



Wîn Awenen NISITOTUNG

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

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Ziisbaakdoke Giizis
SUGAR-MAKING MOON

Key U.S. House committee approves tribe's land claim

WASHINGTON — Legislation that would settle a more than century-old illegal land taking from Sault Tribe ancestors has passed a key U.S. House committee, but the bill faces formidable opposition from a large Las Vegas gambling company, the City of Detroit and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe.

H.R. 4115 was approved by the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources by a vote of 22-5 on Feb. 13. The bill now moves to another House committee, chaired by a Congressman from Detroit

who opposes the land claim settlement. Other opponents, including MGM and the Saginaw Tribe, have launched a massive campaign against the measure, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on lobbyists, campaign donations, radio and newspaper ads in Michigan and Washington, and direct mail pieces to tens of thousands of Michigan voters.

Supporters of H.R. 4115 include Democratic Governor Jennifer Granholm, former Republican Michigan Governor John Engler and

powerful Democratic and Republican members of Congress. U.S. Rep. Bart Stupak (D-Menominee) is working hard for passage of the measure, which is sponsored by U.S. Rep. John Dingell (D-Dearborn). U.S. Rep. Dale Kildee (D-Flint), co-chairman of the Congressional Native American Caucus, also supports the legislation.

H.R. 4115 passed the committee after many people testified for and against the measure. Testifying in favor was Sault Tribe Chairperson Aaron Payment. A delegation of Sault Tribe board members attended the hearing to lend their sup-

port.

Opponents who testified included Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick.

ABOUT H.R. 4115

In the mid-1800s, lands along the St. Marys River were taken illegally from ancestors of the Sault Tribe and Bay Mills Indian Community. The illegal taking occurred in an area known today as Charlotte Beach. H.R. 4115 would resolve the Sault Tribe's claim. The legislation would create new trust lands and allow the tribe to open a new Indian casino outside Detroit, generating 3,000 good jobs for Michigan and revenues for

Sault Tribe member programs and services.

TRIBE TO CAMPAIGN FOR THE BILL

The Sault Tribe will soon launch a public campaign to try to win passage of H.R. 4115. Though the tribe will never be able to come close to matching the lobbying resources of MGM and the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe, the campaign will ask Sault Tribe members and others to contact members of Congress to urge them to pass the legislation.

Sault Tribe members are urged to watch their mail and e-mail for more about the campaign to pass H.R. 4115.

But Charlotte Beach settlement still facing stiff opposition

News Briefs ...

People v Paquin court case dismissed

SAULT STE. MARIE — A misdemeanor assault charge against Sault Tribe Unit III Representative Fred Paquin was dismissed without prejudice by Judge Mike McDonald in accordance with a motion by the prosecuting attorney on the afternoon of Feb. 25.

The charge was filed against Paquin four months ago in mid-October 2007 alleging he had committed the offense against a female employee of Sault Tribe.

Both sides in the case agreed to terms in a deferred prosecution agreement stipulating Paquin shall not engage in any assaultive or threatening behavior, seek assessment and counseling for issues related to the complaint and comply with any recommendations by the assessor.

The agreement also notes the charge will not be re-issued if Paquin has no criminal difficulty for six months after the dismissal and otherwise complies with all terms.

Constitution update: Back to committee

During the Feb. 19 board meeting, a resolution to conduct a Secretarial Election on the new Constitution was tabled to committee. Several other constitutional concerns were also discussed during the meeting. A review of the Constitution with expenses funded out of special appropriations was tabled. A motion to have an economic impact study/analysis completed on the new draft Constitution was referred back to the Constitution Committee.

New regulations for inland fishing and hunting effective Feb. 26

SAULT STE. MARIE — This is a notice to all Sault Tribe members that effective Feb. 26, 2008, Sault Tribe members are required to follow the new regulations for inland fishing and hunting as outlined in Chapter 21 of the Tribal Code.

Chapter 21 of the Tribal Code can be viewed online at the Sault Tribe's official Web site www.saulttribe.com under the "government documents" menu and "tribal code" sub-menu. Chapter 21 of the Tribal Code is also available at the Bayliss Public Library at 541 Library Drive in Sault Ste. Marie or you may obtain a copy by calling the Sault Tribe administration office at (906) 635-6050.

Gas Discount Notice: Cedar Pantry

CEDARVILLE — The Cedar Pantry, at 159 W. M-134 in Cedarville, has been added to the list of stations that can offer tax exempt purchases on gasoline to Sault Tribe members. Gas and diesel, tax discounts are available for tribal members at certain retail stores located in the agreement area. Fuel tax discounts are realized at the time of purchase. For more information visit our new tax agreement section online at www.saulttribe.com.

Sault Tribe celebrates new Escanaba center



Photo by Rick Smith

OPEN HOUSE — (L to R) Unit IV Representative Tom Miller, Randy Scott of building owners Wilcox Engineering LLC, Chairperson Aaron Payment, former Unit IV Representative Martha Miller and Unit IV Representative Denise Chase cut the ribbons for the new tribal community center at an open house in Escanaba. The new center will share the second floor spaces of the Willow Creek Professional Building with Sault Tribe Community Health. The open house was celebrated on Feb. 22.

Traditional walleye harvest a reserved right

Q: I recently received an application that says I may be able to obtain a permit to spear walleye during the spring spawning season. If this is the case, won't there be some backlash over this from the non-tribal citizens of the state?

A: There may very well be some people out there who don't understand our tribe's history or just plain refuse to accept the fact that we have never given up the right to subsistence fish the inland waters of the ceded territory. Of course, this activity may cause some animosity from those who consider the natural resources the property of the state or by some affluent lake



MEMBERSHIP Q&A

associations, but I don't foresee things getting out of hand like the "Walleye Wars" that the Wisconsin Anishinnabe had to go through. Also, there will probably be citizens of our own tribe who staunchly disagree

with this activity and while they are entitled to their own opinion, they should be willing to stand up and defend those in our tribe who need to put food on the table by exercising the rights that our ancestors preserved for us.

