service banqe ts.

Although he's done little performing during the past decade, his son, a music producer, helped him preserve some of his favorite compositions. The resulting album, "Half Sick of Shadows," is available through music streaming services.

His first published book, "Marty and the Far Woodchuck," arrived in 2007, but its beginnings stretched back more than a decade. Brockman began writing the middle-grade novel when his daughter was about the age of its intended readers. By the time he finished, his granddaughter was approaching that same age.

In 2020, Brockman published "Dead of November: A Novel of Lake Superior," a supernatural thriller inspired by the lake's atmosphere, shipwrecks, history and mysteries.

The novel follows Adam, a psychologist grieving the loss of his wife, who drowned in Lake Superior. When the ghosts of those lost to the lake begin emerging from its waters, Adam discovers they are fleeing something more sinister. His search draws him into a world of supernatural danger and Ojibwe lore.

Brockman drew on his familiarity with the Upper Peninsula to create the setting, incorporating locations around Lake Superior and elements of Native storytelling with assistance from Native friends.

Dead of November was selected as a U.P. Notable Book (2021) by the Upper Peninsula Publishers & Authors Association and has ranked among the top 75 titles on Amazon's American Horror list.

His other works include "Curve of the Earth: A Novel of Lazarus," published in 2022; "Delirium Wilderness," published in 2023; and "Dead Silence," released in 2024.

He also collaborated with Jessie Huisken on the 2023 book "Surviving to Thriving: Best Life with a Hospitalized Child."

Two more titles, "My Burden Is Light" and "Dead Ships," followed in 2026.

Brockman established Curve of the Earth Publishing to manage his writing as a business and provide a home for his creative work.

He is now working on his ninth book, "Clara Remembered," which he hopes to publish in 2027.

While Brockman creates the stories, Sally reviews his manuscripts with a discerning eye, helping him identify what works and what needs attention.

Outside of writing and music, Brockman enjoys constructing miniature dioramas, particularly what he calls faerie houses. More recently, he has begun making miniature Irish cottages from concrete. His interests have also included woodcut drawings, carpentry, gardening, homemade root beer and baking.

Whether he's assembling a miniature cottage, developing another novel or recalling the forests and shoreline of Lake Superior, Brockman continues to find something new to explore.

"I never stop trying to challenge my creative urges," he said. "It's the key to thinking like a kid as I get older — and older!"

Brockman's books can be found on Amazon.com by searching his name. You can also visit his Webpage at craigabrockman.com, where he shares both his love of writing and music.

Justice Department announces results from Operation Not Forgotten

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Department of Justice and FBI announced Oct. 21 results of the personnel surge in support of Operation Not Forgotten 2026, which focuses on unresolved cases in Indian country with a priority on cases involving violence against women and children, including those who are missing or murdered.

In its fourth year, Operation Not Forgotten surged personnel and investigative resources across the country from April 1 through Sept. 30, resulting in 118 arrests, 41 individuals charged federally, 25 child victims identified or located, and 72 weapons recovered. FBI agents conducted 990 interviews and 232 search operations. Arrests increased by 123% and subjects charged by 52% over 2025.

"The Department of Justice will always work to deliver justice for the victims of violent crime in Indian country," said Attorney General Todd Blanche. "Thanks to the hard work of the FBI, our U.S. Attorneys, and other federal and tribal partners, Operation Not Forgotten and Operation Steadfast Promise are helping make communities safer and providing comfort for victims and families."

FBI's Operation Steadfast Promise

Operation Steadfast Promise, first announced in 2026, is a continuing comprehensive surge of resources to address a wide range of violent criminal threats impacting Indian country. Operation Steadfast Promise builds on the successes of Operation Not Forgotten with the addition of multiple new initiatives to improve public safety in tribal communities. The FBI, in coordination with U.S. Attorneys' Offices, the Bureau of Indian Affairs Missing and Murdered Unit, Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and tribal and other federal law enforcement partners, is working across multiple territories to bring investigative aid to cases and resolution for victims and their families. Since Operation Steadfast Promise began in April, the FBI opened over 1,200 new investigations in Indian country, obtained criminal charges on 678 subjects, made over 700 arrests, recovered 2,260 weapons, and made 140 drug seizures.

The FBI encourages anyone with information related to unresolved violent crimes in Indian country to contact their local FBI field office or submit a tip at www.tips.fbi.gov.

Attention elders age 60 or older - complete your Elder Survey form before November 30

As the Sault Tribe prepares for the 2027 Land Claims distribution, better known as the Elder Check, we would like to remind elders who will be at least 60 years old by Dec. 31, 2026, that they must complete an Elder Survey form.

Every fall, the Sault Tribe Enrollment Department mails out forms to be returned no later than Nov. 30. This year, Enrollment introduced an online portal to apply for Elder Checks. The portal was available from Aug. 1 until Oct. 1. Approximately 2,800 elders applied through the portal. Chi miigwech to all who chose to use it!

For those who did not complete their Elder Survey through the online portal, forms were mailed Oct. 30 to the mailing addresses Enrollment has on file. Please return these forms no later than Nov. 30.

Elder Checks are scheduled to be disbursed in early January 2027. The amount of each check is determined by the number of eligible elders and the interest accrued in the Land Claims account throughout 2026. The amount will not be known until after Dec. 31, 2026.

Please note, we will continue to utilize the online portal moving forward. The portal provides a simple way to complete the survey while saving time and money. Exceptions will be made as needed, but we encourage elders to use the online portal. Watch for updates on Elder Checks and how to use the portal in upcoming issues of the newspaper.

If you have questions, concerns, or have not received your Elder Survey form in the mail, please contact the Enrollment Office at (906) 632-8552 or (800) 251-6597.

Upcoming Sault Tribe elder events

Nov mber
Nov. 16 — Unit II Hessel Elder Meeting, 12 p.m. at the Hessel Tribal Center
Nov. 17 — Unit V Marqe tte Elder Lunch, 12 p.m. at the Marqe tte Community Center
Nov. 18 — Unit IV Manistiqe Elder Meeting, 12 p.m. at the Manistiqe Tribal Center
Nov. 18 — Unit IV BINGO with Heather, 2:30 p.m. at the Escanaba Community Center
Nov. 18 — Unit IV Escanaba Elder Meeting, 4 p.m. at the Escanaba Community Center
Nov. 19 — Unit V Munising Elder Thanksgiving Lunch, 12 p.m. at the Munising Tribal Center
Nov. 20 — Unit II Newberry Elder Meeting, 10:30 a.m. at Zellar's Restaurant in Newberry
Nov. 23 — Unit IV Manistiqe BINGO Fundraiser, doors open at 10:30 a.m., play begins at 1p.m.
Nov. 25 — Unit I Sault Thanksgiving Lunch, 11:30 a.m. followed by BINGO with Phil
Nov. 26 — Closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday
Nov. 27 — Closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday

December
Dec. 2 — Unit I Sault Elder Meeting, 12 p.m. at Nokomis-Mishomis Gamik
Dec. 3 — Unit V Munising Elder Meeting, 11 a.m. at Munising Tribal Center
Dec. 3 — Unit V Marquette Elder Meeting and Holiday Celebration, 5 pm . at Marquette Community Center
Dec. 5 — Unit IV Manistique Elder Holiday Celebration, doors open at 1 pm . Manistique Tribal Center
Dec. 8 — Units I, II, III Elder Holiday Luncheon, doors open at 11 am . Kewadin DreamMakers Theatre Sault
Dec. 9 — Unit IV Manistiqe Elder Meeting, 12 p.m. at the Manistiqe Tribal Center
Dec. 9 — Unit IV Escanaba Elder Holiday Celebration, doors open at 5 pm . Island Resort & Casino, Harris
Dec. 10 — Unit III St Ignace Elder Meeting, 12 p.m. at the St. Ignace Elder Complex
Dec. 10 — Unit V Munising Elder Lunch, 12 p.m. at the Munising Tribal Center
Dec. 14 — Unit IV Manistiqe BINGO Fundraiser, doors open at 10:30 a.m., play begins at 1 p.m.
Dec. 15 — Unit V Marqe tte Elder Lunch, 12 p.m. at the Marqe tte Community Center
Dec. 16 — Unit IV Escanaba Elder Lunch, 12 p.m. at the Escanaba Community Center

Elder Services holiday parties

Elder parties that are scheduled throughout the service area.

Unit 4/5 Marqe tte Area elders, Thursday, Dec. 3, at the Marqe tte Community Center, located at 204 Cherry Creek Rd. There will be a brief Elder Sub-Committee meeting starting at 5 p.m., with dinner to follow. Please RSVP by Nov. 25 by calling the Marqe tte Tribal Health Center at (906) 225-1616.

Unit 4 Manistiqe elders holiday meal on Saturday, Dec. 5, at the Manistiqe Tribal Community Center, located at 5698 W US Hwy 2. Doors will open at 1 p.m., meal served at 2 p.m. RSVP between Nov. 1 and Nov. 20 in person at the Manistiqe Tribal Health Center, or by calling (906) 341-8469.

Units 1, 2 and 3 will be celebrating on Tuesday, Dec. 8, at Kewadin DreamMakers Theatre in Sault Ste. Marie. Doors open at 11 a.m., with lunch at 12 p.m. RSVP by calling Elder Services at (906) 635-4971 by Dec. 2.

The Unit 4 Escanaba elders Christmas dinner Wednesday, Dec. 9, at the Island Resort and Casino. Doors open at 5 p.m., dinner to be served at 6 p.m. RSVP by calling Elder Services at (906) 635-4971 by Nov. 17.

Unit 5 Munising will be celebrating at 12 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 17, at the Munising Tribal Community Center, 622 W. Superior St. There is no need to RSVP.

Tribe advocates improving safety on Highway US-2 near St. Ignace

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors recently passed a resolution supporting additional safety measures along US-2, particularly near St. Ignace, and is urging motorists to use extra caution when traveling the highway.

US-2 is heavily traveled and presents year-round safety concerns, including hazardous driving conditions caused by unpredictable winter weather. Two fatal crashes occurred along US-2 this past summer, including one that claimed the life of a Sault Tribe elder.

Sault Tribe joins local and state leaders in calling for improvements to make US-2 safer for all motorists. Potential measures could include reduced speed limits, additional traffic signals and other roadway safety improvements.

The tribe has previously partnered with the Michigan Department of Transportation on highway improvements, including a recent project to improve access to Kewadin Casinos Manistique. The tribe remains committed to working with local and state partners to advocate for safer roadways throughout the region.

Medicaid/Medicare Notice

You can apply for Medicaid year-round
- You can qualify for Medicaid even if your job offers employer-sponsored coverage.
- Most enrollees pay $0 per month in premiums, minimal copays, and no annual deductible.

FAMILY SIZE	INCOME LIMITS
1	$22,025
2	$29,863
3	$37,702
4	$45,540
5	$53,378
6	$61,217
7	$69,055
8	$76,894

Medicare Open Enrollment runs through Dec. 7
- Most people become eligible upon turning 65.
- You can become eligible for Medicare before age 65 if you have a qualifying disability or medical condition:
  - If you receive Social Security Disability payments, you will be eligible for Medicare the month you receive your 25th benefit payment.
  - If you have end-stage renal disease (ESRD) or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

Need help? Contact Sault Tribe Community Health Worker Kelly Siegwart with the Community Health Access Coalition at 906-635-7483 to schedule an appointment.



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Lowes family grows with birth of daughter



Elodie Lorraine Lowes was born Nov. 4, 2026, to Austin Lowes and Tara Maudrie-Lowes of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. She weighed 8 pounds, 11 ounces. Parents and baby pose above with big sisters Eden and Emilia (L-R).

Jace Andrew birth



Jace Andrew Livermore arrived on Aug. 30, 2026, to Sault Tribe member Andrew Livermore and his wife Brianna and was also welcomed home by big brother, Jack.

Jace weighed eight pounds, seven ounces, and was 19 inches in length. Grandparents are Linda and David Livermore of Garnet, Mich., and Jim and Lori Docter of Hudsonville, Mich.

Ingalls bags buck



Tribal member Adam Ingalls shot this 8-point buck in Twin Lake, Mich., on Nov. 6. Ingalls is from Twin Lake, Mich.

Tribal youth bags buck



Hunting with her father, Emilia Lowes bagged this buck Oct. 29.

Sault elders celebrate birthdays



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS - Unit I elders celebrated three October birthdays at their recent Elder Sub-Committee meeting. Donna, Cheryl and Linda enjoyed the birthday song, cake and ice cream from the Unit I Elder Sub-Committee.



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS - Unit I elders celebrated November birthdays at their recent Unit I Elder Sub-Committee meeting. Celebrating birthdays were Elder Services Registered Nurse Tonya Robbins, and Unit I elders Shirley VanAlstine and Gayle Belleau.

ACFS hosted Night of Wicked Awareness to help "scare away" domestic violence

On Oct. 17, 2026, the Sault Tribe Advocacy Resource Center hosted its now third annual Night of Wicked Awareness to "scare away" domestic violence. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, so what better way to promote awareness than with a Halloween event?

Each year, ARC hosts an event to promote awareness in hopes of eliminating intimate partner/domestic violence. ARC has hosted many successful events, including the annual walk for DV; during COVID, a car parade; and various awareness campaigns to spread the word that domestic violence is not tolerated and must stop.

ARC decided to move away from the walk and switch to a more family-focused activity with community resources and opportunities to learn about healthy relationships. Educating our youth about the red flags of an unhealthy relationship, abusive behaviors, and modeling healthy relationships is a positive step toward a future without violence.

The night included fun games and activities, cupcake walk, a selfie booth, a limbo contest, pizza, lots of candy, a costume contest, and community resources with activities and treats for everyone. Chi miigwech to those who attended and to our fantastic volunteers for helping make the night a success.



The Gardener family enters the Oct. 17 party.



JKL Bahweting students enjoy LSSU volleyball game



JKL Bahweting students, ranging from second grade through middle school, attended a volleyball game at Lake Superior State University. The raucous crowd was joined by two busloads from the Rudyard Area School District, all chanting "We are Lake State" and "LSSUUUUUU!" and heartily enjoying the music during intermissions and time outs.



