



Win Awenen Nisitotung

July 22, 2026
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Bahweting Bidajimowin • Official newspaper of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Board members sworn in during July 6 meeting

BY SCOTT BRAND

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors convened at the Kewadin Casino and Convention Center for a special meeting on July 6 to certify the 2026 General Election results, swear in the winning candidates and elect officers.

In Unit I, newcomer Ashley

Gravelle led the field with 1,368 votes, while incumbent Robert McRorie was successful in his re-election bid garnering 1,320 votes to fill the two open seats. Lori Jump came in third with 1,294 and incumbent Isaac McKechnie finished in fourth with 1,093.

In Unit II, incumbent Kimberly

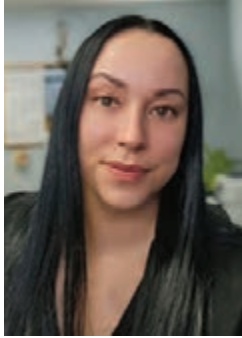
Lee fended off a challenge from Dean Hyslop Sr., 472-404.

In Unit III and Unit IV, incumbents failed to get out of the primary resulting in two new board members winning the right to serve. Sue St. Onge triumphed in the Unit III race with 922 votes well ahead of the second challenger, Fred Paquiu Jr., with 580. The race was closer in Unit IV where Cole Goudreau defeated Abbielle Hoholik, 506 to 450.

In Unit V, incumbent Tyler LaPlaut defeated challenger Rita Glyptis 313- 209.

Following the certification of results, Cecil Pavlat gave an opening prayer before the Ice Circle Singers and the Teal Lake Singers performed as the six winning candidates, one by one, took their official “Oath of Office,” and remained on stage following a presentation of gifts including flowers, sage, tobacco, cedar, sweetgrass and a traditional ash basket.

Upon taking their oaths, the newly-elected board members convened with those who were safe in this round of balloting to



Ashley Gravelle, Unit I



Rob McRorie, Unit I



Kim Lee, Unit II



Sue St. Onge, Unit III



Cole Goudreau, Unit IV



Tyler Laplaunt, Unit V

elect officers. Tyler LaPlaut was tapped as vice-chairman after Chairman Austin Lowes broke a 6-6 deadlock, joining Directors Larry Barbeau, LaPlaut, Aaron Payment, Cole Goudreau, Robert

McRorie, and Kimberly Lee. Ashley Gravelle was unanimously selected as secretary, while Mike McKerche was installed into the treasurer’s position without dissent.



Photo by Scott Brand

New board members Sue St. Onge, Ashley Gravelle and Cole Goudreau.

Sault Tribe reacts to Line 5 tunnel permits approval

BY NICK NOLAN

The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians stands in solidarity with fellow tribal nations following Michigan’s approval of a key set of permits for Enbridge’s proposed Line 5 tunnel beneath the Straits of Mackinac.

The Sault Tribe will continue supporting the Bay Mills Indian Community (BMIC), alongside Earthjustice, the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), and tribal nations across Michigan as they oppose the tunnel project before the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and

other authorities.

“Today’s decision by the state of Michigan is incredibly disheartening and fails tribal communities and all those that value our Great Lakes. Since time immemorial, the Straits of Mackinac have been sacred to tribal nations across the region. The Sault Tribe, along with our partners, is deeply disappointed by EGLE and DNR’s decisions to approve permits for Enbridge,” Sault Tribe Chairman Austin Lowes said. “The Straits, and all the Great Lakes, deserve the highest level of protection from the state of Michigan. The decision to allow Enbridge to industrialize this sacred place demonstrates a disregard for our

environment, our treaty rights, and tribal sovereignty.”

Enbridge’s plan would transform the Straits of Mackinac into an industrial construction zone for at least six years, destroying views, displacing endangered wildlife, and interrupting tourism dollars. Experts warn that running a hazardous liquids pipeline through a confined underground tunnel is dangerous and untested.

In June, Enbridge released drilling fluid into a prized Wisconsin wetland (<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/environment/2026/07/01/drilling-fluid-spills-into-wetland-during-line-5-reroute-construction/90756613007/>) while constructing a separate section of Line 5 that’s being challenged by the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and environmental groups. The company is responsible for spilling more than one million gallons into the

Kalamazoo River in 2010.

“The Straits of Mackinac are not a piece of Enbridge oil infrastructure; they are the heart of creation for Anishinaabe people and a vital source of life for all who depend on the Great Lakes,” NARF Managing Attorney David Gover said. “We will pursue every legal avenue to defend treaty rights, protect drinking water, and preserve tribal lifeways from another Enbridge disaster.”

In the coming weeks, Michigan’s Supreme Court is expected to decide whether to overturn a separate state permit for the tunnel in a challenge brought by four tribal nations, including Bay Mills, and two environmental groups. Enbridge cannot begin construction until it has secured further needed permits from state agencies and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“Our environmental laws, the looming climate crisis, and sim-

ple common sense tells us that an oil pipeline doesn’t belong in the Great Lakes,” Earthjustice Managing Attorney Debbie Chizewer said. “Today’s decision is a setback, but we’re not giving up. A future without oil in the Great Lakes is still possible.”

“While today’s decision from state regulators represents a setback in our opposition to Enbridge’s Line 5, we are not giving up hope that we can overcome this decision and continue to protect the Great Lakes,” Lowes added. “Throughout this process, we have been proud of our allies from across the region. Bay Mills Indian Community has shown tremendous leadership in opposing Enbridge’s Line 5 tunnel, and we are proud to stand alongside them. The Sault Tribe will continue to stand alongside our neighbors and tribal nations across the region to protect the Straits for future generations.”

www.saulttribe.com

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Win Awenen Nisitotung
531 Ashmun St.
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

Elders! Enroll online for your 2026 check

Beginning Aug. 1 00 eligible tribal members can enroll online to receive their 00 elder dividend. The online portal will be available Aug. 1 through Oct. 1 00

If you will be 0 years of age or older by Dec. 3 00 you are eligible to enroll.

To complete your online form:

- 1 Visit www.saulttribe.com.
- 2 Click on the “Elder Form” link.
- 3 Complete the online form and select “Submit.”
4. Once your form has been successfully submitted, you will

receive a confirmation/ reference number. Please keep this number for your records.

Once you have received your confirmation number, your form is complete, and you will be registered to receive your elder dividend check in January 02 If you complete the online form, you will not receive a paper form in the mail.

The online portal will only be available Aug. 1 through Oct. 1 00 If you do not complete online during that time, a paper form will be mailed to you. You will then need to complete and

return the paper form by mail.

Important Reminder: If you move after submitting your elder form but before your check is mailed in January 02 please contact the Enrollment Department to update your mailing address. Keeping your address current will help ensure your elder dividend check is delivered without delay.

If you have questions or need assistance with the online portal, please contact the Enrollment Department at (00 0 0 or email Stacey Synett at ssynett@saulttribe.net.

Young fox visits cabin in the woods near Munising



Photos by Scott Brand

The Hiawatha National Forest hosts a wide range of wild animals including a fox family that has learned to forage from nearby cabins where they feast on rib bones, hot dogs and other assorted scraps. The foxes have also learned to come early to beat the raccoon family that prowls after the sun sets. This sneaky little fox might give ‘Swiper’ a run for his money.

Khalil brothers bring documentary *Aanikoobijigan* home for screening



Photos by Brenda Austin

Left-Zack (left) and Adam Khalil with Cecil Pavlat watching from the couch. Above: Jacque Clark, Cecil Pavlat, Zack Kahlil, Colleen Utter, Adam Kahlil, Marie Richards and Dave Houghton. Right: Zack and Adam Kahlil gave an introductory speech prior to the films showing in the Sault July 2.

EVERY YEAR IN
MICHIGAN,
APPROXIMATELY
2,000
PEOPLE
DIE OF DRUG
OVERDOSE.