It has to be understood that the key word is "subsistence" fishing. A few synonyms for this word are "survival," "continuation" and "life." So, when our ancestors felt the cold of winter giving way to the warmth of spring they knew where the fish would gather when the ice had left the lakes and it was there that they went to harvest some much needed food through the resourceful and efficient practice of spear-

ing.

Today, we Anishinaabe get most of our food at the grocery store but what if there comes a time when our people just cannot afford to do this to the extent we do now? Looking ahead to that possibility, we should be thankful that our treaty rights provide us with a way to supplement our dietary needs while also protecting and securing our sovereignty.

Finally, and of utmost importance, this activity will be regulated by our tribe so that it can not become a free-for-all leading to any harmful effect on the walleye populations. The lake systems and a few rivers where we will be able to spear will have a yearly limit to the num-

ber of fish that can be harvested along with a permit requirement that will only be valid for one day with a limit of 10 fish per permit. Ironically, these regulations will help to preserve one of our traditional beliefs of taking only what we need and leaving the rest.

In closing, I must make a plea to those of us who may encounter a hateful, intolerant person while exercising their treaty rights. Please, don't engage in any kind of altercation or argument as this is probably just what they are looking for. Simply keep quite and continue to pursue the right of subsistence that your ancestors preserved for you.

Respectfully, Clarence Hudak

Tune in to Sault Tribe radio shows

"Sault Tribe This Week Saturday Morning Show" with host George Snider airs every Saturday morning at 10 a.m. Snider's faithful listeners from both sides of the border are tuned in to WSOO 1230 AM. Snider interviews guests from the Sault Tribe organization or membership who want to promote upcoming events, new programming or services.

To contact Snider, call Sault Tribe Communications Department at 632-9368, extension 26098 or by emailing him at geosnider@yahoo.com.

"Sault Tribe This Week Radio Show" with host Tom Ewing airs on Tuesday on



WSOO-AM at 9:35 a.m., WNBY-FM at 12:37 a.m. and 5:38 p.m., and WIDG-AM at 9:04 a.m.; Wednesday: WNBY-FM at 12:37 p.m. and 5:38 p.m.; Thursday: WSUE-FM at 10:25 a.m. and 4:25 p.m.

Archives of the Sault Tribe This Week broadcast can be found at www.saulttribe.com.

Medicare scam reported

LANSING — The Michigan Medicare/Medicaid assistance program is issuing a warning to Michigan residents with Medicare health coverage.

Medicare beneficiaries in the Detroit, Grand Rapids and Mansitee areas have received calls from someone stating that they were from Medicare. The caller requested private information stating that they would be issuing new Medicare cards.

The information requested was the beneficiaries' Medicare identification number and their bank account numbers.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is not reissuing Medicare cards, nor would they contact beneficiaries

at home to ask them for their bank account information or their Medicare number.

Any Medicare beneficiary receiving one of these calls should gather as much information as possible about the caller, such as name, telephone number where the person can be reached (call-back number), time of the call, or anything else that government officials could use to track and prosecute the scam artists.

Beneficiaries are urged to call the MMAP toll-free number at (800) 803-7174, (800)-MEDICARE or (800)-633-4227, or (800) HHS-TIPS or (800)-447-8477, to report any such telephone calls.

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 not an independent newspaper. It is funded by

Corrections to January and February issues ...

In our January 2008 issue, *Win Awenen Nisitotung* staff provided a headline that Diane J. Humetawa was the first Native American U.S. Attorney. While she is the first Native American U.S. Attorney for Arizona, nationally she was preceded as the first Native American U.S. Attorney in

America by Phil Hogen, South Dakota's U.S. Attorney from 1981 to 1991.

Thanks to tribal member Stephanie R. Strong for the correction.

On Page 1 of the February 2008 issue, AP Photo /J. Scott Applewhite, who received photo credit of Chair Aaron

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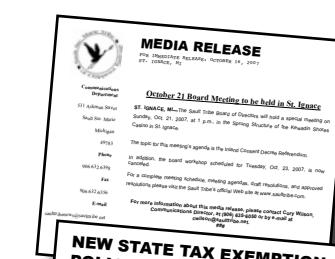
Important updates on issues that affect you.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES!

Latest updates to your membership benefits

NEWSPAPER!

Immediate notification when the latest issue becomes available online.



the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and is published 13 times a year by the Communications Department. Its mission is to inform tribal members and non members about the activities of the tribal government, membership programs and services and cultural, social and spiritual activities of Sault Tribe members.

Our name: *Win Awenen Nisitotung*, in our native language, means, "One who well or fully understands," pronounced "Win Oh-wi-nin Nis-toh-tuhng"

Visit us online: This issue can be viewed online at www.saulttribe.com beginning on its publishing date.

Subscriptions: The regular rate is \$13 per year, \$10 for senior citizens, \$25 to Canada, and \$35 to 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 Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

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Local News

Board wants code ensuring employees due process

SAULT STE. MARIE

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors, at its Feb. 26 meeting, directed the Legal and Human Resources departments to develop a "full administrative code providing for tribal employees rights to be protected with full due process and Tribal Court appeal rights."

The resolution, proposed by tribal Chairperson Aaron Payment, specifies that Tribal Court would hear "appeals of adverse employment actions and the awarding of meaningful civil declaratory, injunction and remedial measures."

The final vote was 7-3 in favor with two absent.

Labor disputes within Sault Tribe and Kewadin Casino employment are appealed to a

body made up partially of elected officials. The current method has been scrutinized in the past. "As an individual who believes in core justice and democratic principles of due process and that everyone should have a right to their job (not fearing for retribution through politics), the only way to ensure real due process is to have the right to challenge employment disputes through the courts," remarked Payment. "Over the years, I have seen elected officials put family members back to work, while turning a deaf ear to those who have spoken out against them politically. This is not fair. This should not be allowable."

Payment added that with organized labor threatening to encroach upon tribal employ-

ment across Indian Country, the act to guarantee employees a right to their jobs would "create a work environment where employees have confidence that they have real due process while protecting our sovereignty."