Photos by Scott Brand

Above, the Middle School students from JKL Bahweting gather outside the Norris Center on the campus of Lake Superior State University after watching the women's volleyball team take on the Purdue Northwest Lions on Oct. 23 as part of the celebration of Great Lake State Weekend. Below, a large contingent of elementary students showed their Laker Pride at the conclusion of the game while they waited for the busses to arrive.



The LSSU women huddle up to discuss strategy.



Dancing in the bleachers.



Seymour makes a visit.





THANK YOU, SAULT TRIBE CITIZENS

As the secretarial election comes to a close, the Sault Tribe thanks all tribal citizens who exercised their right to vote and participated in the election process.

Regardless of the outcome, our membership has exercised its right under Article X of the Sault Tribe Constitution to determine how it wishes to be governed.

No matter how our government is structured, we remain united as one tribe. Our mission remains the same: supporting our membership, honoring our culture and living by our Seven Grandfather Teachings.

Ballot drop-off: ONE DAY ONLY

NOV. 19

KEWADIN CASINO - SAULT

2186 Shunk Rd., Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Registered voters may drop off their completed ballots at the DreamMakers Theater at Kewadin Casino in Sault Ste. Marie on Thursday, Nov. 19, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST.

NOV. 19 - Tabulation Night

KEWADIN CASINO - SAULT

The Secretarial Election Board will begin counting ballots at 4 p.m. EST at the DreamMakers Theater. Tribal citizens are welcome to attend in person. There will be no live stream due to this being a federal election.

Results are expected to be posted on or about Nov. 19 at the Sault Tribe Governmental Office, 523 Ashmun St., and the BIA Michigan Agency, 2845 Ashmun St., in Sault Ste. Marie. Unofficial results will be shared on the Sault Tribe's website and social media once available.

If the amendment...

Passes?

If approved and certified by the Secretary of the Interior, the amended Constitution will take effect, establishing three separate, co-equal branches of tribal government: legislative, executive and judicial.

Under the Constitution Implementation Plan, approved Sept. 22, the Sault Tribe will follow an 18-month timeline to update tribal laws and implement the new governmental structure.

During the transition, current leadership, departments, programs, budgets and existing legal obligations will generally remain in place, subject to the amended constitution and applicable law.

Fails?

If the proposed constitutional amendments are not approved, the Sault Tribe's current constitution and governmental structure will remain in place.

The Sault Tribe will continue operating under its existing system of government.

Requirements for approval

- 30% of those who registered for the secretarial election must submit a ballot
- A simple majority must vote in favor of the amendment
- The Secretary of the Interior must approve the amendment

What is the vote for?

Citizens of the Sault Tribe will decide whether to amend the tribe's constitution to establish three co-equal branches of government: legislative, executive and judicial. The ballot offers the choice of voting "yes" or "no", and must be returned no later than 3 p.m. Nov. 19.

The federally administered secretarial election concludes Nov. 19, when ballots are counted.

How would a 3-Branch Government work?

Executive
Carries Out Laws

- Implements tribal laws
- Manages tribal government
- Oversees tribal services
- Executive leader: **Tribal Ogemaa**

Legislative
Makes Laws

- Adopts tribal laws
- Approves the tribal budget
- Adopts tribal regulations
- Legislative body: **Tribal Council**

Judicial
Interprets Laws

- Ensures due process
- Resolves legal disputes
- Reviews laws for consistency with the constitution
- Courts: **Trial and Supreme Court**

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ELECTION

Current constitution. Proposed constitution. Implementation Plan. Election Information.

saulttribe.com/government/secretarial-election

Apple cider workshops bring the taste of fall



The Sault Tribe Health Division and Michigan State University Extension teamed up to host a series of apple cider workshops in Sault Ste. Marie, Munising and Marquette during the month of October. Above, Munising Youth Education and Activities students collecting their apples. Below, students enjoying the fruits of their labor sipping warm apple cider accompanied by a multitide of snacks.





Photos by Scott Brand

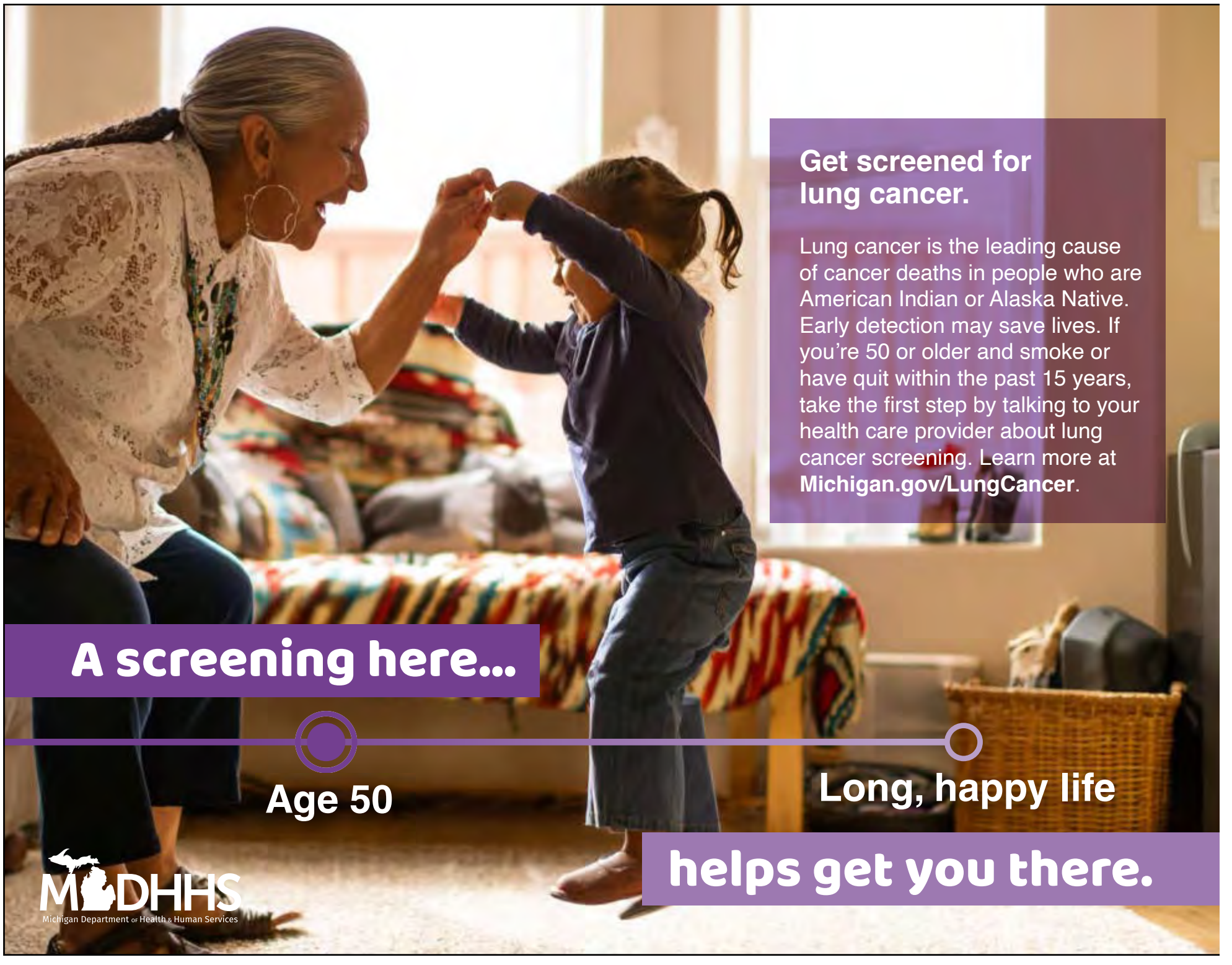
Above and top right, the children hand-fed apples into the machine where they were ground into a fine mush that would be later fed to local deer. At right, the juice passed through a strainer before going into the collection bin. Bottom left, the press was employed allowing participants to squeeze nearly every drop from the apple mush. Bottom right, Erin Tigue of Sault Tribe Community Health and Biidaaban Reinhardt of MSU Extension prepare to heat the cider to the recommended 160 degrees.











Paradiso owner operator of Sloth's Sealcoating

By Scott Brand

After 16 years of working for someone else, Nick Paradiso came to the realization he would never be able to buy a house and decided to go into business for himself.

Sloth's Sealcoating —a nickname he garnered from friends and family associated with the movie "The Goonies" — was established about the time COVID came rolling in. During the warmer months, Paradiso, a member of the Sault Tribe, does sealcoating that protects asphalt from weather, UV rays and wear, hot asphalt patching, hot rubber crack filling and line painting. As seasonal work dries up in the colder months, he switches over to snowplowing in the winter.

And, despite that work and effort, he still doesn't have his own house.

"It's not cheap," he said pointing to a tool he shut down just before the interview. "That saw is $1,800."

Skid steers, hot boxes, rollers and trailers have all been accumulated as he continues to grow his business and a lot of his work takes place away from the job site, maneuvering equipment to where it needs to be and back where it belongs once he is done.

"Where are we going and how are we getting there," he said of the daily calculations that could see him traveling almost anywhere, even beyond the Eastern Upper Peninsula. "If it's worth going, we'll go."

Paradiso lived in the Sault up until the age of 16, before moving briefly to Au Train, but he returned in time to graduate from Sault High in 2010.

"Pretty much right out of the gate," he said of his experience in this industry as he was employed in the sealcoating and asphalt business shortly after graduation.

Paradiso is the son of Gina Gough, who currently resides in Green Bay, Wisc., and has a twin brother named Alex.



Nick Paradiso owns and operates Sloth's Sealcoating in the Sault Ste. Marie area.

Tribe updates Tribal Code Chapter 70: Criminal Procedure

The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Board of Directors passed two resolutions on Oct. 13 to amend Tribal Code Chapter 70: Criminal Procedure to provide more protections for defendants and Law Enforcement.

Tribal Code Chapter 70: Criminal Procedure

Chapter 70 establishes the procedures for criminal cases in Tribal Court. These procedures apply to all criminal proceedings unless different procedures are established elsewhere in Tribal Code.

The chapter outlines the criminal justice process from start to finish, including when an arrest can be made, trial procedures, and how individuals may be sentenced following a conviction. It also establishes the rights and protections of individuals accused of violating criminal law, as well as the rules law enforcement officers, attorneys, and judges must follow.

The two sections that the board voted to amend are Section 70.104(2)(d) and Section 70.106.

Section 70.104 Arrest

§70.104 has been updated to remove an obsolete subsection that could have caused confusion when making an arrest. The amendment clarifies and modernizes arrest provisions, removes outdated statutory references, and establishes consistent probable cause terminology without weakening protections for victims or compromising community safety.

The board voted to remove §70.104(2)(d), which stated:

"The officer has reasonable cause to believe that a violation of §71.114 or §71.115, being assault or threats of endangerment respectively, has taken place or is taking place and that the person who committed or is committing the violation is a spouse, a former spouse, or a person residing or having resided in the same household as the victim, may arrest the violator without a warrant for that violation, irrespective of whether the violation was committed in the presence of the officer."

Generally, law enforcement cannot make an arrest for a misdemeanor unless the offense occurred in the officer's presence. This subsection allowed officers to make an arrest if there was reasonable cause to believe §71.114 or §71.115 had been violated, even if the offense occurred outside their presence. However, these provisions referenced sections of criminal code that no longer exist. The amendment removes those outdated references.

Domestic violence is defined in part by the relationship between two individuals. The previous language in §70.104(2)(d) permitted an arrest involving "a person residing or having resided in the same household as the victim." This included individuals, such as roommates, who do not meet the current relationship standards under Chapter 71 or federal domestic violence law.

Tribal citizens are no less safe following the repeal of §70.104(2)(d). Law enforcement retains full authority under §70.104(2)(c) to make lawful warrantless arrests in domestic violence cases, even if they do not occur in the officer's presence.

Section 70.106: Notification of Miranda Rights

§70.106 now includes a provision requiring law enforcement to advise individuals of their Miranda Rights. Prior to the amendment, nowhere in Chapter 70 were individuals granted their Miranda Rights protections, nor did law enforcement have to advise individuals of such rights. Instead, law enforcement had to advise individuals when they were being arrested you can stay silent, your statements can be used against you, and you can hire your own attorney.

The board has made it clear in the amended code revision that individuals are not only afforded their Miranda Rights, but law enforcement must advise individuals of their rights upon a custodial interrogation and that legal representation will be provided if an individual cannot afford representation. The amendment to the code brings Tribal Code into compliance with applicable state and federal law.

Updating Tribal Code

Updating Tribal Code is a serious undertaking by Sault Tribe Legal to protect the rights of tribal citizens. Maintaining an up-to-date and concise Tribal Code allows for the legal procedure to operate fairly and equally for all tribal citizens.

"The board of directors amendments to the Tribal Code provide more clarity for Sault Tribe Law Enforcement to better serve and protect the tribal community," said Sault Tribe Law Enforcement Police Chief Robert Marchand. "It's important that our laws are clear, consistent and reflect the needs of our community. These updates help us do our jobs effectively and maintain public safety."

JKL students "Paint the Plow" for safety awareness

By Nick Nolan

Students at JKL Bahweting are getting hands-on with safety thanks to Sault Tribe Transportation.

With winter quickly approaching, bringing snow, ice and hazardous driving conditions, Sault Tribe Transportation is helping students learn the importance of staying safe near roadways.

So, how do you combine road safety and education? By painting a commercial-sized snowplow blade, of course.

The plow blade was deposited at JKL's temperature-controlled maintenance building on Oct. 1, by Sault Tribe Construction staff. The school will have about eight middle-grade students brainstorming designs to bring to life on the blade, and now they'll have their chance to apply their craft.

Sault Tribe Transportation supplied all materials needed for the project, including water-based paint and protective materials for students to begin their work. The blade was primed by JKL facilities staff and is now awaiting students to put their artistic talents to work.

"By helping design this plow blade, students become part of the safety message. We hope they'll spot the plow on the road and remember the importance of staying alert and safe throughout the winter," said Sault Tribe Transportation Planner Wendy Hoffman. "We're using creativity to start conversations about safety. When students connect with the message, they're more likely to remember it when it matters most."