Drug overdoses are preventable.

Today's drugs are more addictive and deadlier than ever before. Overdoses can happen anywhere. Keep naloxone on hand. It can reverse an overdose in minutes. Working together we can reduce overdoses. Learn more at Michigan.gov/SUD.

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

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 members to Lona Stewart at lstewart2@saulttribe.net, 523 Ashmun Street, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783, or call (906) 635-6050 with any ques-

The following gas stations are offering discounts to Sault Tribe members.

Tribal owned 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 stations
offering gas discount only:***
- University BP, 301 W. Fair
Ave., Marquette, MI 49855
- Not tribal owned stations
offering gas discounts 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
 - Manistique Oil Company,
216 Deer Street, Manistique, MI
49854
 - Carnes Eco Fuels, 2300
Ludington St., Escanaba, MI
49837

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.

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

Child Welfare Committee -
Two vacancies - one 4-year term,
one term expires May 2029

Conservation Committee:
Non-Commercial Fisher - Two
vacancies (4-year terms)

Education Committee - One
vacancy (4-year term)

Elder Advisory Committee
Unit I - Sault - One regular
vacancy (4-year term); two alter-

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 - Manistique - One
regular vacancy (4-year term)

Unit V - Marquette - 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 - Two regular vacancies, one term expires March 2028, one 4-year term; one Alternate vacancy, term expires August 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 - One
regular vacancy (4-year term)

Unit V - Munising - One alternate vacancy (4-year term)

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

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

Sault Tribe Election
Commission - Three vacancies
 terms expiring November 2030.

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 sev-

en-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 Jenerou
Manistique Tribal Center,
(906) 341-8469
Munising Tribal Center, (906)
450-7011
mjenerou@saulttribe.net

Q: I heard the tribe might be starting hunters' safety classes. If so, when would they begin?

A: The Natural Resource Division's Wildlife Program is currently working with Sault Tribe Law Enforcement to establish a hunters' safety program for 2026. Plans are to hopefully offer two courses in August, with the goal of expanding the program next year. NRD staff have been coordinating with the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society's Hunt Safe Program to certify instructors for the program. An announcement will be made when dates and times are established.

Q: Will the tribe help me with setting up a Power of Attorney and plan for my estate? I'm not wealthy but I want to be sure my property does not end up in probate.

A: The Sault Tribe does not have any programs that assist with estate planning for the members. However, there is a source called Michigan Indian Legal Services out of Traverse City that can help members do estate planning if you meet a certain income level. Services can be at no charge for those who are income eligible. You can visit their website at www.mils3.org to explore what resources are available.

Members can call (231) 947-0122 to conduct an intake to find out if they qualify.

Tribal members and subscriber's receiving the print edition of the newspaper can switch to digital to receive the "early" digital edition. A link will be sent to digital subscribers the same day the print edition goes to press. Read your paper at least 6 days early!

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

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.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State and Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

☐ new subscription
☐ change of address

☐ digital subscription
OR
☐ print subscription

DOB : _____

Red #: _____
(red # on your card)

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

July 22, 2026
Blueberry Moon
Miin Giizis

Jennifer Dale-Burton.....Editor
 Sherrie Lucas.....Secretary
 Brenda Austin.....Staff Writer
 Scott Brand.....Staff Writer
Win Awenen Nisitotung welcomes

Tribe presents life saving awards to local heroes

BY SCOTT BRAND

Four special guests were in attendance at the June 6 meeting of the Sault Tribe Board of Directors meeting to accept Life Saving Awards presented by Kewadin Casino Security Director Derek O’Dell and Sault Tribe Police Chief Robert Marchand.

“Today, we gather to recognize three individuals whose courage, quick thinking and commitment to protecting others made the difference between life and death,” O’Dell said, introducing Sault Tribe Police Officers Harrison Thorne and Marissa Skinner as well as Security Guard Joshua Nainan. “Their calm judgement, teamwork and commitment to helping others made a profound difference when it mattered most.”

According to O’Dell, Officers

Thorne and Skinner were the first to respond to a 9 1 call at approximately 7 30 a.m. on March 3 for an unresponsive female lying between two beds in her sixth-floor hotel room. Officers immediately began cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) after determining the woman was not breathing and did not have a pulse. Security Guard Nainan arrived shortly afterward with an Automatic External Defibrillator and administered two shocks before EMS arrived.

“Due to their combined efforts, they were able to regain a pulse and she began breathing on her own, before she was transported to the hospital,” O’Dell noted.

The fourth individual to receive a Life-Saving Award was Sault Tribe Police Officer Ryan Lubben for his efforts back in January.

According to Marchand, Lubben responded to a medical call involving a female who had collapsed arriving to find the woman’s husband performing CPR. Lubben immediately applied the AED pads and delivered a shock before resuming CPR until EMS arrived. Paramedics provided additional treatment, including a second shock from the AED and the patient began to regain color and showed signs of having a pulse.

Marchand said that the law enforcement community often measures success by the number of cases solved, “but there is no greater accomplishment than re-unifying families.”

“Their actions exemplify the highest standards of service, professionalism and dedication. They demonstrated that true heroes are those who step for-



Photo by Scott Brand

Life saving awards were presented to Kewadin Casino Security Guard Joshua Nainan, Sault Tribe Police Officers Ryan Lubben, Harrison Thorne, and Marissa Skinner (L-R).

ward in moments of need and act with courage and compassion,” said O’Dell while handing out the awards. “On behalf of our

organizations and community, we extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation for your outstanding efforts and selfless service.”

STI Federal-ISHPI Alliance LLC awarded U.S. Navy contract

FROM STI FEDERAL

STI Federal’s joint venture, STI Federal-ISHPI Alliance LLC (STISHA), has been awarded a significant contract by the Department of the Navy’s Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic. STI Federal is the federal contracting brand for Sault Tribe Inc. (STI), the independent business arm of the tribe. STISHA represents a tribal partnership between STI Federal’s subsidiary company, Sault Tribe Solution Services (STSS), and the Sault Tribe member owned and run firm,

ISHPI Information Technologies Inc. (ISHPI).

Over the next five years, STISHA will support NIWC Atlantic’s Software Services Integrated Product Team (S2IPT). Our team will provide specialized information technology (IT) expertise to design, develop, engineer, and sustain key software systems that the U.S. Navy relies on for day-to-day operations and long-term readiness.

This achievement marks an important step forward in STI Federal’s long-term vision to

grow advanced IT capabilities within the Department of Defense, as well as expand its footprint within the U.S. Navy. Its support will include a range of IT services, including application integration, information assurance, IT operations, and efforts focused on modern data, systems design, and prototype development.

“While this award is technical in nature, at its core it reflects meaningful progress for our tribally-owned business — work that supports national-level missions while helping create a

stronger economic foundation for tribal members,” said Brenda Gallegos, Vice President of Business Development at STI Federal.

Through the profits generated by this and other contract awards, STI Federal will continue investing in the capabilities needed to better serve its federal clients, and ultimately to serve the tribe. As STI Federal continues to grow, profits will also generate dividends that support the tribe’s educational, health, social, cultural, economic, and community development initia-

tives.

STI Federal extends its heartfelt thanks to the dedicated professionals across the STISHA team, whose collaboration and commitment made this achievement possible. As a tribally-owned joint venture rooted in its community’s heritage, STI Federal is proud to represent the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and to help grow opportunities that support tribal prosperity.

For questions or additional information, please reach out to info@stisha.net.