"It is time we satisfy

employees through sound wages, real due process, a right to work and to share in our successes," said Payment. "My proposal to continue the team member incentive this year and to include all employees for the first time was based on this premise."

Over the course of the next 90 days, meetings will be held with tribal and casino employees to gauge their input of what tribal labor law should look like. Meetings will be announced when they have been scheduled.

Deb Pine honored

Bud Biron presents Deb Pine with a certificate of appreciation in recognition of her valuable contributions to Sault Tribe powwows for many years at a Powwow Committee meeting on Feb. 6 as other members of the committee look on.



Photo by Rick Smith

Remember to register!

Unregistered tribal members must register before March 28 to vote in the 2008 election

On behalf of the Sault Tribe Board of Directors, the Sault Tribe Election Committee would like to remind all tribal members to register to vote.

Two years ago, voter registration was made permanent as well as open for all tribal members. But, members must register first. Prior to this, members located within the election units were automatically registered. This is no longer true.

While registration is permanent, it is no longer automatic for any member. Any tribal member who has turned or will turn 18 by the date of the general election needs to register to vote before March 28. Also, any member who has moved in or out of an election unit needs to register. As stated in the Election Code under Section 10.109(6), "A registered voter must re-register if he or she has changed residency into or out of an election unit. Address changes or corrections to voter registration may be made by contacting the tribal enrollment office and changing or correcting the member's residency in the tribe's enrollment records."

What does this mean to you? It means that you only have to register once and your registration is permanent. If you registered within the last two years, you are still considered registered. However, if you moved

in or out of an election unit, you would be required to re-register. And, if you have turned 18 years old, you need to register to vote.

Below you will find a voter registration card and a unit map. Please read through it and complete all blank areas along with a signature. You may also obtain a voter registration card by one of four ways: you can contact Tribal Enrollment or the board executive assistant's office at (800) 793-0660 or (906) 635-6050; you can download a registration card from the Sault Tribe's official Web site, www.saulttribe.com; or, if you are a newly enrolled member, you will receive a registration card in the mail.

If you are not sure if you are registered, require additional information or have any other questions, please contact Michael McKerchie, Election Committee chairman, or Joanne Carr, executive assistant to the board of directors, at (800) 793-0660 or (906) 635-6050.

Remember, the election process only works when you participate. If you are not registered, you will not receive a ballot. So, please register to vote and be a part of one of the most powerful tools our sovereignty gives us — the right to select our own government and those who lead it.

SPRING 2008 TURKEY HUNTING INFORMATION UPDATE / APPLICATION

To receive a turkey permit, you must have a current enrollment card.

Effective Feb. 26, 2008, Sault Tribe members are required to follow new regulations in Chapter 21 of the Tribal Code, which can be viewed online at the Sault Tribe's official Web site www.saulttribe.com under the "government documents" menu and "tribal code" sub-menu. Chapter 21 of the Tribal Code is also available at the Bayliss Public Library, located at 541 Library Drive in Sault Ste. Marie, or you can obtain a copy by calling the Sault Tribe Administration Office at (906) 635-6050.

There is no deadline date for the submission of applications, however please note that Spring Turkey Season runs from April 15 – June 15.

APPLICANT: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ DATE OF BIRTH: _____ SEX: _____

DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER: _____

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

Please designate the county you are requesting:

County: _____

The above information needs to be returned to the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Law Enforcement Department at 2175 Shunk Road, Post Office Box 925, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783 or by fax (906) 632-0691.

SAULT STE. MARIE TRIBE OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS VOTER REGISTRATION FORM

All unregistered Members must register to vote. Resident Members must register within their unit of residency, and Non-resident Members must choose one of the five election units in order to vote in Tribal Elections. They should consider selecting the unit in which they have the closest ties and indicate below the unit they select. Registration is permanent unless you move in/out of an election unit. This form must be received by the Tribal Election Committee ninety (90) days prior to a general election in order for the registration to be valid. The address to which my ballot should be sent is:

Please Print

NAME _____ MAILING ADDRESS _____

STREET (PHYSICAL) ADDRESS _____

CITY & STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

To verify identity, please include last four numbers of your social security:
I understand that this voter registration card must be completed and received at least 90 days prior to a general election to be eligible to vote in Tribal Elections.

I register to vote in Unit _____ SIGNATURE _____ (All Members must sign)
(Non-resident Members Only)

This registration card copy may be clipped, completed and returned to the Election Committee at 531 Ashmun, Sault Ste. Marie MI 49783.

Vote PAYMENT

TRIBAL CHAIRPERSON

Representing All Members Everywhere

"I am honored and humbled to serve you as your Chairperson. I would deeply appreciate your continued support and vote. We are on the verge of accomplishing great things. Together we can finish what we started."

Dear Tribal Members across Units 1 - 5 and At Large:

Three and a half years ago, Members honored me with the privilege of serving as your Tribal Chairperson. This was the first time in 17 years the Members elected a new Chairperson. Given the extreme negative campaign we all had to endure, the best part of being elected was sharing this victory with my mother - Katherine "Gotnee" Payment who has since passed-on. The picture to the right is the happiest I have ever seen my mother. Thank you for this precious memory. I am dedicating my re-election efforts to my mother. I promise to run a clean, issue driven campaign.



ee picnic and the Chair's office move, email investigations and so on. Shouldn't we instead devote our time to solving real and pressing issues facing our Tribe? I am running for re-election to re-align our commitment to our original purpose as a Tribe, to help one another. The photo above is of my Uncle Chester Cook's shack and me as a little boy (far right) when Community Action built a new porch on our home on Shunk Road. I still live in my boyhood home.