The final design will feature an eagle and comes from Ms. Darcy Schreiber's class, a fitting choice for young JKL Eagles. On the plow blade, an elegantly sketched miigiizi swoops into action holding a banner that states: "GO SLOW. ICE & SNOW" across a blue gradient background. Students worked with brown, blue, light blue, red, yellow, black, and white paint.

Giving students an opportunity to express their creativity is just one part of Sault Tribe Transportation's efforts to improve student safety. The department plans to introduce additional incentives and learning opportunities to help students recognize hazardous conditions as snowbanks begin to pile up and impair driver visibility.

The Paint the Plow project is being led by Sheila Berger, who joined the Transportation Department as the project specialist in mid-August. Hoffman provided praise for Berger's initiative on collaborating with JKL and putting safety at the forefront of students' minds.

"Making sure the kids are safe is what's important," added Berger. "It doesn't have to be just about winter, but this time of year creates so many hazards for both drivers and pedestrians. It's in everyone's best interest that our students are engaging with materials that can help them stay safe."

Once the plow blade is complete, Sault Tribe Transportation plans to build on the project by providing additional safety lessons and resources to JKL students. The department is working with the school to host a safety fair where students can learn more about winter driving hazards, roadway awareness and ways to stay safe as pedestrians. Safety-themed giveaways will also help reinforce those lessons throughout the school year.

And once winter weather arrives, students might just spot their own artwork helping keep local roads clear and their community safe.

To follow the Paint the Plow project and learn more about upcoming safety initiatives, visit saulttribe.com.



Photos by Nick Nolan

Above: The proposed design for the Paint the Plow project featured a miigiizi. Below: The plow from early November showing preliminary work. The final design is expected to be done before Thanksgiving.



Tribal foster care homes desperately needed

From ACFS

Two jars sit side by side. The one on the left holds a pile of marbles representing Sault Tribe children in foster care through Anishnaabek Community and Family Services (ACFS). The one on the right holds just four marbles, one for each of the agency's tribal foster homes.



As of Oct. 13, 2026, ACFS had 39 Sault Tribe children in foster care and just four tribal foster homes. When a child needs a foster placement and no tribal foster homes are available, ACFS has to rely on non-Native foster homes through other agencies.

Having more tribal foster homes gives ACFS more options to find a safe, supportive home that meets each child's needs and helps them stay connected to their culture. For a child, that might mean going to a powwow, hearing Anishinaabemowin spoken, or learning about tribal teachings and traditions from elders.

ACFS monitors tribal cases nationwide and can help connect children with tribal resource foster homes beyond the tribe's seven-county service area. Those homes can give children opportunities to learn about and take part in their culture even when they live outside the area.

Sault Tribe children in foster care need more families willing to open their homes and help them stay connected to their culture. As a foster parent, you can give a child a safe, steady place to live and make their culture part of everyday life. ACFS recruits foster families year-round and welcomes inqi ries wherever you live. If you've thought about fostering, take the first step. Call (800) 726-0093 or email acfs-fosterhomes@saulttribe.net to find out how to get started.

Walking on...

MARTHA MARY MILLER



Martha Mary Miller, 94, passed away on Oct. 27, 2026. A beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, great-great-grandmother, and sister, Martha leaves a legacy of love rooted in her devotion to family and the life she built in Cooks, Mich.

Martha was born on June 4, 1932, to William and Esther (Daley) King of Escanaba, Mich., and attended Cooks Schools. She met the love of her life, Arthur Albert Miller Sr., and they were married on April 17, 1948, in Escanaba. Together, they made their home in Cooks, where they raised 10 children and built a family that would grow to span generations.

Family was at the heart of Martha's life, and raising her children was one of her greatest joys. She treasured time spent together and the family traditions that gave those moments meaning. Cooking for her loved ones was a heartfelt expression of her care, and shared meals were an opportunity to gather and enjoy one another's company. She also found happiness in picking blueberries and strawberries and tending her garden. Her life reminds her family that some of the most precious memories are made in ordinary momentsi— n a meal prepared with love, a familiar tradition, and time set aside for one another. The devotion she gave to her children and the generations that followed remains a lasting part of her legacy.

Martha's work with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians held a special place in her heart. She served first as a community tech aide and later as a parent family aide with ACFS, continuing in that position until her retirement in 1996. These roles were an important chapter in her life, giving her a meaningful connection to the community she served. Her love for family made her work as a parent family aide especially meaningful. To Martha, her work with the tribe was much more than a job—it was a source of purpose and a cherished part of her life. Her service remains an important part of the legacy her family honors and remembers.

Martha was also an elected board member of the tribal council for 22 years, a true matriarch of Unit 4. During her tenure she met leaders from around the world including presidents, and vice presidents. She had met Hillary Clinton four times in her tenure. The Clintons in fact would send her a personalized signed Christmas card every year while they were in office. She was a true voice of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. She helped preserve culture and traditions and was dedicated to her culture and paving the way for generations to come. Her dedication to helping others reflected a deep sense of responsibility~~not~~ only to her own family, but also to the people whose lives she touched. She recognized the importance of supporting one another and passing that spirit of care on to future generations. Through her example, she reminded those around her that kindness is more than a sentiment; it is a commitment expressed in how we treat and help one another. She truly understood what it meant to care for one another.

Within her family, Martha helped instill the values of compassion, mutual respect, and responsibility for others. Those lessons extended beyond her family to the many people she helped within her many positions held with the tribe helping others and her elected position as a tribal board member. Her concern for the generations to come gave lasting purpose to her efforts: she wanted those who followed her to carry forward an understanding of what it means to look after one another. Her legacy lives on in the values she shared, the care she offered, and the people who continue to put those lessons into practice.

Martha was also a member of St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church in Cooks, Mich.

Martha is survived by her 10 children: Arthur (Beverly) Miller of Carpentersville, Ill; Tom (Lynne) Miller of Cooks; Louis Miller of Cooks; Richard V. Miller Sr. (Brenda) of Lake in the Hills, Ill.; Sandra (Mike) Rozga of Davenport, Iowa; Jeff (Joni) Miller of Manistiqe , Mich.; John (Theresa) Miller of Cooks; Robert Miller of Cooks; Mary Jenerou (Jeff Hopp) of Manistiqe ; and Joseph Lee Miller of Cooks. She is also survived by her brother, Alfred (Judy) Bellefeuille of Bark River, Mich.; her sisters, Yvonne MacArthur of Spring Green, Wis., Mildred Landers of Osseo, Mich., Gloria (Phil) Griffin of Tucson, Ariz., and Nancy (Dave) Amato of Grand Island, N.Y.; sister-in-law Ruth Miller, 21 grandchildren; 33 great-grandchildren; and 15 great-great-grandchildren.

Martha was preceded in death by her parents, William and Esther King; her beloved husband, Arthur Albert Miller Sr.; her siblings William King, Charles King, John/Jack Bellefeuille, Sharon Bellefeuille; her grandson Jeffrey Miller Jr.; and her great-great-grandson, Gage Miller.

A celebration of Martha's life will take place at Inwood Township Cemetery on Saturday, June 12, 2027, graveside service starting at 11 a.m. with a luncheon to follow at the Cooks Township Hall. Fausett Family Funeral Homes is assisting the family with arrangements and services.

Memorial donations may be directed to Anishnaabek Community Family Services (ACFS) Attn. Child Placement Program Foster Children Memorial Donations, 2218 Shunk Rd. Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Martha's love lives on in the generations of family she helped nurture. May those who loved her find comfort in their shared memories, in the closeness of family, and in knowing how deeply she will be remembered.

ANGELA MARIE LEONARD



Angela Marie Leonard (nee Burnett), 84, passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on Oct. 9, 2026, in Holt, Mich., following complications from congestive heart failure and pancreatic cancer.

Angela was born on March 1, 1942, in Charlotte, Mich., to Joel and Ola (Halsey) Burnett. Raised on the family farm on Cochran Road between Charlotte and Olivet, she developed a lifelong love for nature and community.

She pursued her passion for literature at Anderson University in Indiana, earning a bachelor's degree in English, and later completed her master's degree at Michigan State University.

Her teaching career began in Grand Blanc, Mich., where fate stepped in during a winter storm. George H. Leonard (member of Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians) shoveled her car out of the snow, and just three months later, the couple was married on the Burnett Family Farm. Shortly after, they relocated to the Upper Peninsula, settling into a home at the end of Sims Street in DeTour Village, where they would spend the rest of their lives. Angela and George shared 50 beautiful years of marriage until his passing from cancer in February 2016.

Angela was a dedicated educator, teaching high school English for the DeTour Area Public Schools for 28 years. After taking an early buyout from teaching, she partnered with George in business. Together, they ran the Point DeTour Cafe and The Fogcutter Restaurant for roughly a decade. They next spent 10 years as the caretakers of the Metivier Inn on Mackinac Island before officially retiring back to DeTour to travel and cherish their remaining years together.

Angela's true love was the written word; she could routinely be found reading morning, noon, and night. She also was part of an entrepreneurial group of women who started up DeTour's Timberdoodle Mercantile, which she enjoyed being part of a great deal. She was a proud member of the Book Worms book club and a dedicated advocate for local literacy, working tirelessly with the Friends of the DeTour Library to raise funds for year-round community programming. Angela also loved crossword puzzles and the New York Times daily Wordle puzzles.

An active soul, Angela loved playing Mahjong with her close friends, attending Friday night dinners with friends and a good glass of chardonnay, tending to her beautiful plants and vibrant gardens, and cross-country skiing. She deeply loved the raw beauty of the Upper Peninsula, and after 30-plus years, she took immense pride in finally being considered a true DeTour "local."

Angela's legacy lives on through her devoted family. She is survived by her son, Dr. Kevin Philo Leonard, and daughter-in-law, Shannon Erin Mulally; beloved grandson, Griffin (Finn) Philo Leonard; siblings, Dave Burnett (Marge), Carolyn Moghtader (Ed), and Juanita Thornton (Kevin); sisters-in-law, Leona DeKeyser (Jim), Geraldine Huyck, Hermina Tatrow (Randy), and Sharon Socia (Richard); brothers-in-law, Philbert Leonard and Mick Adams and numerous cherished nieces and nephews across both sides of the family.

Angela was reunited in rest with her beloved husband, George Herman Leonard; parents, Joel and Ola (Halsey) Burnett; father-in-law, Herman Benedict Leonard, and mother-in-law, Beatrice Constance (King) Leonard; sisters-in-law, Diane (Dottie) Adams, and Teri Burnett; brother-in-law, Jim Huyck and nephews, Daryl DeKeyser and David Huyck.

A memorial and celebration of life were held at the Burnett Family Farm (6223 S. Cochran Road, Charlotte, MI 48813) on Nov. 1.

A memorial and celebration of life for family and friends will be scheduled in late May/early June in DeTour Village.

Burial of ashes will be at Maple Grove Cemetery in DeTour Township.

Memorial donations may be made in Angela Marie Leonard's name to any local area Hospice organizations or if you wish to Heartland Hospice in Lansing, Mich., who provided wonderful end of life care for my mother in her and our greatest time of need.

BRYAN KEITH ARMSTRONG



Bryan Keith Armstrong, 56, of Fairborn, Ohio, died Nov. 8, 2026, at the Ball Hospice House in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. He was born Jan. 27, 1970, in St Petersburg, Fla., to Lynn and Rosaline (Pavlat) Armstrong.

Bryan was born into a Coast Guard family and had the opportunity to live in many different parts of the United States, including St. Petersburg, Fla.; Kodiak

See "Walk ng on," page 9

GRPM Native internship

The Grand Rapids Public Museum is now accepting letters of interest for a spring semester internship!

The internship aims to support the Anishinaabe Curator and Collections Department in the performance of its duties. This position reports directly to the Anishinaabe Curator. This Collections Native Internship provides a uniqe opportunity to collaborate with diverse stakeholders and honor cultural heritage while advancing museum objectives and fostering a one-of-a-kind learning experience.

The Native internship is a paid bi-weekly stipend position. This spring semester internship will begin Monday, Jan. 11, 2027.

Letters of interest will be accepted until Friday, Dec. 4, 2026, and interviews will take place on Monday, Dec. 14, 2026

See the full description on how to apply: https://www.grpm.org/internships/

Walking on continued

From "Walk ng on," page 8

Island, Alaska; Traverse City, Mich.; Long Island, N.Y.; and Belle Chasse, La. He graduated from Michigan Technological University in Houghton, Mich., with a bachelor's degree.

Bryan worked for the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians before joining the United States Air Force, where he served as an officer for 10 years. He later worked in the accounting department for 17 years while stationed in Fairborn, Ohio.

Bryan was a proud member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

In his free time, Bryan enjoyed reading military history and hiking.

Bryan is survived by his parents, Lynn and Rosaline of Sault Ste. Marie; brother, Andrew Armstrong of Sault Ste. Marie; and friend, Karen Power.

Per Bryan's wishes no services are being held.

Family Life Funeral Homes – Sault Ste. Marie assisted the family with arrangements.

Condolences may be given to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

ARTHUR (JOHN) LEIGHTON



Arthur John Leighton, 61, of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., died on Oct. 15, 2026, at the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor, Mich. He was born on Feb. 7, 1965, in Flint, Mich., to Arthur and Beatrice (Andrews) Leighton.

Arthur grew up in Clio, Mich., and graduated from Carroll High School in Fort Wayne, Ind. He proudly served in the United States Army with the 3rd Infantry Division as a medic. A few months after his discharge from the Army, his sister, Kim, introduced him to Jennifer "Jenny." The two were married on Aug. 10, 1991.

Arthur continued his education, earning a bachelor's degree in history, a master's degree in history from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, and a Ph.D. from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind. He dedicated much of his professional life to education and historical research, working as an educator at Bay Mills Community College in Brimley, Mich.; St. Francis College in Fort Wayne, Ind.; and Defiance College in Defiance, Ohio.

He later worked for the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians as a tribal historian before beginning his career with the federal government as a historian for the Department of the Interior, where he remained until his medical retirement in 2020.

Arthur was a proud member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. He was also a member of the Sugar Island Historical Society and Sacred Heart Church, where he generously volunteered his time. He was a founding member of Book Club 2.0 and had a great appreciation for the Library of America.