SATURDAYS IN AUGUST \$ ALL SITES

BLAZING
SUMMER
Bucks

WIN YOUR SHARE OF
\$155,000 CASH AND CREDITS

Draws Start at 1 p.m.
Win Up To \$200 Kewadin Credits
or \$500 CASH

See Northern Rewards Club to register and for more details. Must earn 50 base points to qualify for promotion.
MANISTIQUE \$ ST.IGNACE \$ CHRISTMAS \$ SAULT STE. MARIE \$ HESSEL

SIZZLIN’ HOT SATURDAYS

All Sites | Saturdays in July

Excludes Hessel July 25

ELECTRIFYING FRIDAYS

St. Ignace | Fridays in August

Electric Bike Giveaway Every Friday in August

ROW-BUST REWARDS

Hessel | August 8

One FREE Entry to Prize Draws with Valid Boat Show Button/Ticket

GOLF & PLAY

Hessel | Bear on the Mountain Golf Course

Purchase 18-hole Round of Golf Receive \$10 Kewadin Credits

With same day receipt

TOURNAMENTS

Check out our Full Schedule of Exciting Tournaments | Visit [kewadin.com/gaming/tournaments](#)

KEWADIN ADVANCEMENT TOURNAMENT

Sault Ste. Marie | Mondays in August

Daily Prize Pool \$400 CASH & 105,000 Bonus Points

KEWADIN ELITE SLOT TOURNAMENT

Sault Ste. Marie | First Tuesday Monthly

Daily \$300 CASH & 130,000 Bonus Points

FOOD & DRINKS

SAULT STE. MARIE

The Eatery

Fresh Start Breakfast Club | Fahrenheit 906

Northern Wok – Coming Soon

Black Rock Bar & Grill™

First Light Café

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HAPPY HOUR & DRINK SPECIALS

Come in for Watch Parties, Live Entertainment, Drink Features, and More. Visit our Facebook Page for More Information

Point requirements for all promotions. See Northern Rewards Club to register and for more details.

RV PARK BONUS

Manistique & Christmas

RV Guests Enjoy \$5 Kewadin Credits

GOLF & STAY

St. Ignace | Bear on the Mountain

June 1 - September 30

Two-Night Stay, \$40 Kewadin Credits, \$20 Gas & Two 18 Hole Rounds of Golf with Cart

SOO LOCKS BOAT TOUR PACKAGE

Kewadin Casino Hotel - Sault Ste. Marie

Sunday - Wednesday

Two-Night Stay, Two Original Soo Locks Boat Tour Tickets, \$20 Kewadin Credits, \$20 Dining Credits & Complimentary Happy Hour Beverage

YOOOPER TOURNAMENTS

Christmas & Hessel | Mondays

Manistique | Thursdays

Daily \$100 CASH & 35,000 Bonus Points

SPIN TO WIN

Sault Ste. Marie | August 7-9

Win Up to \$15,000 CASH/Bonus Points

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MANISTIQUE · ST.IGNACE · SAULT STE. MARIE · HESSEL · CHRISTMAS

Understanding the Secretarial Election

A guide to the proposed constitutional amendments and election process.



Sault Tribe citizens will soon cast their votes on proposed constitutional amendments through a federally administered Secretarial Election. This guide explains **what's on the ballot** and **how the election process works**.



What is a Secretarial Election?

Sault Tribe citizens will soon be voting **“yes”** or **“no”** on if the Sault Tribe Constitution will be amended to create three separate and equal branches of government. A secretarial election will occur no later than Sept. 26. These special elections are administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) are required by the federal government and Article X of the Sault Tribe Constitution to make amendments affecting the way the Sault Tribe is governed.



What Would Change? The Proposed Three-Branch Government

If approved by Tribal citizens, the amended Constiution would establish three seperate, co-equal branches of government, each with its own responsibilities.

 Legislative Makes Laws - Adopts Tribal laws - Approves the Tribal budget - Adopts Tribal regulations - Legislative body: Tribal Council	 Executive Carries Out Laws - Implements Tribal laws - Manages Tribal government - Delivers services to Tribal citizens - Executive leader: Tribal Ogemaa	 Judicial Inteprets Laws - Ensures due process - Resolves legal disputes - Reviews laws for consistency with the Constitution - Courts: Trial and Supreme Court
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How the Secretarial Election Process Works

Once the Secretarial Election Board is established, the election process moves through a series of steps before the results are certified by the U.S. Department of the Interior.



At a glance



YES/NO
One ballot question
Vote by mail



Registration required
Election will occur no later than Sept. 26

Learn more

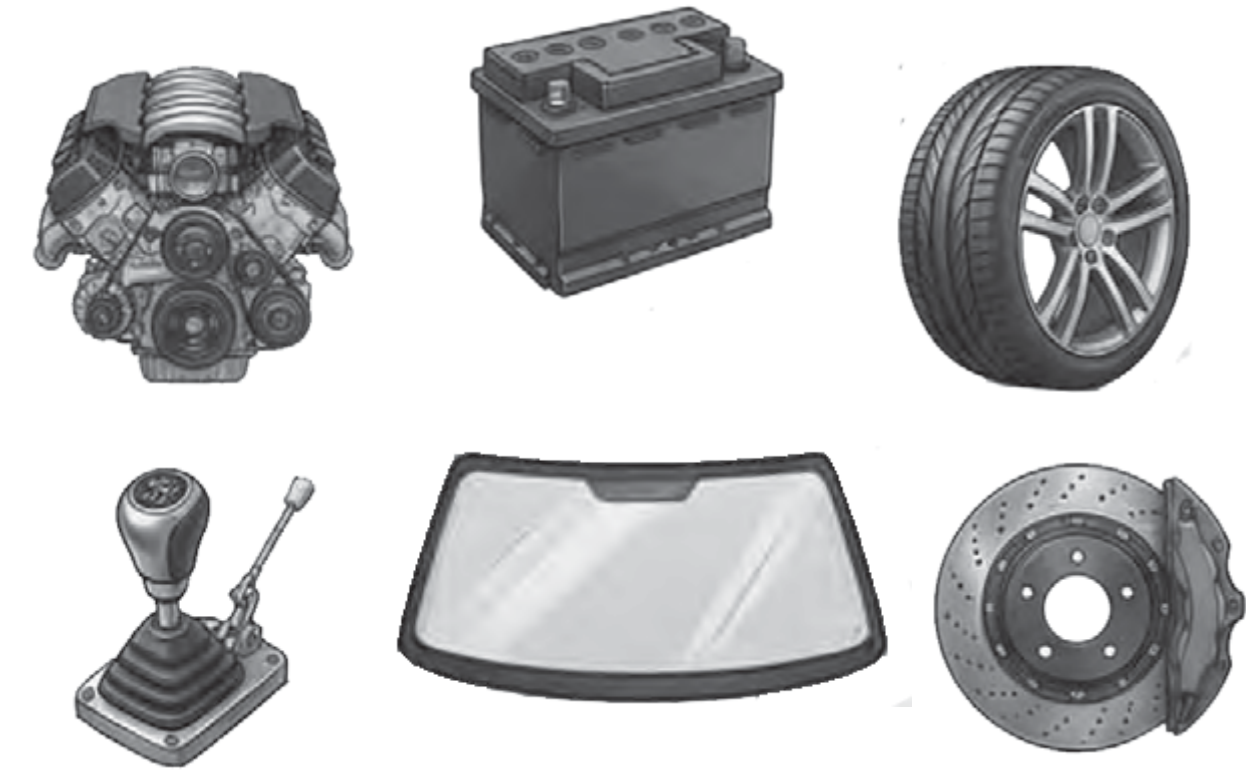


Read the proposed Constitution
Find answers to common questions
Get election updates
Visit the election website at:
saulttribe.com/government/secretarial-election

Anishinaabemowin 2026

How to know your language: Learn some comments about what goes on in your life every day. Then repeat one or two all day for a week. Then try a couple more for a while. And make it fun!