It is time to send a mandate through your vote that the people don't support Tribal Board Gridlock characterized by petty infighting. I promise the Membership to re-double my efforts to work with any Board members who wish to accomplish our collective agenda - to meet the needs of our neediest, to expand services to those who live in the service area, to reach out to the 64% of our members who live outside of the service area by creating "At Large" voting districts and expansion of services, to establish revenue generating opportunities like gaming in Romulus and non-gaming economic ventures, to create an even more effective and responsive Tribal government, to institute real reforms through enactment of a new constitution created by the people with a "separation of powers" to end corruption, and to once again make you proud of your Membership in our great Nation. The photo above right is when I testified in the U.S. Congress to settle a 150 year old land dispute at Charlotte Beach which would pave the way for a Romulus casino. The photo to the left is with Congressman Bart Stupak of the 1st Congressional district of Michigan going over the Congressional U.S. bill to allow gaming at the Kewadin Shores Casino in St. Ignace, MI.



The photos to the left and below show Members in the Detroit area and Northern Michigan mobilizing to make sure our government represents our "At Large" Members. I do my best every day to try to represent everyone's interests. When I wake each morning, I pray for direction from the Creator on how best to serve the people. I work hard every day often up to 60 hours a week or more. As Chairperson/ CEO, I am the lead administrator for our Tribe. I ensure we spend within the budgets the Tribal Board appropriates. In 2004, through operational efficiencies and shoring-up our resources, I managed to return back \$4.5 million to the budget to help cover our Tribal debt. In 2005, we returned \$2.5 million and in 2006 - \$1.5 million. In 2007, we had a tough year with revenue shortfalls coupled with additional debt incurred through Greektown re-financing to complete our permanent facility, and

had to use internal reserve accounts to balance the budget. Prior to 2004, our budget never balanced. I have balanced the budget every year I have served as your Chairperson while expanding services and increasing Tribal Members in employment from 50% to over 64% today with Members in management increasing from 60% to 89%!

We see the light at the end of the tunnel. The sky is not falling but we do have a delicate balancing act ahead that requires stability in our government. When our permanent Greektown casino is completed and when the debt is retired, we project to earn \$60 Million a year from Greektown which is twice the amount all of our existing casinos generate. I realize it has taken great patience and sacrifice over the years, but we are now closer than we have ever been to achieving our goal of self-sufficiency. If Romulus becomes a reality, we will net an additional \$80 Million per year.

We need to move forward together to finish what we started. We need to enact Tribal Labor Law to protect our sovereignty while affording employees a right to work. On February 26th, after 13 months, the Tribal Board finally approved my plan to start this process. We need to line up behind and support the enactment of a new Tribal Constitution drafted "by the people for the people." We need to establish

a Membership driven long term strategic plan that benefits all members regardless of where you live. Over a year ago, I first introduced legislation to establish a revenue share plan to be voted on by the people via referendum. If passed this would guarantee that all Members benefit from our membership and that no future Board or Chairperson can undue what "We the people" put in place.

I love serving the people of our Tribe and representing our interests at all levels. The photo to the left shows me representing our Tribe while addressing the National Congress of American Indians. To the right is a photo with my long time friend U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow. Representing our Tribe at the national level is a very big part of the responsibility of Chairperson - for which my education and experience have well prepared me.



WELL QUALIFIED TO SERVE

Listed below is my education and my experiences that qualify me to serve as your Chairperson /CEO. My most important qualification, however, is that I remember where I came from. In fact, I live in the house I grew up in and I recognize that we have a long way to go to ensure that we all benefit from our Membership regardless of where we live.

MY ENTIRE CAREER HAS BEEN DEVOTED TO HELPING OTHERS AND SERVING INDIAN PEOPLE:

- Chair, Tribal Chairperson/ CEO
- Vice-Chairperson (appointed 2 terms)
- Deputy Executive Director, Sault Tribe
- University Instructor, Political Science/Native Studies - Lake Superior State University
- Native American Coordinator, Michigan State
- Federal-State Policy Administrator, Sault Tribe
- Consultant-Inter Tribal Council of MI
- Coordinator - Anishinabe Future Leaders
- LSSU Upward Bound, Tutor Counselor, Floor Manager, Dorm Supervisor, Native Counselor, Academic Coordinator- 1/3 of students are Native American
- Student Janitor - Sault Tribe (first job at 16)



EDUCATION:

- Completed 21 credits of Political Science/ Public Administration doctorate degree before being elected to Tribal Board in 1996
- MPA (Masters in Public Administration) 1991 - Northern Michigan University
- BS (Bachelors of Science) in Sociology 1988 - Northern Michigan University
- GED (General Education Diploma) 1982 - Highschool drop out at 15 but never gave up

HONORED TO SERVE AS:

- Chair, Tribal Gaming Commission
- Chair, Kewadin Gaming Authority
- Vice-Chair, United Tribes of Michigan
- Vice-Chair, Chippewa - Luce Mackinac Community Action Board
- International Joint Commission
- Greektown Management Board
- Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority Board
- Inter-Tribal Council Board
- Habitat for Humanity Board
- Rosemary Gaskin Scholarship Trustee
- Michigan Political Leadership Advisory Board
- Boys and Girls Club

PREVIOUSLY SERVED AS:

- Joseph K. Lumsden School Board President
- JKL Discipline Committee
- JKL School Improvement Committee
- JKL Cultural Curriculum Committee
- Joint Employment Procurement Board
- War Memorial Community Care Clinic - Board
- Rosemary Gaskin Chippewa Dialysis - Board
- Tribal Cultural Committee Member
- Tribal Higher Education Committee
- Sault Tribe Housing Commissioner
- Native American Retention Task Force
- Native Americans of Marquette Board
- Lansing Indian Center - Board Member



Please cast your vote to allow me to finish what we started. I would be honored and humbled to be re-elected as your Tribal Chairperson. Every single vote counts.