Arthur had many interests, including reading, historical research, music, cooking, genealogy, graphic novels, political science, and engaging conversations. He had an extensive book collection and enjoyed playing board games and role-playing games with family and friends.

An enthusiast of animals and wildlife, Arthur especially enjoyed watching birds and had a special fondness for his cats. He was also an avid rower, logging an impressive eight million meters on his Hydrow rowing machine.

Arthur was deeply loved by those who knew him. A natural peacemaker, he never knew an enemy and had a way of treating everyone he met like an old friend. He was a man of strong convictions and many passions, including his faith, politics, his tribe, Detroit Tigers baseball, and a cold beer. His kindness, welcoming nature, and ability to connect with others left a lasting impression on everyone fortunate enough to know him.

Throughout his life, Arthur was blessed with family and friends who offered their love and unwavering support. During his courageous fight with cancer, his sister, Kim; brother-in-law, Jerry; cousin, Cecil; coworker, Wendy; and his book club friends provided exceptional care, comfort, and encouragement. Their love and support meant so much to Arthur and his family.

Arthur is survived by his wife, Jennifer; son, Charles Leighton of Sugar Island, Mich.; daughter, Claire Leighton of Sugar Island; parents, Arthur and Beatrice; and sister, Kim (John) Bozich of Portland, Ore.

Arthur was preceded in death by his grandparents, Joseph and Josephine Andrews, and Arthur and Emily Leighton; father-in-law, Raymond Johnson; nephew, Heath Knecht; and many beloved aunts and uncles.

Rosary and a memorial gathering were held on Oct. 21, at the Niigaanagiizhik Cultural Building in Sault Ste. Marie. The memorial service followed on Oct. 22.

Arthur's final resting place will be at Wilwalk Cemetery on Sugar Island.

The family would like to extend their heartfelt appreciation to the staff of the Sault Tribe Health Center and Mackinac Straits Oncology for the excellent care and compassion they provided to Arthur throughout his illness.

Family Life Funeral Homes – Sault Ste. Marie assisted the family with arrangements.

Condolences may be given to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

WILLIAM (BILL) NYSTROM

William (Bill) Nystrom, 54, of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., passed away on Oct. 13, 2026. He was born on Jan. 15, 1972, in Malden, Mass., to John (Jack) F. Nystrom and Velma "Bunny" (Ellis) J. Nystrom.



Bill, affectionately known to many as "Buckadoo," grew up in Everett, Mass. His parents later moved to Sault Ste. Marie in 1981, settling at 910 Young Street. His unique nickname came from his buck teeth as a child, a name that would stick with him throughout his life.

Bill was a proud member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. He earned his high school diploma in 1993 and went on to receive numerous certificates in culinary arts. His love for cooking led him to begin his career as a chef alongside Fred Gardner at the Sault Tribe Bingo Hall. Throughout the years, Bill shared his talents in the kitchens of several local establishments, including Angio's, The Palace Saloon, and the deli at Kewadin Casinos, where he spent many years. He took great pride in his cooking and was especially known for making the best Italian subs. Cooking was more than a job to Bill; it was something he truly loved.

A true Bostonian at heart, Bill was a lifelong Boston Bruins fan who never forgot his Massachusetts roots. As a child, he enjoyed playing both Little League baseball and hockey. One of his proudest memories came from his hockey days, when he and his father, who coached his team, won the State Championship together.

Bill loved the band KISS and was a big fan of heavy metal music. He was also covered in tattoos from head to toe. To those meeting him for the first time, Bill might have seemed intimidating, but those who knew him knew that beneath his tough exterior, Buckadoo had a heart of gold. He will be deeply missed by his many friends, coworkers, and, especially, his family.

Bill is survived by his loved and cherished daughter, Felyssia McAllister of Fargo, N.D.; mother, Bunny, of Sault Ste. Marie; siblings, Kim Nystrom of Rudyard, Mich., John Scott Nystrom of Sault Ste. Marie and Adam Nystrom of Sault Ste. Marie; niece, Jocelyn (JJ) Nystrom; nephews, Randy (Mindy) McLeod and Christopher (Alli) McLeod and their children, all of Sault Ste. Marie; extended family, uncle and aunt, Ed and Sandy Reining of Sault Ste. Marie, uncle, Robert Ellis of Sault Ste. Marie; aunt, Brenda Gaynor of Nahant, Mass.; numerous cousins from Sault Ste. Marie and Boston, Mich.; former wife, Tammy Nolan-Garlinghouse and her children; good friends, Dan Woodhall and family, and Jessica Marble and family; and his cat, Mattson.

Bill was preceded in death by his father, Jack; aunt, Roberta Nystrom; uncle, Bob Gaynor; cousin, Colin Gaynor; grandparents, Harold and Elsie Ellis; nana, Patricia Nystrom; great-grandparents, William and Mary Murray and Joseph and Beaulah Burke; great-aunt and uncle, Gwen and Bud Campbell; and great-aunt, Joan Rutledge.

Per William's wishes, no service will be held.

Fly high Buckadoo! We love and miss you!

Family Life Funeral Homes – Sault Ste. Marie assisted the family with arrangements.

Condolences may be given to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

GERALDINE BOURNE



Geraldine Bourne, 72, of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., passed away peacefully surrounded by her family, on Oct. 23, 2026, at MyMichigan Medical Center in Sault Ste. Marie. She was born on July 2, 1954, in Sault Ste. Marie, to Alvin and Helen (Oga) Fish.

Geraldine was a funny, strong, caring, and wonderfully stubborn woman who held a special place in the hearts of those who knew and loved her. Above all, she was a wonderful wife, mom, grandma, and great-grandma, whose love for her family was an important part of who she was.

Some of Geraldine's happiest moments were spent surrounded by family, sharing laughter, celebrating holidays, crafting, and playing cards. She treasured family gatherings and the simple joy of being together. Her humor, strength, caring heart, and unmistakable stubbornness were all part of what made her uniquely herself. The memories made around the table, during the holidays, and in everyday moments will continue to bring comfort and smiles to those who loved her.

Geraldine leaves behind her beloved husband of 54 years, David Bourne Sr.; children, David Bourne Jr., John Bourne, Linda Smith, Roy Bourne, and Joshua Bourne; siblings, Sandra Hall, Betty Gravelle, Deanna Ryder, Nancy Cook, Richard Fish, Rodney Fish, Ethel LaBranche, Marjorie Jones, Tina Fish, and Sherri Brussveen; along with a vast and close-knit network of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends who meant the world to her.

Geraldine was a proud grandmother of 10 grandchildren and a cherished great-grandmother of seven. Her family was an important part of her life, and the love she shared across generations will remain a lasting part of her legacy.

Geraldine was preceded in death by her parents, Alvin and Helen; siblings, Virginia "Tookie" Brommerich, Helen "Datsy" Fish, Alfred "Wayne" Fish, Larry Fish, and William Fish; and granddaughters, Ashley Feuerborn and Baby A.

Family and friends were invited to honor and remember Geraldine on Nov. 7, at the Niigaanagiizhik Ceremonial Building in Sault Ste. Marie. The memorial gathering was followed immediately by Memorial Services. Family and friends were invited to remain at the building for lunch and fellowship.

A burial at Mission Hill Cemetery took place on Nov. 8, 2026, with immediate family.

Geraldine will be deeply missed, forever loved, and always remembered.

Family Life Funeral Homes – Sault Ste. Marie assisted the family with arrangements. Condolences may be given to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

DIANE LEE GRANT

Diane (Rickley) Grant peacefully passed away at Medilodge long term care facility, on Sept. 26, 2026. She was born on Jan. 9, 1965, in St. Ignace, Mich., to Deward and Mabel (Moses) Rickley.



Diane was a proud native and member of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians she enjoyed viewing the world, taking photos as she would go for a drive. Whether the changing of the season, or the many animals that would cross her way she never missed a picture to capture the moment. She appreciated the beauty of the world, and Michigan as a whole. Above all else she loved strongly, felt great compassion for her family and close friends. She will be dearly missed by anyone whose life she touched.

Diane is survived by her son, Eric Ward; daughter-in-law, Jazmine Ward; grandchildren, Evelyn Ward, Elijah Ward and Costa Kozanas; siblings, Judy and Al Watts, Russell and Veronica Rickley and Christine and Mike McPherson; many nieces, nephews and great nieces and nephews; her significant other of 27 years, Dennis Bazinaw; and stepsons, Zachary, Dennis and Kyle.

Diane was preceded in death by daughter, Megan; mother, Mabel; father, Deward Sr.; brothers, Deward II, Robert, Gerald, Roger, John and Ronald; and sister, Darlene.

Visitation was held on Oct.16, at St. Ignatius Loyola Catholic Church in St. Ignace, followed by a Memorial Mass.

Diane's final resting place will be Wequayoc Cemetery in St. Ignace Township alongside her daughter.

Family Life Funeral Homes – St. Ignace assisted the family with arrangements. Condolences may be given to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

See "Walking on," page 21

Chairman Lowe's report to the membership



Austin Lowe
Tribal Chairman

HEALTH AUTHORITY FIASCO

In my last unit report, I discussed my efforts to create an independent health authority to oversee our Health Division. My vision was straightforward: to replace the board of directors with qualified tribal professionals who understand the complexities of healthcare administration and appreciate the services the Health Division provides to our citizens.

Under my proposal, interested tribal members with relevant education and experience would apply through the Chair's Office. Qualified candidates would then be nominated by my office to the board of directors for confirmation. Several workshops were held, and I verbalized a commitment to including Health Division staff in this process.

Unfortunately, that process took a disappointing turn. As many of you know, my wife and I recently welcomed our daughter into the world. I was absent from the Nov. 3 board meeting because she was in labor. During my absence, Bridgett Sorenson introduced a resolution that abandoned the concept of independent oversight and instead placed the board of directors in control. You heard that right, the board selected itself to oversee the Health Division rather than qualified professionals.

To my knowledge, Bridgett Sorenson has no healthcare experience. More concerning, I am unaware of a single board member who has ever supervised employees in a health center. Yet these same individuals believe they are qualified to oversee an organization responsible for delivering lifesaving medical services to thousands of tribal citizens.

Winning a tribal election does not make someone a healthcare administrator. This raises an important question: Why is the board so determined to retain control over our Health Division rather than entrust this responsibility to qualified tribal professionals? Is it about improving healthcare, or is it about maintaining political power? Our Health Division deserves stability, professional leadership, and oversight from individuals who understand healthcare. Our citizens deserve nothing less.

A referendum petition is now circulating concerning this resolution. I strongly encourage tribal citizens to educate themselves about this issue and consider what form of oversight will best serve our healthcare system for generations to come. Your health could depend on it.

FIREARM DEER SEASON QUIET PERIOD CHANGE

The tribe's quiet period for firearm deer season has officially changed. The quiet period will now run from Nov. 10 through Nov. 14, rather than Nov. 1 through Nov. 14. This will provide our firearm deer hunters with an additional nine days of hunting to provide for their families. I wish all our tribal hunters a safe, enjoyable, and successful hunting season!

As a reminder, Units 1 and 4 are hosting elder venison drives this year. Tribal hunters who donate their harvested deer will have them processed free of charge, with the venison distributed to our elders.

SWEARING IN CHIEF JUDGE LAPORTE

On Oct. 14, I had the honor of administering the oath of office to Chief Judge LaPorte. It was a pleasure meeting her family and sharing this important occasion with them. Our tribal court plays an essential role in protecting the rights of our citizens and administering justice within our sovereign nation.

I have confidence in Judge LaPorte's ability to carry out the responsibilities of her position with professionalism, fairness, and integrity. I wish her nothing but success in her role within our judicial system.

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TRIBAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

On Nov. 19, I am scheduled to chair a virtual meeting of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Tribal Advisory Committee.

I currently serve as chair of this federal advisory committee, which provides tribal leaders an opportunity to engage directly with federal officials on policies and programs affecting Native American children and families.

The committee's work includes issues involving child welfare, family support services, economic security, and the federal government's responsibilities to tribal nations.

APPOINTED TO GOVERNOR-ELECT BENSON'S TRANSITION TEAM

On midterm election night, I received a phone call from Michigan gubernatorial candidate, Jocelyn Benson, inviting me to serve on her transition team if she won her election. She did, and I gladly accepted. I am honored to represent the Sault Tribe and Indian Country in this capacity. Governor-elect Benson has assembled a strong group of leaders from across Michigan to help prepare her administration to take office in January 2027.

I will serve on a 15-member Leadership Council alongside individuals representing an impressive range of professional backgrounds, including U.S. Senator Elissa Slotkin, former Congressman Dan Kildee, Detroit Mayor Mary Sheffield, Benton Harbor Mayor Marcus Muhammad, Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy, and former Michigan Solicitor General Fadwa Hammoud.

The council also includes leaders from major Michigan businesses, organized labor, education, healthcare, and philanthropy. These include executives and representatives from the United Auto Workers, Michigan Education Association, American Federation of Teachers, Michigan Laborers, and other prominent institutions.

The transition effort will help the incoming administration establish its priorities, prepare for governing, and identify opportunities to improve services for Michigan residents.

I am particularly proud that tribal representation has a seat at this table. Tribal governments are sovereign nations with unique relationships and responsibilities involving the state of Michigan. Having a tribal leader involved in these early discussions creates an opportunity to ensure that tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, consultation, and the needs of our communities are considered as the new administration takes shape.

I appreciate Governor-elect Benson's confidence in me and look forward to working with her administration to strengthen the relationship between the state of Michigan and our tribal nations.

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING: HOLDING INDIAN ENERGY ACCOUNTABLE

On Oct. 20, I called a special board meeting to address a serious concern involving Indian Energy and the protection of our tribe's financial interests.

Several years ago, the tribe invested millions of dollars in seed funding into Indian Energy. As part of a later contractual agreement, Indian Energy committed to making payments totaling over $6 million to our tribe. These are funds that rightfully belong to our citizens.

The agreement established two payments with specific deadlines. Unfortunately, Indian Energy is now approximately four months late on its second payment, which exceeds $ million. Let me be clear: This is not an insignificant amount of money. These are millions of dollars that could support housing, healthcare, elder services, and other priorities that directly benefit our membership.