- N'doo daabaan* maaba aawi.
- O'wiiyaw* *bgashkanani*
- N'doo detibiseyak* *bashkondibewag.*
- Nakiiwin zegataagot.
- Waasmoni makakoons* *niinmizi.*
- Nagaakwiganan ndawendaagadoon.
- Gaandaabidesjigan zakshkaa.
- Waasechigan enaabiisin.
- Mdwechigan geyaabi nishin.
- Daabaan bkaanzid* *nandawenmaa.*



What car part . . . (answer in Anishinaabemowin)
needs gasoline _____
is needed for starting _____
allows you to back up _____
catches lots of bugs _____
can be painted blue _____
provides entertainment _____
comes in sets of four _____
uses a floor pedal _____
and ... the alternative to getting a new car is
getting _____

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!

Miin Giizis

Blueberry Moon

by Susan Askwith



This is my car.
The body *is rusty*.
My tires *are bald*.
The engine *sounds frightful*.
The battery *is weak*.
It needs brakes.
The gear shift *is stiff*.
The windshield *is cracked*.
The radio *is still good*.
I need a different car.

Maanda ezhi-nokiimagak!
This is the way it works!

Remember that items and beings are recognized as being either alive physically or in spirit, or not alive at all. All of the starred (*) items above are alive in spirit.



Make simple sentences!
To say ‘this is’ for one live item, name the item then say **maaba aawi** (like the first sentence of this teaching).

To say ‘those are’ for more than one live item, name the items, then say **giwi aawiwag**. (For example: Detibiseyak giwi aawiwag. - Those are tires.)

(Stop by next month for how to speak about non-living items!)

Fun Fact: “**Daabaan**” is a general word for vehicle. It includes cars, trucks, vans, SUV’s as well as trailers and wagons.

Aambe, baapin! (Come on, laugh!)

When is a car not a car?
When it turns into a parking lot.
What did the tire say to its owner?
I’m working under too much pressure!
It takes good brakes to drive like I do — other peoples’ good brakes.
What is the liquid inside the iPhone’s battery called? Apple juice
What’s a car’s favorite meal? Brake-fast



Sault Tribe Health Division
Traditional Medicine Program

Gerard Sagassige
2026 August Healer Clinic Schedule

August 3, 4, 17, 18, 24, 25, 31
Sault Ste. Marie Health Center
(906)632-0236

Wednesday, August 5th
St. Ignace Health Center
(906)643-8689 or (877)256-0135

Wednesday, August 19th
Manistique Health Center
(906)341-8469 or (866) 401-0043

Wednesday, August 26th
Munising Health Center
(906)387-4721 or (800)236-4705

ANY QUESTIONS, OR TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT PLEASE CALL
TRADITIONAL MEDICINE PROGRAM AT
906-632-0236 OR 906-632-5268

NIIZHWAASO GIIZHIGAT	NTAM GIIZHIGAT	NIIZHO GIIZHIGAT	NSWO GIIZHIGAT	NIIWO GIIZHIGAT	NAANO GIIZHIGAT	NGODWAASWO GIIZHIGAT
						1 minoomin (wild rice)
2 maanwang (fruit)	3 mskomin (raspberry)	4 miinan (blueberries)	5 wiigwaasmin (cherry)	6 makade miskomin <u>or</u> datgaagmin (blackberry)	7 miinke (he/she is picking blueberries)	8 zhominan (grapes)
9 jiimaan (canoe/boat)	10 Zhebwe. (S/he is rowing.)	11 N'da abwez. (I am sweating.)	12 Damina. (S/he is playing.)	13 Biimskowebshkige. (S/he is riding a bike.)	14 bkibdoon (pick it)	15 bkibjige (is picking fruit)
16 Boodwe (S/he is making a fire.)	17 shkode (fire)	18 Giigoonhke. (S/he is fishing.)	19 ziibiing (at the river)	20 zaag'iganing (at the lake)	21 wiikwedong (at the bay)	22 noopiming (in the woods)
23 negweki (sand)	24 makinaak (snapping turtle)	25 miskwaadesi (painted turtle)	26 mishiikenh (turtle)	27 Zaam-aate. (It is too hot.)	28 Mooshkaneshin Dibiki Giizis (It is a full moon.)	29 ngaasmoon- gamig (tent)
30 ginebig (snake)	31 Gwojiing wiisini. (S/he is having a picnic.)					

Calendar created by Sault Tribe Language & Culture Division

Sault Tribe, Kewadin Casinos to distribute more than \$675,000 to U.P. communities

BY BRENDA AUSTIN AND SCOTT BRAND

More than \$675,000 will be distributed to communities across the Upper Peninsula through the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians’ latest round of semiannual 2% payments. The funding will support senior and youth services, public safety programs, recreation, cultural opportunities and other community needs.

The twice-yearly program distributes 2% of the video gaming revenue generated by the tribe’s Kewadin Casinos to eligible local government entities. The latest payments are based on slot revenue from Kewadin Casino properties in Sault Ste. Marie, St. Ignace, Hessel, Manistique and Christmas.

The Sault Tribe has provided 2% funding to U.P. communities and organizations since November 1993.

Distributions are divided into two categories: short-term and long-term. Short-term recipients may change each distribution cycle based on the projects selected for funding. Long-term distributions provide ongoing payments to designated communities and organizations.

“The 2% campaign is one of many meaningful ways we invest in the people and places that make this area home,” Sault Tribe Chairman Austin Lowes said. “These dollars help local organizations keep our community healthy, safe and strong.”

More than 30 communities and numerous local programs will benefit from the spring allocations, including:

In Unit I, the City of Sault Ste. Marie was the largest recipient with \$148,729 earmarked for gen-

eral governmental services, while the Sault Area Public School received a total of \$37,000 with \$25,000 for a Title VII advocate and \$12,000 distributed for payment in lieu of taxes. Chippewa County took in \$17,000 for general governmental services and an additional \$3,000 for the Probate Court’s Foster Care Program. Lake Superior State University received \$34,025 for the Gem of the North and Kinross Charter Township was allocated \$13,500 for law enforcement.

Other Unit I recipients in the spring 2026 round of 2% dispersals included: Dafter Township in the amount of \$4,956.93 for the fire department to purchase firefighting hand tools. Bay Mills Township receiving \$5,152.84 towards a side-by-side for their fire and rescue operation. The City of Sault Ste. Marie also received \$5,152.84 to purchase an 800 mhz radio for the fire and ambulance crew. Soo Township Fire Department received \$5,152.84 for the Neebish Island Fill Station. Sault Area Public Schools took in \$5,152.84 for the elementary school mural project. Lake Superior State University was awarded \$9,999.96 earmarked for Phase II of the Robotics Program. The Eastern Upper Peninsula School District received \$5,152.84 for the Road to Building a Movement for Michigan BAMM. And Kinross Township received \$18,000 designated for Rec Center activities and kitchen floor upgrades.

In Unit II, Clark Township received \$2,000 for general governmental services, the Rudyard Area Schools took in \$10,000 for the pool and Newton Township received \$7,000 earmarked for the Historical Society and Gould

City Museum.

Other Unit II entities receiving 2% funding in the spring of 2026 included: The Village of DeTour took in \$10,740.67 towards a new truck for the Department of Public Works. McMillan Township received \$7,870 for pavilion construction. Engadine Consolidated Schools received \$10,000 for a program designed to improve literacy.

Mackinac County took in \$3,500 earmarked for the Top of the Lake Snowmobile Museum and an additional \$3,000 going towards chimney repairs at the Engadine Museum. Hudson Township was allocated \$7,870 helping the Fire and EMS crew purchase tracks for their side-by-side to improve response times over snow, mud and difficult terrain. DeTour Township was awarded \$10,740 for EMS building upgrades. And Trout Lake Township received \$5,000 as the community looks to improve pedestrian safety.