Chi Megwitch, Niigii,

If you would like to join the Payment Re-Election team, please call or Email:

Call: 1-906-632-2446

Email: aaronpayment@aaronpayment.com

Web site : aaronpayment.com

*** PAID FOR BY TRIBAL MEMBERS EVERYWHERE TO RE-ELECT AARON PAYMENT, TRIBAL CHAIRPERSON ***

Local News

Bush eliminates RIF funding serving 130 children in Sault, St. Ignace

FROM SAULT TRIBE HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START SAULT STE. MARIE

— “The future of Reading Is Fundamental’s (RIF) book distribution program serving 130 children in Sault Ste. Marie and St. Ignace depends on Congress reinstating funding for the non-profit organization,” said Mary Green, family services coordinator, Sault Tribe Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

President Bush’s proposed budget for fiscal year 2009 eliminates approximately \$25 million in federal funding for RIF’s book distribution program, which has been funded by Congress and six administrations without interruption since 1975.

“The impact of the president’s budget would be devastating to the 4.6 million children and their families who receive free books and reading encouragement from RIF programs at nearly 20,000 locations throughout the U.S.,” said Carol H. Rasco, president and CEO of Reading Is Fundamental.

In Sault Ste. Marie and St. Ignace, RIF’s Family of

Readers program distributes more than 390 books a year to children at three locations comprised of two Head Start centers and a Head Start classroom at the Sault Tribe Child Care Center.

“When children have access to books and are motivated to read for fun they tend to perform better in school,” said Green. “It would be tragic if our RIF Family of Readers program could not continue here in Sault Ste. Marie and St. Ignace. We are urging the people of the communities to write and call their congressional representatives as soon as possible and ask that RIF’s funding be reinstated.”

RIF has established an online information center for supporters to send letters to Congress. Visit www.rif.org for more information.

Reading Is Fundamental, Inc., founded in 1966, motivates children to read by working with them, their parents and community members to make reading a fun and beneficial part of everyday life. RIF’s highest priority is reaching underserved

children from birth to age 8. Through community volunteers in every state and U.S. territory,

RIF provides 4.6 million children with 15 million new, free books and literacy resources

each year. For more information and reading resources, visit RIF’s website at www.rif.org.



Photo by Jennifer Dale-Burton

Tribal Chairperson Aaron Payment reads the Mishomis Book by Eddie Benton-Benai to the kids at Early Head Start class during RIP Reading Days.

President’s FY2009 budget affects Indian Country

BY BRENDA AUSTIN

Although there are several increases in funding for some American Indian programming in President George Bush’s proposed FY 2009 \$3.1 trillion budget, there are also significant cuts in some programs while other program funding remains flat.

Top priority areas for Indian Country, according to the National Congress of American Indians, are education, public safety, economic development and health care. Unfortunately, the president’s budget does not reflect these priorities.

Sault Tribe Health Division Director Bonnie Culfa, said, “If Bush’s proposed 2009 budget is passed as it is written it will affect many of our tribal members who live down state and who receive

health care services at the Indian urban health clinic in Detroit. If they decide to drive to the U. P. in greater numbers than they already do, it will impact the health services and appointments at our clinics, particularly the Lambert center in St. Ignace since it is the closest clinic in our seven-county service area.

“President Bush’s rationale to close the urban health clinics is that Indians residing in urban cities like Detroit have access to health care and do not need an Indian urban clinic. Also, that the urban centers did not score high enough on outcome measures known as the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), however what is not reported is the lack of insured Native Americans and those not eligible for

Medicaid who will have no access, their only option is to drive 300 miles north. I am hoping in 2008 that Congress once again restores the funding to the Indian urban health clinics. To me, it is the promise of the federal government to provide Native Americans health care and closing those centers and putting up barriers that cause hardship of travel to great distances to access care is not fulfilling the promise.

“Second issue is the cutting of funding to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSA) for substance abuse services. Once again this area of health care has a great-unmet need already and to reduce funding levels does not make sense. It will filter down as reductions in grant

funding and other dollars that are earmarked for substance abuse services, particularly for inpatient detox. Any cut in funding levels will greatly impact our delivery of direct services to our tribal members.”

Bush’s budget plan will also hurt tribally-controlled colleges by cutting discretionary support by \$23 million, after they received a \$30 million boost for 2008 and 2009 from the Budget Reconciliation Act. The FY2009 Education Department budget proposal calls for cutting back budgeted appropriations for programs serving minority-serving institutions because they received funding in last fall’s budget reconciliation bill.

See “Bush budget falls flat,” page 5



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Chi Mukwa hosts family celebration

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Local organizations and businesses will participate by providing parents with information and activities for their children. Skating with free skate rental can be enjoyed from 5:30 to 6:20 p.m. A jumping castle will be set up on the second floor, door prizes from local businesses, and submarine sandwiches, fruit and refreshments will be offered in the hospitality room.

The event is sponsored by Anishnabek Community and Family Services (ACFS), Chippewa County Council for Youth and Families, EUP Intermediate School District, Sault Tribe Head Start, Youth Education and Activities, Nutrition, Housing and Kewadin Casino.

March is parenting awareness month. ACFS will have table displays with parenting information at the Sault Tribe Health Center, the Sault Tribe Child Care Center and at the Chi Mukwa.

Family events will take place March 15 in St. Ignace at Little Bear from 1 to 4 p.m. and in Manistique from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Manistique Tribal Community Center. Call 1 (800) 726-0093 for more details.

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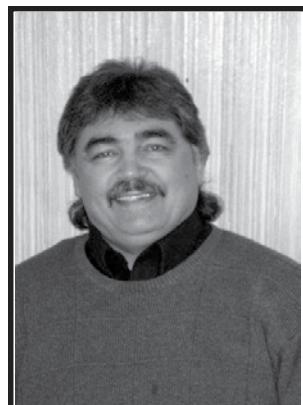
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KEWADIN CASINOS DONATES STUFFED ANIMALS TO TRIBE'S CHILD CARE PROGRAMS —

Pictured are Ms. Pam McKerchie's pre-school class along with Ms. Beverly MacLaren, teacher mentor and Head Start class with the donation of five overstuffed animals, raccoon, moose, beaver, squirrel, and bear, that are currently used in Kewadin's marketing campaign. A similar donation was made to the Sault Tribe Early Head Start program. Nicole Ince and Susan Jones are the head start aides pictured with the class.