Our general counsel has recommended suspending further business dealings with Indian Energy until its contractual obligations are satisfied. A resolution was also passed at the summer meeting in Lansing to file a civil suit against Indian Energy to collect our funds.

Unfortunately, certain board members have continued communicating directly with the company despite the advice of our legal professionals. I introduced a resolution that would prohibit board members from independently meeting with companies or organizations the tribe has authorized litigation against. The purpose was simple: to protect the tribe's legal interests, maintain a coordinated approach to litigation, and prevent individual elected officials from undermining the work of our attorneys.

Unfortunately, my resolution failed. As a result, there is no prohibition preventing individual board members from continuing these communications, even while Indian Energy remains delinquent on its contractual obligations.

One of our Seven Grandfather Teachings is humility. I believe humility is especially important in leadership. It requires recognizing that holding elected office does not make someone an expert in every field. Our tribe employs attorneys, financial professionals, and business executives for a reason. These individuals possess specialized education and experience that should inform major decisions involving our tribe's financial future.

Despite this, we continue to see elected officials disregard professional recommendations because they believe their personal judgment is superior to that of the experts we employ. I have repeatedly advocated for professionalizing our government's business operations. The Indian Energy situation is another example of why that reform is necessary.

Our board should be focused on collecting the millions of dollars owed to our citizens, not entertaining additional business relationships with companies that have failed to honor their existing commitments.

I encourage tribal citizens to ask their board representatives two straightforward questions:

1. Why would you disregard the recommendations of the tribe's legal and business professionals concerning Indian Energy?

2. When can our citizens expect to receive the more than $ million that Indian Energy is contractually obligated to pay?

Accountability should not be optional, particularly when millions of dollars belonging to our citizens are at stake. Our tribe deserves leadership that exercises sound judgment, respects professional expertise, and places the financial interests of our membership above all else. You should accept nothing less.

As always, it's an honor serving as your elected Chairman.

Advocacy is an important part of leadership



Tyler LaPlaunt
Director, Unit V

Aanii, Boozhoo,

November brings us into a season of reflection, gratitude, and a renewed purpose. As Anishinaabe people, we understand that strength is not measured by the challenges we face, but by how we choose to overcome them and what we build together along the way. Our ancestors taught us the importance of perseverance, humility, and looking beyond ourselves for the good of future generations. These teachings remind us that meaningful progress is not always easy, nor does it happen overnight. It requires courage to challenge what has always been, wisdom to learn from one another, and a shared commitment to creating something better for those who will follow in our footsteps. Our greatest strength has never been found in thinking alike, but in recognizing that our different experiences, perspectives, and gifts can move our community forward together.

This November, I encourage everyone to reflect on the legacy we are creating through our words, our actions, and the way we treat one another. We will not always agree, but disagreement should never overshadow the respect and responsibility we share as relatives. Let us be a community that chooses understanding over division, recognizes effort over criticism, and measures leadership and one another by the positive difference we make. True leadership is not about seeking recognition, but about having the courage to make difficult decisions, remain grounded in our values, and continue showing up for our people. The generations before us made the sacrifices they made so that we could stand where we are today, together. It is now our responsibility to ensure that the generations after us inherit a stronger, more united, and more hopeful community than the one we were given.

SECRETARIAL ELECTION UPDATE

The historic secretarial election on the proposed three-branch separation of powers is approaching its final stage. Ballots must be received by 3 p.m. EST on Thursday, Nov. 19, with vote tabulation beginning at 4 p.m. at DreamMakers Theater in Sault Ste. Marie. To pass, the proposed constitutional amendments must receive a majority of votes cast, meet the required 30% voter participation threshold, and receive approval from the Secretary of the Interior. Election results are expected to be posted following tabulation, with Nov. 24 serving as the deadline for formal challenges to the results. Regardless of the outcome, this election represents an important moment in our tribe's history, placing the

See "LaPlaunt," Page 21

LaPlaunt report continued

From "LaPlaunt," Page 20

future structure of our government directly in the hands of our citizenship.

If the amendments pass, we will move forward with the approved 18-month Constitution Implementation Plan, aligning our laws and codes with the new governmental structure while maintaining continuity of tribal services and operations. This transition will reqi re collaboration, accountability, and careful planning as we prepare for full implementation and the 2028 elections. If the amendments fail, our current Constitution and governmental structure will remain in place, and we must continue working together to identify meaningful opportunities to strengthen accountability, transparency, and representation within our existing government. Whatever the outcome, our responsibility as elected leaders does not change. We must respect the decision of our citizens, remain focused on the work ahead, and continue building a stronger government for future generations. The outcome may determine our path forward, but our commitment to serving our people must remain unwavering. Regardless, I look forward to continuing to serve our tribe in the path ahead.

ADVOCACY UPDATES

I am excited to announce some additional developments through my service on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC). In a significant decision, fellow tribal delegates voted to select Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., as the host location for the September 2027 CDC Tribal Advisory Committee in-person meeting! This is an important opportunity to bring tribal leaders and federal public health officials from across Indian Country directly to our community. Hosting this national gathering will provide an opportunity to showcase our tribe, strengthen relationships with federal partners, and highlight the priorities, accomplishments, and needs of our people. Bringing these conversations to our own community is a meaningful example of how national representation can create opportunities here at home.

Another important development was being selected by fellow delegates to serve as chair of the CDC Tribal Advisory Committee's Strategic Planning Committee. This leadership position provides an opportunity to help shape the committee's long-term direction, establish priorities, and strengthen accountability in how the CDC engages with tribal nations. Having a leadership role in these discussions is especially important as federal agencies consider policies, investments, and strategies that directly impact tribal public health. It ensures that tribal perspectives are not simply heard but have an opportunity to influence the direction of federal decision-making.

National advocacy will continue in Washington, D.C., with participation in the HHS Traditional Food Summit on Nov. 17-18, including service as a panel presenter throughout the summit, followed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Tribal Advisory Committee meeting on Nov. 19. These gatherings bring together tribal leaders, federal officials, and subject matter experts to address critical issues surrounding traditional foods, food sovereignty, cultural preservation, and the health of our communities. The NIH meeting also provides an important opportunity to advocate for tribal priorities in federal research, funding, and health initiatives. Our traditional knowledge and lived experiences deserve a meaningful place in shaping the policies and programs intended to serve our people.

Looking ahead, Dec. 1-2 will bring another important opportunity for national advocacy through the HHS Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee (STAC) meeting in Washington, D.C. Serving at these federal advisory tables provides direct opportunities to engage with senior federal leadership, advocate for tribal sovereignty, and influence conversations surrounding healthcare, federal funding, and the federal government's trust responsibilities. These appointments and leadership opportunities are not simply titles. They represent a responsibility to ensure our communities are represented where conseqe ntial



decisions are discussed. True representation means more than having a seat at the table. It means helping shape the agenda, strengthening our voice, and turning national relationships into meaningful opportunities for our people here at home.

Unit 5 Children's Christmas Parties

Marquette: The Sault Tribe Children's Christmas Party for Unit 5 and Unit 4 households in the greater Marquette area will be held on Saturday, Dec. 5, at 204 Cherry Creek Road in Harvey, Mich. A special sensory-friendly Quiet Christmas experience will take place from 1 to 2 p.m., featuring dinner, gifts, and traditional storytelling. The main celebration will follow from 2 to 4 p.m., featuring drumming, dinner, gifts, and cookie decorating. A quiet space will also be available throughout the main celebration for children and families who need it. The celebration is open to children from birth through age 18, with gifts available for children ages 9 and under and gift cards for youth ages 10-18. Families must register by Nov. 25 by calling or texting (906) 379-806 during regular business hours. We look forward to bringing our families together for an afternoon of celebration, culture, and holiday memories!

Munising: The Sault Tribe Children's Christmas Party in Munising will take place on Saturday, Dec. 12, from 12 to 2 p.m. at the Munising Tribal Health Center, located on M-28 in Munising, Mich. The celebration is open to children from birth through age 18, with gifts available for children ages 9 and under and gift cards for youth ages 10-18. Registration is required by Nov. 20. To register, please call or text (906) 450-5246 with each child's full name, age, and gender. For children ages 9 and under, families are also asked to provide three gift ideas. We encourage families to register before the deadline so every child can be included in this special holiday celebration.

MARQUETTE COUNTY WIN

I want to congratulate the Teal Lake Singers for being nominated for and awarded the Performing Artist award by the City of Marquette Arts and Culture. They recently accepted the award on Nov. 8. This comes with quite a bit of controversy amongst the group, but ultimately, it was a good thing. Yes, we are part of the arts and culture, but there was definitely a learning moment for the entire community to understand that we are not "performing" artists.

The fact of the matter is that we are here, we are being recognized, and we have a place at the table to right the wrongs and correct the incorrectness. When we sing, we pray, we practice our culture, we care for our community, and do so around a living being, the Grandfather Drum. So, congratulations to the Teal Lake Singers for being recognized for the amazing work you have done in our community and bringing us to the table to be able to educate our community on who we are and what we represent. Another amazing moment in strengthening our presence, our culture, and the communities understanding.

ELDER MEETINGS AND MEALS

The next Unit 5 Elder Meeting in Munising will be on Thursday, Dec. 3, at 11 a.m. at the Munising Tribal Health Center, followed by the luncheon at 12 p.m. The next Unit 5 Elder Meeting in Marqe tte will be on Thursday, Dec. 3 at 5 p.m. at the Marqe tte Tribal Community Center, followed by the dinner at 6 p.m. Marqe tte is open to both Unit 4 and 5 elders of Marqe tte County. Please feel free to join if you aren't already a part of these gatherings. I am also excited to announce the expanding meal services in both Munising and Marqe tte. Watch for the dates of the additional meals.

If you have any questions, comments, or would like to discuss something with me, please use my contact information below. You can also reach out to Unit 4/5 Liaison Mary Jenerou mjenerou@saulttribe.net or (906) 450-7011 or (906) 341-8469.

Chi Miigwech,

Tyler Migizii Migwan LaPlaunt
Unit 5 Director / Vice-Chairman
tlaplaunt@saulttribe.net, (906) 440-8294

Walking on continued

From "Walking on," page 19

GAIL MARIE NESBERG



Gail Marie Nesberg, 78, died of natural causes surrounded by loved ones on Oct. 29, 2026. She was born in Brown City, Mich., in 1948. For 49 years, Gail was happily married to Wallace James Nesberg, who walked on in 2018. Gail and Wally were longtime residents of Munising, where Gail retired from the Munising Public School District. In retirement, they moved to Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. When Wally walked on, Gail moved to Caro, Mich., to be closer to her family. After a stroke, she lived the last years of her life with daughter Nicole Nesberg in Port Angeles, Wash.

Gail was a loving wife, mother, sister, and friend. She was brief of words, but kind in actions. She enjoyed drinking coffee, playing cards, visiting with friends, and trying her luck at the casino. She had a green thumb grew a garden and kept plants. In the Upper Peninsula, she was an avid deer hunter and fisherman. In retirement, she volunteered for the Sault Tribe, earning an award for that service.

Gail was preceded in death by Ellen Shaw, Wally Nesberg, Dorothy, Cheryl (Nesberg) Davis, and is survived by her loving daughters Sharon (Nesberg, Hainstock) Dodge (Mike Dodge) and Nicole Nesberg (Jonathan Williams). She is also survived by six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Upon her wishes, she was cremated and no service will be held. Friends and family please remember, share, and release a story to help her along her path.

JUSTIN LAWRENCE DUFRESNE



Justin Lawrence DuFresne, also known by his spirit name, Black Wolf Man (Makade-Ma'iingan), 42, of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., unexpectedly passed away on Oct. 15, 2026. He was born on Sept. 4, 1984, in Sault Ste. Marie, to Fred DuFresne and Rita Goetz.

Justin was a loving father, husband, son, brother, friend, and boss. He enjoyed camping and spending time with family and friends. Justin always had a joke or story ready for any occasion. He was a hardworking contractor who built his business from the ground up. Justin took great pride in building things, and it showed in all of his projects, especially his family home. Of all the things Justin accomplished in life, his greatest accomplishment will always be the loving father and provider he was.

Justin and his wife, Nicole, spent 19 years together building a life and family in their community. He was actively involved in his Native American heritage and sat with the drum group, Ice Circle Singers, that became like a second family to him. Justin made an impression on everyone he met. His legacy will live on in the hearts and memories of his family, friends, and the countless lives he touched over the years.

Justin is survived by his wife, Nicole DuFresne; children, Shaylnn, Jordan, Mason, Memphis, and Trinity; mother, Rita Goetz; father and stepmother, Fred and Kenna DuFresne; siblings, Chantal Goetz, Chris Lalonde, Travis Trosclair, Mario Piette, and Aaron Wissell; very special uncle, Les Trumbley; and many beloved nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Visitation was held on Oct. 18, at the Niigaanagiizhik Ceremonial Building in Sault Ste. Marie, including a pipe ceremony. Visitation continued overnight until Oct. 19, followed by a traditional ceremony and feast.

Family Life Funeral Homes – Sault Ste. Marie assisted with arrangements. Condolences may be given to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

Reporting on October's work, Unit 3 housing



BRIDGETT SORENSON, DIRECTOR, UNIT III

On Oct. 5, several board members and staff attended the two-day MMIP training in Traverse City. This was training with tribes and state agencies on detecting trafficking and how to implement plans for reservations and off reservations.

At the October Unit 3 elder meeting, the group was discussing things they would like to do with their recreation funding. They plan to visit some local casinos for dinner. Anyone 60 years old and older can attend the weekly lunches Monday-Thursday at elder complex community room 11:30 a.m. The elder unit meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month after the luncheon.

On Oct. 13, we had our board meeting at the new community center in Escanaba. The building is beautiful and the staff served us a wonderful lunch. I would like to thank Darcy and Denise for their vision to build this with their ARPA funding, which had been a long-time goal of theirs. It was also nice to see their reservation was getting new sidewalks and roads too.

On Oct. 19, we had our unit meeting. It is the third Monday of the month at the McCann building from 7 to 8 p.m. We do this as a qe stion-and-answer format and we provide refreshments.

On Oct. 24, we hosted a community ghost feast at the McCann Building. We had lots of great food and shared stories of our ancestors. This was our second annual event, and we hope to continue to build on it within our community.