In Unit III, the City of St. Ignace received \$6,500 for road improvements, \$3,500 for lodging and law enforcement and \$7,000 for the Ojibwa Museum. St. Ignace Township was awarded \$7,000 for general government services. The St. Ignace Area Schools took in \$8,900 funding a student advocate and the Mackinac County Sheriff Department received \$11,250 for lodging and law enforcement.

Other Unit III recipients in the 2026 allocation included: The City of St. Ignace received \$8,000 to help fund activities at the Museum of Ojibwa Culture, \$2,000 for a truck bed sander/salter, \$3,000 for the downtown boardwalk, \$5,000 for pickleball courts, \$2,100 for a Water

Department drill press, \$6,400 for the fire departments thermal imaging cameras, \$10,000 for repairs on the ice chiller at Little Bear East, \$6,000 earmarked for the police department’s request for a traffic safety trailer, \$6,000 for the public library and \$10,000 for an EMS IV pump. St. Ignace Schools took in \$2,000 for football equipment. And LaSalle High School received \$2,000 for its Robotics Team.

In Unit IV, the Delta County Sheriff’s Office was awarded \$8,000 for lodging and law enforcement, Bay de Noc Community College took in \$8,000 for Delta County’s YMCA, the City of Escanaba received \$4,000 for law enforcement, Manistique Township was awarded \$2,000 for general government services, the City of Manistique received \$2,500 for lodging and law enforcement, while the Schoolcraft County Sheriff Department received \$6,400 for lodging and law enforcement.

Other Unit IV recipients in this round of 2% funding included: The Gladstone Area Schools with \$2,000 for music materials, \$4,152 for a math intervention program, \$690 to promote book reading online, and \$5,000 for Native American education and cultural activities. Inwood Township was awarded \$13,266.67 for specialized firefighter equipment. West Branch Township received \$12,000 towards pavilion construction. Big Bay de Noc School took in \$6,250 to maintain a healthy community program. The Rapid River School District was awarded \$5,000 to help upgrade equipment for its softball program. The Village of Garden received

\$3,900 for playground improvements. Schoolcraft County was awarded \$1,462 for the Historical Society’s efforts to recognize Bishop Baraga. And Maple Ridge Township received \$5,000 for playground mulch.

In Unit V, the Alger County Sheriff’s Office received \$6,400 for lodging and law enforcement, while Au Train Township was awarded \$1,500 for general government services. The City of Marquette took in \$4,000 for lodging and law enforcement. The City of Munising received \$16,000 for general governmental services and another \$9,000 for its recreation program. Munising Township received \$1,500 for general government services.

Other Unit V recipients included: The City of Munising took in \$8,204.65 for the Alger County Food Pantry. Chocoday Township received \$10,000 to help fund a police department patrol vehicle. Alger County was allocated \$5,000 for the Community on Aging’s home meal program. The City of Marquette was awarded \$2,500 to assist with the purchase of a Zamboni for the Lakeview Arena and \$7,500 earmarked for the Women’s Center. An additional \$5,040.38 was awarded for the Children’s Museum and another \$4,319.76 for fire department equipment upgrades. Grand Island Township received \$2,855.88 to help upgrade emergency response. And Munising Public Schools received \$13,300 for the Mather Elementary Library Safety and Modernization Project.

To learn more about current and past recipients of the Sault Tribe’s 2% contributions, visit <https://kewadin.com/2-percent-donating>.

Tribal Housing Authority opens satellite office in Sault

BY SCOTT BRAND

The Sault Tribe Housing Authority (STHA) invited the public to celebrate its new satellite home, located at 2163 Migisa Court in Sault Ste. Marie with an open house on July 2.

“When we walked in here it felt like we were finally home,” said Resident Services Manager Cathie Erickson.

The structure had originally served as a group home before housing Anishinabek Community and Family Services. Once ACFS moved out, the building sat vacant awaiting new tenants.

“Housing has been looking for a satellite office in Sault Ste. Marie for years,” said Housing Director Mariea Mongene of the decision to purchase the building from facilities and put the money in for the needed renovations. “The Force Account crew remodeled the whole thing.”

That work included moving a staircase inside the building, to meet code, adding a new external staircase providing the upper floor with its own access point and removing some bathtubs that were no longer needed in an office setting.

“Our crew did a really good job,” said Mongene as she provided a tour of STHA’s new home.

The 2,576 square foot structure will easily house the four STHA employees who have moved there and the upper floor

will be available to add more housing staff or to rent out to future tenants should the need arise.

The Sault Tribe Housing Authority has their own website, visit them by going to:<https://www.saulttribehousing.com>.



STHA Resident Services Manager Cathie Erickson, Home Ownership Specialist Felicity Madigan and Housing Director Mariea Mongene.

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Sault Tribe assists in highlighting importance of renewable energy through solar array

BY NICK NOLAN, SAULT TRIBE PR MANAGER

With the 2025-26 academic year winding down in early June, schools across the Upper Peninsula have put a bow on the school year. In the Central UP, a hands-on alternative school partnered with two tribal nations to make it a year to remember.

At Marquette Alternative High School, the future is brighter than ever, in part thanks to the installation of a new rooftop solar array that helps power the building and teach pupils about the power of sustainable energy.

In September 2025, four years of working and planning concluded with the installation of an 18.1-kilowatt solar panel system that aims to power roughly one-third of the school’s energy needs. The goal of the project was creating a clean power source, and just as importantly, teaching youth about the benefits of sustainable energy.

Leading the charge to bring a solar panel array to the alternative high school was teacher Brian Prill.

“We want to make our school

and community a better place,” said Prill, noting the idea was sparked by students in an economics class he taught that focused on the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals. “The students decided as a group to see if solar energy was feasible.”

The 18.1KW system cost just over \$69,000 and was installed over a four-year period. Due to a substantial investment, “the Alt” turned to community partners with carbon neutral ambitions to make the dream a reality.

A collaboration between the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and Keweenaw Bay Indian Community was able to assist in funding that allowed the school to apply for a state grant, which fully funded the project. Over several years of applying for funds, approximately \$35,000 came from the two tribes’ 2% funds that are designed to invest in communities they serve. These funds were essential in securing a state-matching grant to cover the cost of the project.

“It was a big project, and we were asking what they can support,” added Prill, citing the importance



Marquette Alternative High School teacher Brian Prill helped bring a solar panel array to the school while incorporating the importance of sustainable energy into multiple classes’ curriculums.

of the relationships between tribal governments and local education. “It’s about friendship amongst all government and reducing our carbon footprint.”

Prill said students are still assessing how much energy has been saved during the school year and have dashboards in the classroom to assess energy savings and consumptions. Students will



Students at Marquette Alternative High School wave goodbye to the 2025-26 school year and hello to energy savings early this June. The school’s solar panel array was installed in September 2025.

review the data after a year with goals of using money saved to apply for more grants to grow the solar panel array.

“Energy sovereignty is highly valued within the Sault Tribe, making this project especially impactful to tribal membership in the Marquette area and the Central U.P. as a whole,” said Sault Tribe Chairman Austin Lowes. “Teaching the values of sustainability to students will have long

term impacts across the U.P.”

In Marquette, there are over 1,200 Sault Tribe members. Marquette Alternative High School has sizeable tribal representation amongst its student body.

The success of the Marquette Alternative High School’s solar panel array shines a bright light on collaboration between tribal nations and local education systems.

Sault Tribe Capital Fund creates new opportunities for tribal entrepreneurs with support program

SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich. — The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians has established the Sault Tribe Capital Fund, a new financing support program designed to help tribal members and businesses gain access to the capital needed to grow and succeed.

For many aspiring business owners, the biggest obstacle is not the idea itself. It’s access to capital. Whether starting a new business, purchasing equipment, expanding operations, or acquiring property, financing is often one of the most difficult challenges entrepreneurs face. This is where the Sault Tribe Capital Fund is available to help.