Many Promises To The Membership Have Been Broken

In order to move our Tribe forward and to solve its serious and complicated problems in the difficult world in which we live, we must first establish simple respect for one another and our heritage; we must respect our mutual goals and objectives and work together to accomplish them; and we must rekindle the fire of brotherhood and sisterhood that unites us all and allow it to grow into a roaring blaze of progress.

Elect Unit One Board of Directors

DARWIN (JOE) MCCOY



I am not a man of many words. I will tell you that I am proud to be native; I am proud of my Indian heritage; I am proud of my Tribe; I am proud of my family, and I am proud at having grown up on Sugar Island.

I am, however, very concerned about the current conditions in our Tribe. Our financial difficulties are as bad as they've ever been. We have been consistently overspending our resources. We have repeatedly failed to take full advantage of our resources and opportunities. Many promises to the membership have been broken. Much bitterness and discord permeates our relationships. Our historic position of leadership among Michigan's Tribes has fallen by the wayside.

It is for these reasons that I've decided to run for the Tribal board. I believe that I can make a difference towards correcting these problems and reestablishing good government. It is my intention to focus my energy and talents to reestablish a well-run, fiscally solvent government that has the means for providing the services and benefits to our membership that we all deserve.

As your board member, I will stand for: Establishing benevolence in our government and respect for our members; establishing fiscal responsibility and solvency; establishing transparency in our government activities and actions; improving Tribal income and enterprise; protecting employee rights; providing responsible health care; developing a system for revenue sharing; providing responsible elder dividends; and, providing educational opportunities for our youth.

To accomplish these goals, it will not be easy. It will take hard work, dedication and compromise. Most importantly, the Tribe is going to have to put its divisiveness away, and come together as a mutual front - consensus - or we will fail.

If you need any proof in what I am saying, just look around you at what's happened in the Tribe during the past four years. What have we improved over that time? Have our business operations grown? Is your life better than it was? How much ground have we lost over those years? How much of our reputation has been damaged? Can it be repaired? How many assets have we sold? How many new jobs have been created? How many members and employees have suffered political retribution? How deep does demoralization and discontent run?

The Big Question, and perhaps the only Question, is: When do we stand as one and say ENOUGH!

As your board representative, I intend to work towards implementing change to our government to accomplish our goals. I intend to help restructure government to make it more accountable; I intend to establish fiscal responsibility, transparency and accountability; I intend to develop a code of ethics to improve the manner in which we operate our government and how we treat one another; I intend to mend broken fences; to establish open and honest communications; to establish an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust for one another, for our culture, for our language, for our heritage, for our wisdom; and of course, to provide a legacy for our seven generations.

In order to move our Tribe forward and solve its serious and complicated problems in the difficult world in which we live, we must first establish simple respect for one another and our heritage; we must respect our mutual goals and objectives and work together to accomplish them; and we must rekindle the fire of brotherhood and sisterhood that unites us all and allow it to grow into a roaring blaze of progress.

I respectfully ask you to work with me to accomplish my vision for the Tribe's future by supporting me with your vote as your representative of the board of directors.

Thank You
Darwin (Joe) McCoy

djoemccoy@yahoo.com

PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT DARWIN JOE. MCCOY

Judges sworn in at tribal court ceremony



Photo by Brenda Austin

NEW JUDGES — Michael Winnick, Charles J. Palmer, Elizabeth Eggert and Wm. Dyke Justin (L-R), pictured above with Tribal Chairperson Aaron Payment (middle).

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BY BRENDA AUSTIN

At a swearing in ceremony held at tribal court on Feb. 27, four judges donned their black robes and raised their right hands to take individual oaths of office as administered to them by Chairperson Aaron Payment.

At the ceremony, local Attorney Michael Bryce Winnick was sworn in as a new appellate judge, and local Attorney Wm. Dyke Justin was sworn in as a new reserve appellate judge, Attorney Elizabeth Kronk who resides in Montana, will be sworn in as a new appellate judge at a later date.

Charles J. Palmer took his oath as associate judge. Palmer, whose previous contract was for part time services, has been reappointed to a full time position.

Elizabeth A. Eggert was sworn in for the position of assistant associate judge in tribal court.

There are currently three board appointed lay judges with the Appellate Honorable Donelda Harper, Honorable Jeannine Gable, and Honorable Cheryl Nolan who attended the ceremony in addition to court staff, family members, Sault Ste. Marie tribal members, and members of the local community. Tribal court has a five panel appellate court which consists of two attorney's and three lay judges.

“None of these positions are employee positions,” said Court Administrator/Magistrate Kellie LaVictor. “They are all independent contractor positions. We now have a full time judge for the first time in several years. Any backlogs that the court has been experiencing should take care of themselves now. The appellate court has been at a stand still since November 2007 when Judge Karl Webber resigned and Judge Richard Mastaw did not seek reappointment,” she said.

According to LaVictor, 11 candidates were interviewed for the positions, which encompassed a two-day period. “The selection committee was made up of representatives from ACFS, four board members, the chairperson, and representatives from the Tribe’s Legal Department,” said Lavictor.

LaVictor and Clerk of the Court, Vicki Gardner participated in the interviews with the selection committee but did not exercise a voting role.

“The panel deliberated and made their selections which they took to the tribal board in the form of resolutions on Tuesday, Feb. 19 where the board approved their contracts,” she said.

The tribal appellate court reviews all types of matters filed properly through the trial court as well as election appeals to the election code.



Photo by Brenda Austin

Wm. Dyke Justin is sworn in as new reserve appellate judge.



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Communities invited to take in World Water Day

BY BRENDA AUSTIN

After making a commitment to protect our local waterways by signing the 2004 Tribal and

First Nations Water Accord, four tribes — the Bay Mills Indian Community, Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians,

Garden River First Nations and Batchewana First Nations — formed a committee, the Anishinaabek Joint Commission (AJC) to assist each other with projects relating to promoting awareness of the health of the St. Marys River and its ecosystems.