On Oct. 27, we had our board meeting in Munising. We had some members there that would like to see the tribe do a census and redistrict some or all the units. Many that belong to Unit 4 are actually closer to Unit 5. The board did table a resolution regarding redistricting at that meeting. The board has not had much time to discuss it and maybe that will happen if the proposed constitution passes.

On Oct. 28, I was able to attend a drum rebirthing in our community during Wellbriety. There were many great teachings provided and I look forward to this drum coming back into the community.

On Oct. 29, a couple of my co-workers and I went to the St. Ignace Head Start for trick or treating. It is always so nice to see all the little kids excited to dress up and receive treats. The staff do such a great job with the kids.

On Nov. 3, we had our board meeting back in the Sault. Most of the resolutions were approving liqor licenses for the casinos and Midjims. The hot topic was my resolution to establish a health authority. This is something the board has talked about but there have been different ideas of composition. I had originally asked Legal to write the resolution for it to be a board like the EDC and Gaming Authorities, which the board of directors sit on. After conversations, I thought it was best to maybe make it an authority that is a mix of the board, health professionals and the CFO. Our Internal Audit Committee has community professionals as well as board members on that as well.

The last Health CEO was very much siloed from the other divisions as well as the board. We had limited conversations with him as if he reported to the chair. My biggest concern is that I do not want our Health Division to be profits over people. With many of the 2022 boards wanting to model after Blue Stone, I feel that we have not improved our patient care nor recruitment or retention. As elected leaders, we need to be able to advocate for our members' concerns and what is best for them, not being operated to prioritize revenue.

If we meet our patients' needs and take care of our staff, then our revenue should reflect that.

The third-party revenue we receive for billing members with insurance helps us operate fitness centers, community centers, elder programs, etc. We just need to find a balance that works.

I am tired of hearing that the board wants control. There are some that do, and I doubt that will ever change, but the majority want to be advocates for those members we represent. If members have concerns with a corporate style board, will they feel comfortable contacting them? The perfect scenario is a few board members, medical professionals, and a finance person. Maybe the right number is a board of seven or nine. The board did pass the resolution to have Legal come back with a hybrid governance approach for final review by the board within 30 days.

Aaron has decided to circulate a referendum to try and call for a vote to override the board's decision on the health authority. Austin threatened to sue the board for passing the resolution. Tell me now who wants control?

Sue and I attended a work session with Housing on the 26 units that we received a grant to build at the Savard Property. We are proposing to build eight tiny homes, 16 2-bedroom units and two 3-bedroom units. The tiny homes will be for single or couples and will not be suitable for elders or ADA compliant. For years, the focus has been on family homes, but we have many single people or couples that could benefit from 2-bedroom units or tiny homes. The project will take a few years to complete if we build them ourselves.

The secretarial election ballot count will take place in the Sault on Thursday, Nov. 19. I know of at least one person who received two ballots at the same address. Unfortunately, many did not even receive their registration until after the timeframe or the day or two before it was due.

There will be a benefit dinner at the St. Ignace Moose Lodge on Sunday, Nov. 29, from 4 to 7 p.m. for tribal member and team member, Mariah Horn. She has been in the hospital for weeks dealing with some issues. She could use support from the community to help her and her children as she has not been able to work.

Reminder the Unit 1, 2 & 3 Elder Holiday Meal will take place in the Sault on Tuesday, Dec. 8. Please RSVP with the Elder Division at (906) 635-4971. There will be limited transportation available with sign-up sheets at the elder meal site.

Most people know I use my unit reports to call out my fellow elected officials. Recently, I was accused of attending a majority of the constitution workshops via Zoom. I did attend most of them via Zoom. It does not mean that I am not paying attention or do not raise concerns when I have them. There are other directors who attend via Zoom, but I guess they get a special pass. The chair has missed the last three meetings in a row, yes, the board excused him and I think I even made a motion a couple of times to do that.

If only those who spread lies could be fined every time they make false statements; the former chair probably could have paid back the land claims by now. I was accused of having a makeshift elder meeting. What is that? I attended my normal elder meeting that happens monthly. I understand that speaking out lately on Aaron being a conflict voting on who we appoint as judges as he has a case in the court system creates a target on my back. It shouldn't have needed to be said.

I could spend several hours a day on social media correcting all the misleading lies of some, but fortunately I have better things to do with my time. If you hear something that bothers you, feel free to contact me for the REAL story: bsorenson@saulttribe.net, bridgett91@yahoo.com or (906) 430-0536.

Spending time with the elders; upcoming celebrations



KIMBERLY LEE, DIRECTOR, UNIT II

Aanii Unit 2 Members,

I hope everyone is doing well as we head into the winter months and another holiday season. It's hard to believe how qi ckly this year has gone by! As always, I am grateful for the opportunities to spend time with our members, whether it's at community events, visiting with our elders, or simply talking about what matters to you.

I know a lot is going on within our tribe, and while we may not always agree on everything, I hope we can keep looking out for one another and remember what brings us together. As we move into the colder months, I encourage everyone to check in on family, friends, neighbors, and especially our elders.

I was blessed to chauffeur our Hessel elder group on a fall color tour through the beautiful Upper Peninsula, right at peak time. We made our way up to Copper Harbor and stopped at Lake of the Clouds on our return.

We saw beautiful colors and amazing scenery along the way. What I enjoyed most was spending time with our elders, sharing laughs, listening to stories and music, and just enjoying each other's company. And I can't forget to mention that they made sure I was well fed the whole trip!

I'm always thankful for the opportunity to spend time with our elders and make memories with them. It's little trips like these that mean so much. Chi miigwech to our elders for another great trip and for making sure their chauffeur was taken care of too!

Upcoming Unit 2 Youth Christmas Parties

These celebrations are for youth ages 0-17.

Newberry Area Youth Christmas Party

Sunday, Dec. 6, 1-3 p.m.

Pentland Township Hall, 15474 M-28, Newberry, MI

Newberry, Naubinway, Engadine, and Surrounding Unit 2 Areas. Please register your child ahead of time at kwindsor@saulttribe.net.

East End Unit 2 Youth Christmas Party

Saturday, Dec. 5, 1:304 p.m.

NEW LOCATION: Makoons Tribal Center, 1901 N 3 Mile Rd, Hessel, MI 49745

Hessel, Pickford, Cedarville, DeTour, Drummond Island, Rudyard, and Goetzville, and surrounding Unit communities. Please register your child ahead of time at kroe@saulttribe.net. Note: Children must attend the party to receive their gift.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone and celebrating the holiday season together!

Elder Christmas Celebration – Units 1, 2 & 3

Our elders are invited to come together for their annual Christmas celebration at the Kewadin DreamMakers Theater.

Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 12 p.m. (Noon)

Kewadin DreamMakers Theater

RSVP by Dec. 1

Call (906) 635-4971 to register.

I hope to see many of you there. These parties are always a wonderful opportunity to catch up, share some laughs, and enjoy time together.

By the time the next report comes out, our members will have decided how they want our government to function moving forward.

I know many different opinions, concerns, and emotions surround this decision, and not everyone will agree. But one thing I hope we can all agree on is that our government belongs to our people, and we have a responsibility to serve our entire membership.

First and foremost, our members deserve honesty, transpar

See "Kim Lee," Page 23



Serving my unit's people; Unit 3 venison drive



SUE ST.O NGE
DIRECTOR, UNIT III

Aaniin,

I hope everyone has enjoyed the mild fall weather and is preparing for winter. In recognition of Native American Heritage Month, I encourage everyone to take part in the cultural workshops, gatherings, and community events happening throughout our communities this November. These are opportunities not only to learn and celebrate, but also to strengthen our connections to our culture, one another, and to the generations who carry our traditions forward.

This past month, I joined other board members at the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) Conference in Traverse City and attended the United Tribes of Michigan meeting. Both gatherings offered valuable opportunities to share information, build relationships, and explore how we can learn from one another and work together on issues facing our communities. These connections help strengthen the programs and services we provide at home. They also amplify our collective voices and help us address challenges while building a better future for our people.

The board has also been busy addressing proposed policy changes at the state and federal levels. Many of us have provided comments and testimony on proposals that could negatively affect our communities and threaten our sovereignty. I, myself submitted comments on the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act (BAAJA), because as it is written, it will weaken protections for sacred places and cultural resources, and it undermines meaningful government-to-government consultation with tribal nations. I also provided testimony on proposed federal grant changes from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which could disrupt funding across Indian Country. The biggest concern is that changes to grant eligibility, funding requirements, administrative rules, or federal oversight could make it harder for tribal nations to receive and use funds that support our communities. The OMB provided a four-day window for feedback, far too little time for tribal nations to fully consider the changes, share their concerns, and engage in meaningful consultation. We are working to address this issue on a state level, but it deserves attention at the federal level as well.

Staying true to why I serve

I was honored to spend time with our Unit 3 elders this past month, joining them on several trips to Bay Mills Resort and Casino, Odawa Casino in Petoskey, and the Veterans Day Dinner at the Kewadin Casino in the Sault. I was grateful for the time together and enjoyed the laughter from the back of the van as elders shared their stories, experiences, and memories. These outings help our elders stay active, socially connected, and engaged with the community. Our elders deserve more opportunities to enjoy themselves, build relationships, and remain active members of our community. I encourage Unit 3 elders to take part in these activities. Our communities need your stories, experiences, and wisdom to help guide us as we work together to reclaim the teachings of our ancestors and ignite the eighth fire of unity and peace.

Not all my work has been as enjoyable. Public service inevitably brings disagreement. People have different perspectives, and not everyone will support every decision. Questions and criticism are part of accountability, and I welcome honest conversation. But disagreement should not be confused with dishonesty. I am here to serve my constituents, listen to their concerns, and represent their interests with integrity. My responsibility is not to follow the loudest voices or assume that one viewpoint speaks for everyone. It is to listen, consider different perspectives, and represent my constituents, including those whose voices may not always be the most visible. Through my experience in mediation, I have learned the value of listening, seeking common ground, and recognizing that people can disagree without acting in bad faith.

When I speak, I speak on behalf of the citizens of Unit 3 and their interests. I share and understand many of their concerns. At one time, I was an at-large member (14 years), as well as a team member (22 years). I am also a mother, an educator, an activist, and a citizen who cares deeply about the future of our people. I did not run for office to become someone different or forget where I came from. I ran because I believe our people deserve to be heard and included in the decisions that shape their lives. I am doing the work: having conversations, listening to concerns, asking questions, and advocating for the people I was elected to serve. I will not always get everything right, and I will not always make everyone happy. But I will continue to serve with honesty, integrity, transparency, and I will remain accountable to the community. I will not lose sight of why I stepped forward to serve or to whom I am here to represent.

The concerns and priorities of my community may sometimes differ from those of other units, but they still deserve to be heard on their own terms and given meaningful consideration. This is especially true regarding the secretarial election currently underway. I have fielded many questions and concerns from Unit 3 residents about the proposed constitution. I have a responsibility to bring forward their concerns about the proposed constitution, the process and to ensure those concerns are not overlooked. Unfortunately, many of those concerns have been minimized and disregarded and the people who have brought them forward vilified and often portrayed as the problem. This month alone, I have heard multiple concerns from citizens who say they did not receive a registration form or received one only after the deadline had passed and therefore, are ineligible to vote. Understandably, they are upset. An election can reflect the will of the people only when citizens have a fair opportunity to participate. I strongly oppose the idea that a desired outcome can justify a process that leaves some citizens unable to take part. All citizens deserve the opportunity to vote and help determine their own future.

Turning our attention to the work ahead

However, by the time this edition is published, we will already know the outcome of the secretarial election. Whatever the result, my focus is on moving forward constructively. There is important work to do, relationships to maintain, and a community that deserves our continued commitment. My hope is that we can move beyond division and focus on what unites us. We have pressing issues that require our attention. Our citizens deserve action, clear communication, and meaningful progress. We cannot continue putting their concerns on the back burner. We need to strengthen our communities and enterprises, support our team members, invest in our Health Division, revitalize our casinos, and develop programs and services that meet the needs of our people.

We may represent different units and hold different priorities, but we share a responsibility to build a better future for all our people. That work begins with listening to and respecting one another. It continues when we work together and follow through on our commitments. I remain committed to serving with honesty, integrity, care and to doing the work needed to produce positive results for our people. My commitment to our community and our nation has not changed.

Final Words

Although we have not formally announced it, we are coordinating a venison drive for elders and families in Unit 3. Someone has graciously agreed to process the deer, and we are looking for hunters who would like to contribute. If you are interested in donating, please contact us. Once we know how many contributions we can expect, we will work out the details for processing and distributing the meat to elders and families. May your hunts be successful!

I would also like to wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving. I hope you can enjoy the time with family and friends. If you have any concerns, questions, comments or ideas, please contact me directly at (906) 203-5654.

Respectfully,
Sue St. Onge

KIM LEE REPORT CONTINUED —

From "Kim Lee," Page 22

ency, accountability, and a government that makes decisions with their well being in mind. We cannot lose sight of what matters most. Caring for our elders, creating opportunities for our youth, supporting our families, protecting our sovereignty, and ensuring our services are there when our members need them. The decisions we make today will impact future generations, and I hope we always keep that responsibility close to our hearts.

I believe leadership is about more than holding a title or having a seat at the table. It's about being present, listening, being willing to have difficult conversations, and working together to find solutions. None of us have all the answers, and we are stronger when we recognize that everyone has something to contribute.

Whatever our future holds, my commitment to our membership remains the same. I will continue to listen, ask qe stions, advocate for our people, and do my best to represent the voices and concerns of those I was elected to serve. I know we won't always agree, but I hope we can keep finding common ground in our shared love for our tribe and our desire to see our people thrive.

At the end of the day, our greatest strength has always been our people. Our elders who came before us, our families who carry us through today, and our youth who will lead us tomorrow. Our future belongs to all of us, and it will take all of us working together to build the kind of future our people deserve.

As we head into the winter months, I know this time of year can be challenging for many, especially here in the Upper Peninsula. Between heating costs, groceries, transportation, and the everyday expenses of caring for a family, winter can add extra stress.