“The goal is simple,” said Dan Doyle, Chief Executive Officer of Sault Tribe Enterprise Development Corporation. “We want to help tribal members access the capital they need to start businesses, expand existing operations, create jobs, and build long-term economic opportunities for themselves and their families.”

Unlike a traditional bank, the Capital Fund does not make loans directly. Instead, it works with participating financial institutions to help tribal businesses secure financing through tools such as collateral support and loan participation programs. These tools help reduce lender risk and can improve access to financing for businesses that may otherwise have difficulty obtaining traditional loans.

The program is available to eligible tribal member-owned businesses, tribal enterprises, and other qualifying businesses. In addition to financing support, entrepreneurs can access techni-

cal assistance through Sault Tribe Thrive, which provides business planning, financial guidance, marketing assistance, credit counseling, and business coaching.

Together, these resources are intended to create a complete support system for tribal entrepreneurs, from developing a business concept to securing financing and successfully operating a business.

Turning opportunity into reality

The impact of the Capital Fund is already being felt.

One recent success story involves tribal entrepreneur James Goga, who purchased an existing business which he intends to expand in North Dakota with support from the Sault Tribe Capital Fund and the Bank of Tioga. *The Depot* is a food service distributor and specialty grocery store that will be expanding into meat processing in the near future. The project demonstrates how the program can help tribal members access financing opportunities even outside the tribe’s traditional service area.

“We are beyond grateful for all the help and assistance provided through the Sault Tribe Capital Fund during this whole process,” Goga said. “Sault Tribe Thrive’s guidance and commitment made it possible for us to turn our plans into reality.”

Another powerful example comes from Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Joanne Garrow, owner of *Caught Dreamin’ Therapy*, utilized the Sault Tribe Capital Fund to support an expansion in Ishpeming. Her project highlights how the program is helping tribal

entrepreneurs strengthen essential services within local communities.

“I want to send a sincere thank you to all involved in helping *Caught Dreamin’ Therapy* purchase our new building in Ishpeming,” Garrow said. “We are ready to provide much needed services to the Upper Peninsula, and it couldn’t of happened without the Sault Tribe Capital Fund.”

Another example of the success and reach of the program comes from *Hair by Brittany*, located in Sault Ste. Marie. Owned by Sault Tribe member Brittany Cunningham, this hair salon specializes in men’s haircuts, but accepts customers from all walks of life.

Other businesses funded include *Lux Electrical* located in Petoskey, Mich., and run by Sault Tribe member Benjamin Smith. This tribal member is providing much needed electrician work in an area short on members of that skilled trade. *White’s Party Store* located in Marquette, Mich., has been a staple in the Marquette community for many years and is now in the hands of Sault Tribe member Matthew Blondeau.

These stories reflect the program’s growing reach and its ability to empower tribal members across diverse industries and locations.

“This is exactly the type of outcome we hoped to create,” said Robert Sawruk, Director of Business Development. “Many tribal members have strong business ideas, but access to financing can be a barrier. Our goal is to help remove those barriers and connect members with the resources they need to succeed.”

Building long-term economic opportunity

Beyond individual business success stories, tribal leaders view the Capital Fund as an investment in the tribe’s long-term economic future.

For tribal members, the message is straightforward: if you have a business idea, are looking to expand an existing business, or simply want to learn more about available resources, assistance may be available.

How to get started

Tribal members interested in learning more about the Sault Tribe Capital Fund, financing opportunities, or business devel-

opment services are encouraged to contact Sault Tribe Thrive Director of Business Development Robert Sawruk at rsawruk@saulttribe.net or by calling (906) 379-8537.

Sawruk and his team can help evaluate financing opportunities, connect members with available resources, and assist entrepreneurs in preparing for business growth and expansion.

The Sault Tribe Capital Fund represents more than a financing program — it is a tool designed to help tribal members turn ideas into businesses, businesses into jobs, and opportunities into long-term economic success.



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New health center office space renovations begin

BY SCOTT BRAND

A traditional blessing followed by a tour of the new extension property was held on June 5 as the Sault Tribe begins to make major renovations to two of the buildings, formerly the home of Roy Electric which sold the complex back in April, located in the 90 block of Ashmun Street.

“We are really excited about this expansion; we’re busting at the seams over there,” Tribal Chairman Austin Lowes said, gesturing towards the Sault Tribe Health Center across the street.

Lowes comments came on the heels of a blessing ceremony conducted by Traditional Ojibwe Practitioner Gerard Sagassige for a dozen or so individuals who gathered for the ceremony.

“I’m proud of you guys,” said Lowes speaking to the various department heads, health department representatives on hand for the event. “We are very fortunate to have the crew we do here.”

Following the blessing and chairman’s comments, Assistant

Health Director Joel Lumsden provided a guided tour.

“The bones on the building are really good,” said Lumsden pointing out that the structures will just need some wall-reconfiguration, flooring, drop ceilings and insulation.

U.P. Engineers and Architects was the bid-winner for this project, which is seemingly on the fast track with Lumsden expressing hope that the Health Department Human Resources building could be ready in the fall. The new home will provide a stand-alone facility for HR activities and it will free up room over at the health center.

The second building will house non-clinical administrative office space upon its completion allowing more people to move out of the health center.

A large pole building also came with the property. There are no current plans for it to be renovated, however, it will be available to store mobile medical devices and other items as needed.



Photo by Scott Brand

Human Resource Generalist Cheryl Nolan, Project Manager Annie Thibert, Health Division CEO James Benko, Assistant Health Director Joel Lumsden, Tribal Chairman Austin Lowes, Behavioral Health Manager Laura Fisher, Traditional Ojibwe Practitioner Gerard Sagassige, HR Admin Assistant Sarah Zimmerman, Health HR Director Karen Justin, Commercial Real Estate and Property Management Director Helen Wilkins.

Sault Tribe board meets, passes resolutions July 7

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors made quick work of a lengthy agenda on July 7 as its newest members, Ashley Gravelle, Sue St. Onge and Cole Goudreau, participated in their first regular meeting.

The board approved eight separate resolutions, all under one umbrella vote, to reflect the changing of the guard providing the new secretary Ashley Gravelle and new treasurer, Mike McKerchie authorization to be signees on documents for various banking and financial institutions during their tenure.

Also, the directors, by a majority vote, named Chairman Austin Lowes the JKL Fiduciary Chair.

In other action, the board approved the following resolutions:

— Approved a Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget modification to the U.S. Department of Agriculture allowing for a change to the personnel page and the reallocation of expenses seeking to improve staffing to meet the needs under the Anishnaabek Community and Family Services (ACFS) Division.

— Approved a FY 26 budget modification to Big Bear Administration for changes to the personnel page affecting a pair of job title descriptions with no effect to tribal support.

— Approved a FY26 budget modification to Enrollment resulting in a decrease of \$66,758.49 from tribal support and an increase of \$21,000 from other revenue.

— Established a FY 27 budget for National Telecom and Information Administration with the Federal Department of Communication Revenue of \$500,000 to deliver broadband to certain households within the coverage area.

— Approved a FY 26 budget modification to Purchased Referred Care (PRC) for changes to the personnel page and a reallocation of expenses seeking to

save funds in preparation for a potential new hire.

— Approved a FY 26 budget modification to Human Resources for an increase in tribal support of \$20,088.30 for space costs associated with a change in location within the Administration Building.

— Approved a FY 26 budget modification to JKL School Fiduciary decreasing Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) revenue of \$200,000 coupled with a FY 26 budget modification to JKL School Interest for use of \$200,000 from its fund balance to offset monies pledged to Malcolm Schools to meet BIA requirements.

— Established a FY 26 budget for Adam Walsh Act Implementation with Department of Justice (DOJ) revenue of \$67,664.37 as the grant extension is earmarked to fund a position and associated office supplies.