In an effort to involve the local communities in this process, a local gathering to observe World Water Day will be held March 22 at the Sault Tribe cultural building across from the powwow grounds near the Chi Mukwa Recreation Center. "Libby Bobiwash of Garden River and I are working together to get this set up in honor of World Water Day; we want to share knowledge about how we should be taking care of our water in the Great Lakes," said Cathy Abramson, a Sault Tribe board member who also serves on the AJC.

"More and more people are stepping up and wanting to learn about our responsibility to the water," Abramson said. "We

have invited tribal elders from the four tribes to attend and share their knowledge about water ceremonies. We would like to bring those ceremonies back and start treating the water the way we are supposed to."

The meeting will be very informal, according to Abramson, and is planned to begin at 9:30 a.m. and continue until about 3 p.m. Traditional foods will be served, those wishing to bring a dish are welcomed to do so.

"We want to share knowledge and learn from each other," she added.

Confirmed speakers include Traditional Healer Harland

Downwind, Cathy LeBlanc, Lance Teeple, Cindy and Dale Thomas, and members of the Pine family from Garden River among others who are not yet confirmed.

The goal of the four tribes, by signing the St. Marys River Treaty, was to work collectively to influence the governments of the U.S. and Canada to revitalize, preserve and protect the waters of the St. Marys River and encourage the governments to develop additional programs and practices to achieve those results.

For more information contact Cathy Abramson at (906) 322-3823.

CDC suppressing disturbing report?

BY RICK SMITH

According to a new report, millions of people living in the eight Great Lakes states are vulnerable to elevated health risks, but it appears the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention, the very agency charged with protecting public health, is suppressing that report for political reasons.

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Science and Technology is reviewing what it calls disturbing allegations about interference with the work of government scientists at the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), a subordinate agency of the CDC.

According to a letter from the committee to Dr. Julie Gerberding, director of the CDC, the committee is concerned about the report on a Great Lakes region study of health conditions and environmental pollution requested by the International Joint Commission in 2001 and started in 2002.

The report, over 400 pages titled *Public Health Implications of Hazardous Substances in the Twenty-six U.S. Great Lakes Areas of Concern*, was finished in July 2007.

However, according to the letter, the director of the ATSDR and his deputy abruptly cancelled the release of the report after it was completed and is undergoing extensive

"editing." An investigative and oversight subcommittee asked for records from the ATSDR regarding the report in December 2007 but has yet to receive any response. No reason has been given for the delay. The committee noted it expects immediate delivery of all the requested documentation.

"Congress and the public have a right to know," the letter reads.

The committee also expressed concern about what appears to be managerial retaliation against Dr. Christopher De Rosa. The committee suspects the ATSDR management may have retaliated against Dr. De Rosa, a 34-year career employee, for blowing the whistle on the conduct of the ATSDR. The letter noted that some managers see whistle blowing as insubordination and a challenge to their authority, but the committee disagrees with that view, for the public is well-served by federal employees willing to speak up when federal agencies act improperly. In addition, Congress depends upon whistle blowers for effective oversight and the committee noted it does not tolerate retaliation against any whistle blower.

The Center for Public Integrity, a non-profit, non-partisan investigative news organization reports it has obtained a copy of the report. A story on the report and report excerpts are available for viewing at www.publicintegrity.org.

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Robert Horn



My name is Robert Horn and I would like to introduce myself and my family. From left to right are my sons Joshua, Zachary, Timothy, daughter Katelyn, Jacob, Caleb, my wife Kay and myself.

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Senate passes groundbreaking health care bill, U.S. apology to American Indians tacked on

By RICK SMITH

In a vote of 83-10, the U.S. Senate passed the Indian Health Care Improvement Act Amendments of 2008 on Feb. 26. The passage marks the first update of Indian health care in 16 years, according to a Senate announcement.

The United States government is responsible for providing health care to an estimated 1.9 million American Indians under the terms of treaties between Indian nations and the U.S.

The Act provides about \$35 billion over the next 10 years for Indian health programs; this appears to be a boost of about \$5 billion over current spending levels.

"For years, funding has fallen far below what is required and, to make true progress, the Indian health care system must be fully funded. It's scandalous when our federal government spends almost twice as much per person for health care for federal prisoners as we do for First Americans," the announcement cited U.S. Senator Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.) as saying. Dorgan was the chief sponsor of the bill co-sponsored by 31 other senators.

The Act expands current cancer and diabetes screening programs as well as domestic violence prevention services. It continues recruitment and scholarships for Indian health professionals and improves disease monitoring.

Significant improvements are found in health service systemic support in the form of allowing tribes to use maintenance funds for renovation or construction of replacement facilities when it is not economically practical to repair a facility.

It directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to fund culturally appropriate urban Indian youth residential alcohol and substance abuse treatment centers and creates an Indian youth project to address suicide prevention, intervention and treatment.

American Indian health care has historically been under-

funded by about 40 percent of actual need and this Act represents the first step in correcting the matter.

"Today marks a major step in health care for Native Americans," Dorgan was quoted in the announcement. "The bill includes several programs that will help combat the most serious health issues facing American Indians and it contains programs to promote Native Americans entering the health care field. But we have to remember that this is just a start to the work that needs to be done to meet and pay for the health care obligations that we have to American Indians."

The sponsoring senators of the bill said they now will turn their attention on acquiring increased funding for Indian health care.

An acknowledgment of wrongs and apology to

American Indians was attached as an amendment to the Act.

The seven-page document is intended "to acknowledge a long history of official depredations and ill-conceived policies by the federal government regarding Indian tribes and offer an apology to all Native peoples on behalf of the United States."

The document notes the Congress finds "the ancestors of today's Native peoples inhabited the land of the present-day United States since time immemorial and for thousands of years before the arrival of people of European descent."

It goes on to reflect on the checkered history of the relationship between American Indians and settlers, government violations of treaties, ill-conceived federal policies such as extermination, termination, forced removal and relocation, outlawing traditional religions

and the destruction of sacred places.