I encourage everyone to check in on one another, especially our elders, those living alone, and families who may be struggling. Sometimes something as simple as a phone call, helping shovel a walkway, or offering a ride can make a big difference.

I also want our members to know that if you're struggling or unsure where to turn for assistance, please reach out. No one should feel embarrassed about asking for help. We all go through difficult times, and that's why a community that looks out for one another matters. We talk a lot about the importance of taking care of our people, and winter is one of those times when we can put those words into action. Our strength has always been in our willingness to look out for one another. Let's make sure no one feels forgotten or left behind this winter.

As we approach the holidays and the end of another year, I want to say miigwech for our conversations, your qe stions, your concerns, and the time we get to spend together. Whether we agree or disagree, I appreciate hearing from you because every conversation helps me better understand what matters to you.

I hope this holiday season brings some peace, joy, and time with those you love. Please keep looking out for one another.

Chi miigwech for your time.

Kimberly Lee
Unit 2 Director
klee@saulttribe.net
(906) 379-8965



Barbeau: Winter is upon us – Unit 4 updates



LARRY BARBEAU, DIRECTOR, UNIT IV

Aaniin,

I hope everyone is having a wonderful November and staying safe and warm as we move further into the fall season. Winter is upon us, and as the temperatures continue to drop, I hope everyone is taking the time to prepare for the colder months ahead. Please remember to check in on family, friends, elders, and neighbors, especially as the weather changes and winter conditions begin to settle in.

November is also hunting season for many of our families and community members. For those heading out onto the land, I wish you a safe and successful hunting season. Please remember to practice firearm safety, be aware of changing weather conditions, and look out for one another. Hunting is an important tradition that connects many of us to our land, culture, and way of life, so I hope everyone has the opportunity to enjoy this time safely.

As we move through the month, please continue to keep an eye on Facebook and our community pages for upcoming events, community gatherings, Christmas parties, and other activities happening throughout our communities. These gatherings are a great way to stay connected, support one another, and bring our families together as we head into the winter season.

Don't Forget to Vote!

As November approaches, I want to remind everyone not to forget to vote. Your voice matters, and participating in elections is an important way to have a say in decisions that affect our communities and future. Please take a moment to make sure you are aware of upcoming election dates, voting locations, and registration requirements. If you have not already done so, please make sure you are prepared to cast your vote.

Wishing everyone a safe, healthy, and enjoyable November. Stay warm, stay safe, and take care of one another!

Upcoming meetings for the month (subject to change)

We have a few scheduled meetings coming up during the months of November and December, including board workshops and meetings, JKLFC meetings, Kewadin Gaming Authority meetings, Enterprise Authority meetings, Conservation meetings, and other tribal business.

Nov. 10, 2026 – Board workshop/JKLFC meeting starting at 9 a.m. in the Whitefish Point Room at Kewadin Casino, Sault Ste. Marie. No Conservation Committee meeting for the month of November.

Nov. 17, 2026 – Board workshop and Enterprise Authority meeting starting at 10 a.m. and the board meeting starting at 5 p.m. in Hessel.

Nov. 24, 2026 – Board workshop and KGA meeting starting at 10 a.m. in the Whitefish Point Room at Kewadin Casino, Sault Ste. Marie.

Dec. 1, 2026 – Board workshop, Enterprise Authority and KGA meeting starting at 10 a.m. and the board meeting start at 5 p.m. in the Whitefish Point Room at Kewadin Casino, Sault Ste. Marie.

Dec. 7, 2026 - Conservation Committee meeting starting at 5 p.m. in the Whitefish Point Room at Kewadin Casino, Sault Ste. Marie.

Unit 4 Elder Meetings

We encourage all tribal elders to attend the elder meetings and stay connected with one another and our community.

The next meeting in Manistique will be held Dec. 9, 2026, at 12 p.m. EST at the Manistique Tribal Center.

The next meeting in Escanaba will be held Dec. 9, 2026, at 5 p.m. EST at the Escanaba Community Center.

The Elder Advisory meetings will start up again in March 2027.

Unit 4 Christmas Parties

Manistique – Dec. 12 at the Manistique Tribal Community Health Center from 4 to 7 p.m.

Escanaba – Dec. 11 at the Escanaba Tribal Community Center from 3 to 7 p.m.

Contact Information

Phone: (906) 259-3040

Email: lbarbeau@saulttribe.net

Miigwech, Larry Barbeau

Unit 4 Representative

Honoring our elders, sharing gratitude, shaping our future



COLE GOUDREAU DIRECTOR, UNIT IV

Aaniin Unit 4 Members,

Holiday Season is Upon Us

As we enter the holiday season, I wanted to take the time to wish our Unit 4 members and their family a happy, healthy, and peaceful gathering. This time of year is a reminder of the importance of family, community, and looking out for one another. Our strength as a tribe comes from our connections to family, our elders, our traditions, and the next generations that follow us.

I want to give a big chi miigwech to all of our community members that volunteer at our centers to help both our elders and children coordinate and organize activities. Your dedication does not go unnoticed!

Honoring our elders who have walked on

Over this past month, Unit 4 has had to say goodbye to two elders who were a staple of the community and were also dedicated tribal leaders, Martha Miller and Robert Jensen. Each of them has a life lasting impact, whether through their wisdom, kindness, service, or simply the love they shared with those around them. As we enter the holidays, I want to extend my deepest condolences to the families and loved ones who are grieving. They may no longer be with us physically, but their contributions to our families and communities will never be forgotten.

Venison drive Unit 4

We are a proud to partner with Sault Tribe member Don St. John to process 10 donated deer and distribute fresh venison. Together we honor our elders and support our community. We have had a couple deer donated so far and look to get more. The donations to St. Johns started Oct. 10. Deer must be field dressed before drop off. Once processed, Director Larry Barbeau and myself will pick up the meat and distribute it to Unit 4 Elder lunches. The distribution date will be posted soon. The address and contact information is posted below. Miigwech to anyone that donates!

Separation of powers/three-branch government

I hope everyone who received a ballot was able to get it filled out and returned. The ballot count is Nov. 19. This is a monumental time for a tribe for our voices to be heard. I encourage every member to participate. Your voice matters, and your vote helps shape what we leave for our future generations.

Manistique elders Bingo

Bingo is still full steam ahead thanks to all the volunteer work done by the elders. I continue to hear great things and it's nice to see that cafeteria area filled with community members having fun! Keep up the great work!

Bingo is held every second and fourth Monday of the month. Doors open at 10:30 a.m. Cards start selling at noon, and play starts at 1 p.m.

Keeping Unit 4 Elder Subcommittee chair in our prayers

Our very own leader Brenda Kinnart had a medical emergency this past month. Please pray for healing, strength, and comfort during this time. She needs all the love and support from our community.

Unit 4 Manistique/Escanaba YEA Christmas Party

It's the most wonderful time of the year!

We are excited to invite our Unit 4 tribal youth to an evening filled with holiday cheer, fun activities, delicious food, gifts, and a special visit from Santa!

Escanaba Party

Friday, Dec. 11, 2026

3-7 p.m.

Escanaba Tribal Center

Registration is required by Monday, Nov. 30!

Text (906) 440-8356 to register.

Manistique Party

Saturday, Dec. 12, 2026

4-7 p.m.

Manistique Tribal Center

Registration is required by Monday, Nov. 30!

Text (906) 440-8359 to register.

Please include each child's name, age, and three gift ideas (likes/wants) within a $25 budget. Gift preferences are not guaranteed.

We look forward to bringing our families together, celebrating the holiday season, and making special Christmas memories for our youth!

Miigwech, and we hope to see you there!

Cultural Events Ahead

Our upcoming cultural events are below. Please contact Kelly Tovar with any questions.

Ribbon Skirt in Manistique, Nov. 14

Cultural Activity TBD in Manistique, Dec. 18

Cultural Activity TBD in Escanaba, Dec. 19

Unit 4 Elder Events

Manistique Elder Sub-Committee meeting, Nov. 11, 12-1 p.m.

Escanaba Elder Sub-Committee meeting, Nov. 18, 4-5 p.m. (Bingo, 2:30-3:30 p.m.)

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Unit 4 Liaison Mary Jenerou or me. We are here for you. Chi miigwech!

Cole Goudreau

cgoudreau@saulttribe.net, (906) 286-2966

Mary Jenerou (Unit 4 Liaison): mjenerou@saulttribe.net, (906) 450-7011

Kelly Tovar (Cultural Coordinator): ktovar@saulttribe.net, (906) 399-2308

Don St. John (Venison Drive), 906-450-5171

Drop off Address: 7609 W. Frankovich Rd., Manistique, MI 49854

Unit IV events, updates; watch for Christmas parties on Facebook



LANA CAUSLEY-SMITH, DIRECTOR, UNIT II

This past month we had the opportunity to attend all three of our Elder Committee meetings. It was good to see all of you before the weather starts changing and we get snow up to our "knee-caps." :) It was great to hear all the events you had planned and are planning for the extra funds that you all had to host events within your groups. Hopefully, next year, we can plan the funds within the budget at the start of 2027 so you have the entire year to discuss and plan for. I'm glad you are all having this time together and can enjoy yourselves.

The update remains the same for the Makoons wellness center and that is the fabs are slated to be completed by the middle of this month and then the hours of operations will increase and members and non-members can utilize the facility for wellness in our community. A long time coming to get to the finish line, but I'm very excited that we are almost there.

We have not been workshopping any items for the new codes if the new constitution passes, but if it does I'm hoping that those will be set up immediately to get legislation and build upon moving forward with fair and concrete codes to protect the people, our financials, and create real transparency that was promised but never instilled. I truly think we have moved years back in the last four years.

There have been many items coming to the board that need review and I have placed some of these on my "board concerns" for follow up for discussion; some are qi te concerning as it seems we are always the last to know when certain "media releases" or inter decisions are made. I want you to know that my historical knowledge within the tribe is not embraced by all and actually it is not even wanted by some. That's alright, though, I will continue to speak up and represent anyway and how I have for all my time. Many things have changed and I can be a team player for sure, but things that are concerning me are weighing heavy and I'm not the only one that feels this way. I will work with and together with people that want to address these issues and do better for our tribe as a whole.

We held our annual ghost feast in Hessel this past weekend with a sacred, spiritual fire and drums to have ceremony for all our loved ones who have passed. This is a tradition we have been doing since I can remember. It was usually done in family homes and the food was out all evening and night for our past ones to come in and feast — we had a lot of good medicine at ours this year and I would like to thank Dorthy, Midge and Joy for helping us cook; the drum, Mukwa Giizhik, that brought in the songs; and my uncle Jeff

See "Causley-Smith," pg. 25

The seven grandfather teachings guide our lives



Ashley Gravelle
Director, Unit 1

Aanii Tribal Members,

I hope everyone is doing well as we move into November and prepare for the colder months ahead. With the holidays approaching, I want to take a moment to share some thoughts, encourage everyone to stay involved in our community, and reflect on something I believe is important for all of us.

RESPECT, COMMUNITY, AND THE SEVEN GRANDFATHER TEACHINGS

Over the past several weeks, I have spent some time reflecting on how we communicate with one another, particularly when it comes to disagreements involving our tribal government and community issues.

I understand that emotions can run high, especially when decisions are being made that affect our people, our families, and future generations. We all have different experiences, beliefs, and opinions, and I believe those differences are important.

However, I have also noticed how quickly conversations on Facebook and other social media platforms can turn into name-calling, personal attacks, and hurtful comments.

It has made me think about the values we were taught and the Seven Grandfather Teachings that are such an important part of our Anishinaabe culture.

WISDOM, LOVE, RESPECT, BRAVERY, HONESTY, HUMILITY, AND TRUTH

These teachings are more than words. They are guidance for how we live, how we treat one another, and how we carry ourselves within our communities.

When I think about these teachings, I think about how they apply to the conversations we have today.

Wisdom reminds us to think before we speak and consider the impact our words may have on others.

Love reminds us to show compassion, even toward those we may disagree with.

Respect teaches us that every person deserves dignity, regardless of their opinions or beliefs.

Bravery reminds us that it takes courage to speak up, but it also takes courage to stand against bullying and mistreatment.

Honesty encourages us to speak truthfully and avoid spreading rumors or information we do not know to be true.

Humility reminds us that none of us knows everything and that we can learn from one another.

Truth reminds us to be genuine in our words and actions and to live by the values we speak about.

I certainly do not claim to practice these teachings perfectly every day. Like everyone else, I am still learning and growing. But I do believe they offer us guidance, especially during difficult conversations.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE IMPACT OF OUR WORDS

One thing that concerns me is how easily social media can become a place where people feel comfortable saying things they might never say to someone face to face.

There is nothing wrong with disagreeing with an elected official, questioning a decision, or expressing frustration with our tribal government. In fact, I believe those conversations are necessary for accountability and transparency.

But there is a difference between discussing an issue and personally attacking someone.

Social media bullying can take many forms. It can be repeated name-calling, mocking someone, spreading rumors, encouraging others to join in on personal attacks, or sharing personal information to embarrass or intimidate someone.

I have experienced some of these concerns myself, including having information about my personal residence shared publicly during a political disagreement. While I understand that serving in an elected position comes with public scrutiny, I also believe we should be mindful of personal boundaries and safety.

More importantly, I worry about what this type of behavior does to our community as a whole. Think about the tribal member who has a question but decides not to ask because they have watched someone else get ridiculed in the comments. Think about an elder who wants to share their knowledge or opinion but does not want to become the subject of disrespectful remarks. Or, a young tribal member who is interested in becoming involved in tribal government but sees the hostility online and decides it is better to stay silent. Some members may even fear retaliation, damaged relationships, or public embarrassment simply for expressing an opinion.

When people become afraid to use their voices, we lose valuable perspectives, ideas, and opportunities to grow as a tribe.

I often think about the members we never hear from. Those who quietly read the conversations, have concerns of their own, but choose not to participate because of how others are treated. Their voices matter just as much as anyone else's.

Our children and younger generations are also watching how we handle disagreements. They learn from what we do, not just what we tell them. We cannot teach our children the importance of respect, love, humility, and truth while forgetting those same teachings when we disagree with someone online.

I also believe that those of us serving in leadership positions have a responsibility to set an example. That includes listening to criticism, acknowledging when we make mistakes, and treating others with dignity even when conversations are difficult.