— Established a FY 27 budget for the Great Lakes Recovery Initiative Adaptive Wolf Management plan to close out an account through the BIA for the remaining \$1,003.08 on hand.

— Approved FY 26 budget

modification for an increase of \$135,000 in BIA revenue for Nunn’s Creek Hatchery improvements.

— Approved a FY 26 budget modification to BIA to utilize \$2009,000 in BIA fund balance for consulting/contracting.

— Authorized the Natural Resources Division (NRD) to apply for up to \$200,000 across a three-year project to access U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Tribal Wildlife Grants for fire planning and wildlife vegetation monitoring.

— Authorized the NRD to apply for up to \$100,000 in USFWS Aquatic Invasive Species funding.

— Authorized the NRD to apply for up to \$500,000 in Robert Wood Johnson Foundation from Insight to Action: Health Equity Research that Meets this Moment funding in partnership with the University of Michigan.

— Established scholarships for those with special needs. Two scholarships, at \$1,000 apiece will be for those 17 or under and funded through the Youth Education and Activities (YEA) cost center, while the other two

scholarships, also \$1,000 each, is designed for those 18 and older and will be funded via the Higher Education Cost Center. This measure also immediately rescinded Resolution 2007-96.

— Awarded a Request for Proposal to Great Lakes Roofing in the amount of \$265,000 and authorized the Legal Department to work with Facilities Management to negotiate the contract to replace metal roofs at the Middle School and Gymnasium with a membrane roofing system.

— Authorized an application for the Office of Family Violence Prevention and Services under formula funding for FY 26, and a second application for funding through the DOJ’s Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) FY 26 Grants to Indian Tribal Government’s Program.

— Moved Dianne Compo from Alternate to Delegate and appointed Lou Anne Bush

to the Alternate seat to represent the Elders of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians on the Michigan Indian Elders Association. Both terms will expire in June of 2027.

— Updated language in the Elder Ramp Program Policy.

— Accepted the 2025 Housing Authority Audit as presented to the Sault Tribe Audit Committee in June by Anderson, Tackman & Company, LLC.

— Authorized application for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (COC) Builds seeking up to \$11 million for permanent supportive housing projects.

— And, amended Tribal Code Chapter 90 of the Housing Authority Ordinance, absorbing the Utility Authority into the Housing Authority and perform any necessary budget modifications and rescinded Tribal Code Chapter 92: Utility Authority Ordinance.

The Sault Tribe Resolution 2026-145
“the Constitution Amendment Update”
has dozens of changes, the most
disturbing in our view is the false
representation that it is only about a
separation of powers & the change in
the By-Laws Article III Section One
that removes
Tribal Member' Rights.
What's Missing?
Equal Rights for all Tribal Members.

VOTE NO

Editorial posted on
SaultTribeGuardian.com





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PRC Straight Talk: an overview of the program

FROM SAULT TRIBE HEALTH DIVISION

Welcome to PRC Straight Talk — a new Purchased Referred Care (PRC) informational bulletin designed to provide a clearer understanding of the program and address questions commonly asked by Sault Tribe members.

This introductory article offers a broad overview of the PRC program. In the coming weeks and months, please watch for additional pieces in *Win Awenen Nisitotung* and regular posts on the Sault Tribe Health Division’s Facebook page, where we will address frequently asked questions and provide helpful answers. Our goal is to help you better understand this important resource and how it may be available to support your healthcare needs.

WHAT IS PURCHASED REFERRED CARE (PRC)?

Purchased Referred Care (PRC) is primarily a U.S. FEDERALLY funded program, whose costs are rising by millions every year. The program’s purpose is to help supplement costs of health services that cannot be provided at the Sault Tribe Health clinic for patients who are eligible. PRC is not a program to which people are entitled; it is not an insurance plan or a guarantee of payment. PRC is considered a payer of last resort and may not always be available. All other insurances must be utilized before Purchased Referred Care (such as VA healthcare).

If a patient has no insurance, including Medicare or Medicaid, that patient will be required to apply for medical assistance before eligibility for PRC can be established.

A Sault Tribe member must apply for Purchase Referred Care to access the services. This includes providing the PRC office with proof of your insurance and income (which is only used to determine eligibility for alternate resources, such as Medicaid). You will also be asked to update your file yearly to ensure eligibility. When calling for services, the PRC staff will ask if there are any updates that need to be made to your file.

If eligible, an authorization voucher will be provided for an upcoming referral appointment.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

— Sault Tribe members (adults and children) living in the seven-county service area (Mackinac, Luce, Chippewa, Schoolcraft, Delta, Alger and Marquette).

— Non-Native women pregnant with an eligible Native American child.

HOW DOES SOMEONE GET PRC FUNDING?

— Sault Tribe members need to complete and submit an application. PRC specialists will confirm eligibility for the program.

— Contact your PRC Patient Care Coordinator for prior authorization for your referred care to an outside specialty pro-



vider or hospital to determine it will be covered based on coverage priorities and funding available at time of service. Once approved, it is the Sault Tribe member’s responsibility to contact PRC to obtain a “voucher” prior to every visit to an outside referred provider.

IS PAYMENT FOR SERVICES GUARANTEED?

Unfortunately, NO.

— While we strive to ensure payment for eligible services, PRC funding is limited. PRC funds are allocated by federal subsidies annually and are supplemented by Tribal Support dollars because federal funding alone is insufficient to support the current priorities of care established by our PRC Program.

Tribal Support dollars are generated through the Health Center’s billing department by collecting third-party reimbursements from members’ health insurance. This revenue helps offset Health Center operating expenses and supplements the PRC Program, allowing us to provide the current level of covered services despite inadequate annual federal funding.

— To ensure that there are adequate funds to meet the needs of tribal members, medical and dental services are prioritized.

— As funds are used throughout the year, priorities may change. This means that some services may be limited and people requesting these services may be placed on a deferred services list until funds become available.

— Purchased Referred Care payment is limited by medical priorities. Some treatments and procedures are not eligible for payment or may change.

— Priorities are determined by the Special Review Committee.

— The Special Review Committee takes into consideration available funds and medical priority of care for requested services.

DO YOU HAVE OTHER HEALTH INSURANCE?

— PRC is considered the payer of absolute last resort. This means that if you have access to any other type of health coverage — health insurance through your employer, your spouse’s employer, state or federal health plans (Medicare, Medicaid, MI Child, VA, etc.), it must be billed before PRC. It is your responsibility to provide insurance information to all outside providers. If you have no health insurance, you may be required to apply for Medicaid based on your income and

Medicaid guidelines.

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

Purchased Referred Care cannot pay for health services without prior authorization.

— Authorization must be obtained from PRC at least 24 hours before the scheduled health care appointment. Authorization is provided in the form of a reference number, which needs to be presented to the provider at the time of the appointment.

— You must seek additional and separate authorizations for all follow-up appointments, x-rays, and all lab work.

— Prescriptions written by a primary care or referred specialty provider that are not available at our tribal clinic will need to go through a special review process to determine if coverage is possible through PRC.

— Additional treatment ordered by a specialty physician may be subject to review.

— If you reschedule your appointment, you must call PRC to change the date.

— For emergency or urgent care, you must call or go to the tribal health center to be evaluated by a triage nurse, at which time you may be referred to the ER or Urgent care.

— IF there is a truly emergent situation and referral by a triage nurse is not possible, notification must be given to PRC within 72 hours of emergency or urgent care. Elders or disabled clients have 30 days to notify the PRC office in case of emergency or urgent care. Approval will be determined after Managed Care reviews the case for compliance and appropriateness.

If you do not notify the office within these timeframes, payment for your medical services will automatically be denied, and payment will become the client responsibility.

— Patients must be enrolled in the PRC program at least 90 days prior to any inpatient stays.