"The federal government condemned the traditions, beliefs and customs of Native peoples and endeavored to assimilate them by such policies as the redistribution of land and the forcible removal of Native children from their families to far-away boarding schools where their Native practices and languages were degraded and forbidden," notes part 14 of the amendment.

In part 17, it reads, "Despite the wrongs committed against Native peoples by the United States, Native peoples have remained committed to the protection of this great land as evidenced by the fact that, on a per capita basis, more Native peoples have served in the United States armed forces and placed themselves in harm's way in defense of the United States in

every major military conflict than any other ethnic group."

Among other statements, final parts of the amendment recognizes and commends American Indians for their stewardship of the land, expresses regret for the ramifications of former wrongs, commits to build on positive relationships in place, urges the president to acknowledge the wrongs of the United States against Indian tribes and commends states that have begun reconciliation efforts with tribes.

The amendment ends with a disclaimer that nothing in it authorizes or supports any claim against the United States or serves as a settlement of any claim against the United States.

The amendment goes on to the U.S. House of Representatives with the Indian Health Care Improvement Act



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"We must learn from past mistakes to ensure that they are not repeated. To progressively move our Tribe forward we must not dwell upon the past. The Tribe needs to focus on being productive, innovative, and effective to ensure services, their sustainability and enhancement."

"I would be honored, and humbled with the opportunity to continue to represent the interests of the Membership, and my constituents in Unit 2."

✓ **LANA**

CAUSLEY

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Cobell v Kempthorne: Sh-h-h, bang, yay!

By RICK SMITH

It's been called the biggest federal court case no one talks about. Points of fact, then Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt admitted to trying to squelch information as the case went to court; the mainstream media have shown scant interest in reporting on the case. It's also likely that Cobell v Kempthorne is also the oldest active case to receive such lack of attention. It's been going on so long, names of the case defendants had to be changed to reflect changes of the Secretary of the Interior.

The Cobell case is a class-action suit initiated in 1996 by Elouise Cobell who says she is joined by about 500,000 other American Indians who claim the United States owes them at least \$20 billion; in spite of its long and numerous line of records clerks and accountants, the federal government can't disprove their claim.

Attorneys for the plaintiffs

say the total of actual discrepancies in individual Indian land lease trust funds managed for Indians by the Department of the Interior (DOI) may be as high as \$100 billion.

According to documents from the Native American Rights Fund, the suit has two basic objectives. The first objective is to require the federal government to create and maintain an adequate system to properly manage and accurately account for the trust assets of individual Indians. The second objective is to require the federal government to provide a full and accurate accounting to individual Indian trust beneficiaries, and to restate the account balances accordingly.

The Native American Rights Fund also notes the assets involved in this suit are not government handouts, but money that belongs to individual Indians. Most of this money has been generated from the sale or lease of natural

resources on allotted Indian lands. This lawsuit addresses the government's longstanding failure to account for these individual Indian trust funds.

The case stems from the Dawes Act passed by Congress in 1887. The Dawes Act, according to government documents from the National Archives, was part of "the new policy focused specifically on breaking up reservations by granting land allotments to individual Native Americans. Very sincere individuals reasoned that if a person adopted white clothing and ways, and was responsible for his own farm, he would gradually drop his Indian-ness and be assimilated into the population. It would then no longer be necessary for the government to oversee Indian welfare in the paternalistic way it had been obligated to do, or provide meager annuities that seemed to keep the Indian in a subservient and poverty-

stricken position."

The American Bar Association describes the General Allotment Act, another name for the Dawes Act, as "one in a seemingly endless line of failed federal initiatives to assimilate Indian people by 'destroying tribes' and 'eradicating Native culture.' The plan was simple. Divide the remaining tribal landholdings by allotting small parcels to each tribal member. Any 'surplus' land would be opened up for non-Indian settlement. Indian consent, rarely sought, was never a requisite.

"The consequence was both predictable and devastating to Native peoples. Of the 138 million acres in tribal hands as of 1887, 48 million remained when allotment ended in 1934, 10 million acres were owned in small parcels by individual Indians. For these lands, the United States appointed itself trustee, with all the powers

to sell and lease Indian assets — oil, gas, timber, rights-of-way, etc. — without obtaining the landowners' permission."

Under the Dawes Act, the U.S. government became the fiduciary trustee for all tribally owned and individually-allotted American Indian real estate on reservations for 25 years from enactment. But it was continued in the Indian Reorganization Act during the federal administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Today, the governmental accounting of the Dawes Act provisions only goes as far back as 1986, nearly 100 years after the U.S. began keeping records.

With the bang of a gavel, on Jan. 30, U.S. District Judge James Robertson ruled in favor of the plaintiffs that an adequate historical accounting would be impossible to determine and would conduct a hearing to determine an appropriate solution since the DOI failed to deliver a court-ordered accounting of the funds. The judge also noted that a just resolution to the case was not hopeless.

According to the Indian Land Tenure Foundation, while some tribes were allotted under the General Allotment Act, others were allotted through treaty or specific legislation. All 298,379 acres of land split into 4,580 allotments in Michigan went to Chippewa Indians living on reservations in Saginaw, Swan Creek, Black River, L'Anse, Lac Vieux Desert and Ontonagon. Allotments were made until 1934 when further allotments were prohibited.

GAO issues Citizens Guide for first time

The Department of the Treasury and the Office of Management and Budget issued the first-ever "Citizens' Guide" on Feb. 14 highlighting certain important short and long-term financial information in the 2007 Financial Report of the United States Government.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office, which audits the U.S. government's consolidated financial statements included in the financial report, has for some time urged the creation of a user-friendly summary report, one that policymakers and the American people are likely to read and understand.

"With its more clear and concise language, this guide represents an important step forward in improving public understanding of the federal government's true financial condition and fiscal challenges — both today and over the longer-term," said Comptroller General David M. Walker.

The Citizen's Guide can be found at www.gao.gov/financial/fy2007financialreport.

For more information, contact GAO's Office of Public Affairs at (202) 512-4800.

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