I am not asking anyone to stop speaking up or questioning their elected officials. I encourage our membership to remain involved, ask difficult questions, and hold us accountable.

I have encouraged members to read the proposed Constitution, ask questions, and make their own informed decisions. I have never told anyone how they should vote, nor do I believe that decision belongs to anyone other than the individual member.

We can disagree without disrespecting one another. We can hold people accountable without humiliating them. And we can have strong opinions without forgetting our teachings.

At the end of the day, there is a person behind every comment. Someone's parent, child, grandparent, sibling, friend, or neighbor. We are a community, and many of us are connected through family, friendships, and generations of shared history. I hope we can all make a greater effort to remember that.

STAYING CONNECTED WITH MEMBERSHIP

One of the most important parts of serving on the board of directors is hearing directly from our tribal members. I continue to encourage membership to reach out with questions, concerns, and ideas. Whether those concerns involve housing, services, our Constitution, or the everyday challenges facing our families, your voices matter.

I believe it is important that members feel comfortable asking questions and that we, as elected officials, work toward providing clear answers. I especially want to encourage those who may not feel comfortable speaking publicly to reach out. You do not have to participate in a Facebook discussion or stand in front of a room full of people for your concerns to be important.

There will be times when I do not have an immediate answer, but I am committed to asking questions, learning the processes, and helping members find the appropriate information.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

As we head into November and the holiday season, I encourage everyone to take advantage of the many community gatherings, programs, and activities available throughout our tribal communities. These events provide opportunities for us to connect with one another, support our elders, spend time with our families, and strengthen the relationships that make our communities special.

I especially encourage members to watch for upcoming holiday gatherings, community meals, elder activities, youth programs, and opportunities to volunteer or help families in need.

The holidays can be a wonderful time, but they can also be difficult for families experiencing financial hardship, grief, or loneliness. A small act of kindness, checking on an elder, helping a neighbor, or simply showing up for a community event can make a meaningful difference.

Please keep an eye on official tribal announcements and community calendars for confirmed dates, times, and locations.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

As I continue learning and growing in my position on the board of directors, one thing remains important to me, remembering who I am here to serve.

I did not run for this position believing I would have all the answers. I ran because I care deeply about our people, our communities, and the future of our tribe. I believe our government should be one where members feel heard, questions are welcomed, and decisions are made with transparency and accountability.

As we move forward, I hope we can carry the Seven Grandfather Teachings with us, not only during ceremonies or when speaking about our culture, but in our everyday interactions, our conversations, and the way we treat one another. Our ancestors passed these teachings down for a reason. They are values worth protecting and passing along to the next seven generations. We do not have to agree on everything to treat one another with dignity and respect.

As always, thank you to those who have reached out, shared concerns, offered encouragement, or simply taken the time to have a conversation with me. I appreciate hearing from you.

Please continue to reach out. Your voice matters, and I am here to listen.

Chi Miigwech,
Ashley Gravelle

Gravelle voices U.S. Census concerns



Kim Gravelle,
Director, Unit I

Aaniin,

In October I had the opportunity to attend several task force meetings and breakout sessions at the National Conference of American Indians.

One of the sessions was the Native Count: Census Breakout Session (2030 Census Tribal Voices Matter). During this session we found the U.S. Census Bureau is proposing to remove demographic qe stions such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and tribal affiliation from the short form decennial census qe stionnaire.

Approximately half the funding our tribe receives is derived from the most recent decennial American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) population data. This would not only affect our tribe but tribes across the nation. All tribal nations in attendance for this presentation were in support of **opposing** these changes.

If this comes to fruition, federal funding for housing, IHS, education, mental health and food commodity programs, and more, could be lost if these proposed changes move forward. By not including the race and ethnicity (AI/AN) qe stions this proposal runs the risk of making AI/AN invisible on the census count. The powers that be have been trying to erase Native Americans for centuries.

As always, keep the men and women in the armed forces in your prayers for a safe return to their families. I would also like to thank our team members for their hard work and continued dedication.

Please feel free to call me at (906) 259-3742 or email at kkgravelle@saulttribe.net. Please leave a message and I will return you call.

Miigwech,
Kim Gravelle

Causley-Smith report continued

From "Causley-Smith," pg. 24

for striking and taking care of the fire all day. Thank you to all our community and others who brought food and stuck around to help us clean up, it truly brought good medicine to a lot of us and I thank all of you for that.

In closing I want to remind you that we have been hosting many cultural events in our unit. Charlie Treelevin is our cultural coordinator and he has been working hard to get your input and plan for events in different areas.

You can look at our official Language and Cultural page on Facebook or call the department directly to get information for dates and locations. You can also see on our YEA page the upcoming children's Christmas party dates and locations.

As always, please reach out to me (906) 322-3818 or lcausley@saulttribe.net if you would like to talk or meet directly with me. Baamaapii and please take care of each other.

Lana Causley-Smith



Hessel Elder Dorthy Currie cooks.

Payment advocating good policy over politics



Aaron Payment
Director, Unit I

After graduating in 1988 with a bachelor's, I discussed with my Gram (Maria Boulley Parr) my idea to go to grad school. I had a passion for American Indian Policy but wasn't sure what I wanted to study. When I explained there was degree called a Master's in Public Administration, I said to her that I did not like politics as I felt most of politics was corrupt. She replied, "Well, fix it then." Besides launching a career push for good governance, I most recently came across an article written about my Gram's grandfather, Ed Boulley, who apparently initiated a family tradition of public service.

TRADITION OF ADVOCACY

My Gram's father was Norman Boulley and his father was Ed Boulley (born 1858) who everyone on Sugar Island called "Wooley Boulley" because he had full beard. Great great grandpa Boulley was married to great great grandma Catherine (Joseph) and had a bunch of Boulleys including my great grandpa Norman, great great aunties Stella, Lavina, Mamie, and Louise, and uncles Abe, Marcel, and Steve (Puncher). Lavina married Chief Isaac Marshall who first sought federal recognition in 1938. It was her nephew Ed Pine (son of Mamie Boulley) and the Sugar Island Band veterans who reignited the process and who were successful over 20 years later in 1972.

While the Boulley family was a salt of the Earth farming and lumberjack family who lived on Sugar Island, civic duty and service was apparently in our Boulley blood as evidence in Grandpa Ed serving for over 32 years on the Sugar Island Board of Education. I did our tribe's first needs assessment in 1992 on whether or not to open our own tribal school and eventually served as president of our Joseph K. Lumsden Public School Academy. In addition to earning a master's in Public Administration, I went on to earn two additional master's and a doctorate in Education. I realize now that both the public and education service originated from my Boulley blood. My strong ethical core comes from my Little Traverse Nokomis Biidaasagay kwe Amik (Grand Toto aka Angeline Beaver Williams) who handed down, "you know the difference between right and wrong so always do what is right."

PARTICIPATING MATTERS

I know some bristle at politics; I too often have a cynical view of partisan politics. However, I still 100% support Social Security (New Deal program) and Head Start, Upward Bound, Food Stamps and other social welfare programs ushered in 1965's Great Society programs that recognize stark disparities exist among the haves and have nots. Much of this is based on corporate greed, Big Pharma, Big Oil, dark money in campaigns, and a callous "otherizing" of those who need our help. Rather than more fully funding the Affordable Care Act, SNAP Food Benefits, Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance and other social safety net programs, last year the Trump Administration and Congressional Republicans stripped bare this social safety net with the Big Beautiful Bill.

I know a good number of our tribal members and many of my supporters voted for Donald Trump in 2024 with promises to lowering gas prices, groceries prices, getting out of unnecessary wars, and the escalating cost of living. As these metrics got worse, voters chose to go in a different direction and overwhelmingly brought about what is called a political paradigm shift. I realize some may not like the outcome, but I believe it will help restore the treaty and trust obligation and our funding.

NOT Đ " or ₹ " but ₣ "

As an elected tribal leaders, we strive do our job in a non-partisan way to benefit our people. Both times Trump took office, he proposed 35% cuts across the board to Law Enforcement, Indian Child Welfare, Indian Education, Indian Health Service and much more. Fortunately, over the last two years, we have had our friend Tom Cole (Chickasaw, R-OK) serving as Chair of the House Appropriations Committee. Congressman Cole consistently puts the treaty and trust obligation ahead of Trump politics. On the other side of the political aisle, we have had Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo, D-NM), and Sharice Davids (HoChunk, D-KS). Both women made history in 2018 when elected as the first two Native women to Congress.

ANISHNABE KW ELECTED US SENATOR

This year, we added our first Native woman senator in my friend Peggy Flanagan (White Earth Band of Chippewa, D-MN) and are awaiting the results of Alaska's US Senate race to see if Mary Peltola (Yup'ik, D-AK) to see if we again make history by electing two Native women US senators.

DEB HOLLAND NM GOVERNOR

Another major milestone is my good friend Deb Haaland was just elected as the first Native woman governor. As you recall, Deb and I became friends at her first DC fundraiser when my cousin Angeline Boulley and I attended and then I sponsored a meet and greet at the next NCAI meeting. She went on to become the first presidential cabinet member as Secretary of the Interior and ushered in the Indian Mission and Boarding School Reports I and II. I'm confident she will serve to build capacity among other governors to understand the treaty and trust obligation.

BANNER YEAR!

In addition to Peggy and Deb's victories, Tom Cole was returned to office. Oklahoma also elected their first American Indian Lt. Governor in TW Shannon who is also Chickasaw. Claire Valdez (Yselta Pueblo, D) from New York and another Anishinabe in Sean McCann (Citizen Potawatomi, D) was elected as our first Native American to Congress in Michigan's 4th. As you know, I am an alumnus of the Michigan Political Leadership Program. I have trained each MPLP fellows class of 24 for 32 years including three new members of Congress in Sean McCann, Christina Hines (D, 10th), and Jeremy Moss (D, 11th). In addition to Governor Benson who is also an MPLP Alumnus who I trained on tribal government, we just elected four members of the Michigan Senate and seven to the Michigan House. Hard work pays off. Congrats Chairman Lowes for being appointed to her transition team. We have work to do to educate new legislators on Indian 101 but we are up to the task.

Tribal members, please take care and love yourself, your family and our tribe!

Chi Miigwech ~Aaron
Phone: (906) 440-8946
aapayment@saulttribe.net



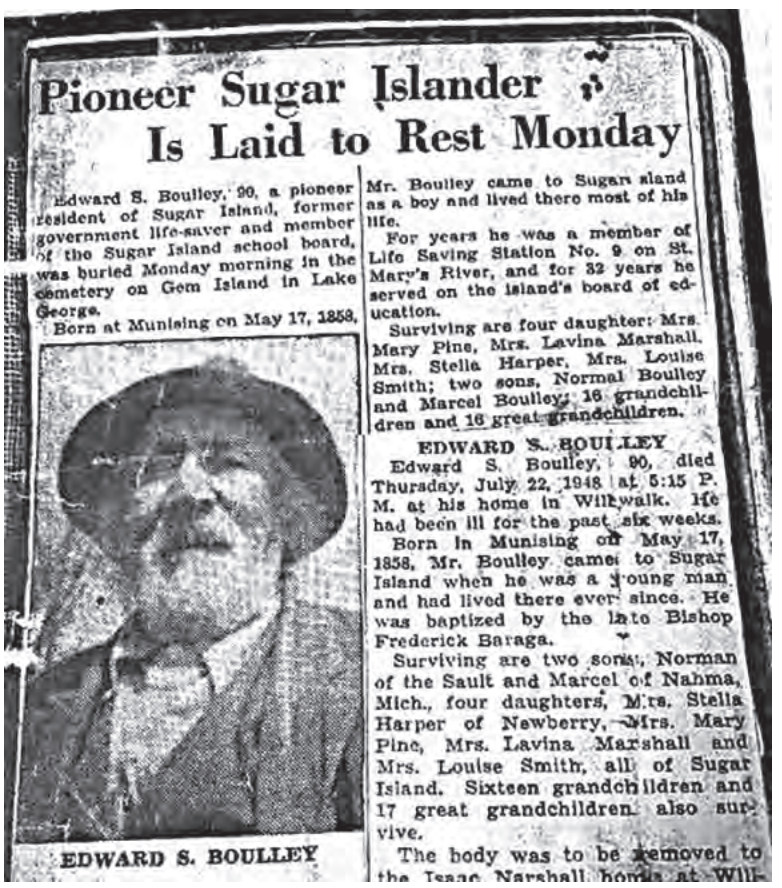
With the late Senator Carl Levin and Jocelyn Benson (then Wayne State Law Chair); with Lt Gov. Gilcrest who is now Secretary of State.



With Benson and Chair Lowes at Feeding America.







Pioneer Sugar Islander Is Laid to Rest Monday

Edward S. Boulley, 90, a pioneer resident of Sugar Island, former government life-saver and member of the Sugar Island school board, was buried Monday morning in the cemetery on Gem Island in Lake George.

Born at Munising on May 17, 1858, Mr. Boulley came to Sugar Island as a boy and lived there most of his life.

For years he was a member of Life Saving Station No. 9 on St. Mary's River, and for 32 years he served on the island's board of education.

Surviving are four daughter: Mrs. Mary Pine, Mrs. Lavina Marshall, Mrs. Stella Harper, Mrs. Louise Smith; two sons, Normal Boulley and Marcel Boulley; 16 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren.

EDWARD S. BOULLEY

Edward S. Boulley, 90, died Thursday, July 22, 1948 at 5:15 P. M. at his home in Wilkwalk. He had been ill for the past six weeks.

Born in Munising on May 17, 1858, Mr. Boulley came to Sugar Island when he was a young man and had lived there ever since. He was baptized by the late Bishop Frederick Baraga.

Surviving are two sons, Norman of the Sault and Marcel of Nahma, Mich., four daughters, Mrs. Stella Harper of Newberry, Mrs. Mary Pine, Mrs. Lavina Marshall and Mrs. Louise Smith, all of Sugar Island. Sixteen grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren also survive.

The body was to be removed to the Isaac Marshall home at Wil-

EDWARD S. BOULLEY



With Senator Cortez-Masto (3rd from left, D-NV), NCAI President Mark Macarro and Secretary Christine Modlin.

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