AFTER HOURS & URGENT CARE

If the tribal health center is open, you must call or go to the tribal health center to be evaluated by a triage nurse, at which time you may be referred to the ER or Urgent care.

If the centers are closed, such as on the weekend or afterhours, you must call the triage line in the area your primary provider is located:

— Sault Tribal Health Center: (906) 632-5200

— St. Ignace Tribal Health Center: (906) 643-8689

— Manistique Tribal Health Center: (906) 341-8469

— Munising Tribal Health Center: (906) 387-4721

— Marquette Tribal Health Center: (906) 225-1616

A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT MEDICARE PART B

Medicare Part B is medical insurance. Part A is “inpatient only hospital insurance.” Part B is the insurance that covers doctors, tests, and services you receive both inside and outside

the hospital. It’s the coverage for your doctor’s visits, outpatient procedures, preventative care, and medical equipment. It is the CORE of your health coverage for nearly everything other than long-term inpatient hospital stays.

Included in Part B Coverage:

— Durable Medical

Equipment (DME): Part B covers 80% of the cost of medically necessary equipment that you use in your home. This includes things like walkers, wheelchairs, hospital beds, and oxygen tanks. You must get your equipment from a supplier that is enrolled in Medicare.

— Ambulance Services: Part B covers emergency transportation by ambulance.

— Mental Health Services: Part B includes coverage for outpatient therapy and counseling.

— Clinical Research: Part B helps pay for the costs of participating in approved clinical research studies.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Since PRC is not guaranteed, if you choose not to take Medicare Part B when you first sign up for Medicare, but take it at a

later date, you will be penalized by the program for every year you did not have the coverage. Moreover, the premiums go up 10% every year you don’t take it. It is important to KEEP Medicare Part B to cover the items, like those mentioned above, because please remember— PRC is NOT GUARANTEED.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Purchased Referred Care Office:

Sault Tribe Health Center (3rd Floor)

2864 Ashmun Street
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

1(800) 922-0582 or (906) 632-5220

Fax: (906) 632-5248

Mailing address:

PO Box 1628

Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

To find the Sault Tribe Health

Division’s Facebook page, please go to: www.facebook.com/SaultTribeHealthDivision.

Please be sure to keep an eye out for additional regularly appearing Q&A to help you better understand and utilize the PRC program. This image will help you recognize the series!



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Houghton closes 36-year teaching career with gratitude, plans for continued service

BY BRENDA AUSTIN

After 36 years in education, 68 graduation ceremonies and decades of helping Native American students reach their goals, Dave Houghton has retired from teaching.

His final day at Malcolm High School in June brought his career full circle. During his last school year, Houghton taught Native American Literature, one of the first courses he taught after beginning his work with students in the Sault area more than three decades ago.

Houghton began his teaching career in September 1990 at Calvary Christian Academy in Ypsilanti, Mich. His schedule included 10th-, 11th- and 12th-grade English, world history, middle and high school physical education and health science. He also coached middle school soccer four afternoons a week.

“It was a very hectic schedule,” Houghton said.

By the end of that first year, he wasn’t sure teaching was the right path for him.

“My first year as a teacher was so horribly bad that I said I never wanted to be a teacher again,” he said. “But the Creator had other plans for me.”

In April 1991, Houghton interviewed for a new position as a Native American adviser with the Sault Tribe Education Dept. He worked solely in that position for one year before adding Native American Literature to his responsibilities and supervising an Ojibwe Language class taught through interactive television. Don Abel of Bay Mills Community College taught the initial language class. The arrangement allowed students at Sault High School to earn credit toward their high school diplomas.

Houghton said it was the



Photo by Sarah Houghton

May 2026 — Don Houghton, Dave Houghton, Dave’s granddaughter Madelyn Houghton at her 17th birthday celebration, and Dave’s daughter, Elizabeth Houghton (Madelyn’s aunt). Dave sports his long beard a month prior to cutting it off in honor of his retirement.

first Ojibwe Language class in Michigan offered through such an arrangement.

He continued supervising the interactive television course for eight years. Teachers included Jim Fox and Michelle Wellman Teeple.

Houghton was originally employed through the Sault Tribe Education Department. He worked there for three years before becoming an employee of Sault Area Public Schools in January 1995. He continued serving as the Native American adviser until 2008 while also teaching Native American Literature.

In 2001, he began teaching both Ojibwe Language and Native American Literature. After leaving the adviser position in 2008, he served for two years as Sault High School’s Section 504 coordinator while continuing to teach his Native American courses.

In 2011, Houghton added 12th-grade English to his schedule. He taught senior English, Native American Literature and Ojibwe Language until retiring from Sault Area Public Schools in 2019.

Including his time in the tribe’s Education Department, Houghton spent 28 years as a

full-time worker connected with Sault schools.

His original plan was to continue teaching part time after his 2019 retirement. Two weeks before the school year ended, however, he experienced a minor stroke that prevented him from returning in September.

Houghton applied for Social Security disability benefits and received approval in June 2020. He still hoped to return to the classroom in some capacity.

In 2021, Sandy Sawyer asked whether he could teach Ojibwe Language. Because of restrictions connected with his benefits, Houghton could teach only one class. He accepted and continued teaching at Malcolm High School through June 2026.

For Houghton, the greatest reward of teaching was not found in a course syllabus or lesson plan. It came from the relationships he built with students.

“The thing I enjoyed the most about being a teacher was the relationships I developed with students, both in my role as Native American adviser and in the classroom as their teacher,” he said.

Houghton attended the graduation ceremonies of his students from both Sault High School and

the alternative school. This year marked the 68th graduation ceremony he attended.

Because he taught juniors and three sophomores during his final year, he plans to attend their future ceremonies. Once they graduate, his total will reach 70.

“To me, that is a remarkable number,” he said.

Houghton said one of his first goals as Native American adviser was to increase graduation numbers and percentages among Native American students. He kept track of students throughout their high school years and found it rewarding to watch them receive their diplomas.

“I think that is why I started going to every graduation,” he said.

He hopes former students remember more than the subjects he taught.

“I want my students to remember me as a fun teacher who cared about their success in my class and, most importantly, about them as human beings,” Houghton said. “It was great working with a teenage population, and I will miss my time over all these years. I especially enjoyed my time working with Native American students.”

Houghton also takes pride in the opportunities he helped create outside the classroom.

He served as a Gates Millennium scholarship reader for four years and helped four Sault High School students receive the scholarship. Each year, he traveled to Albuquerque, N.M., for a week to help select scholarship recipients.

“I felt that this work was extremely important,” he said. Houghton also formed the first Native American Science Bowl team. The team placed first in the national competition during its first year and earned another

first-place finish several years later. Following the second victory, team members met President George Bush and were recognized for their accomplishment. He took students to visit college campuses throughout Michigan and spent 18 years accompanying students to Partners in Prevention Fest and Teen Leadership Cooperative Fest with his friend Pat Ames.

The weekend high school lock-ins were held each fall and spring. Houghton missed only three during the years he participated.

“It was so much fun,” he said. Although his classroom career has ended, Houghton has plans for the years ahead.

He began writing poetry when he was a high school senior. He calls his work “song poems” and has written nearly 2,000 of them. One of his retirement goals is to publish the poems as books he can give to his grandchildren.

He also plans to become an active member of the elders population.

“I want to contribute something positive to my community, like I believe I have done with my work with the youth population,” he said.

Houghton marked the end of his teaching career May 31 with what he calls the Burning of the Beard Ceremony. He had grown his beard during the fall, as he had done three other times over the years.

After cutting it off, he placed the beard in a sacred fire to commemorate the end of his teaching career and the beginning of full retirement.

The ceremony took place one day before his final day at school.

“It was perfect timing,” Houghton said. “I have been blessed by the Creator God to be given this job.”

Family enrichment fund brings fun to foster families

FROM ACFS

Throughout June, foster families across the Eastern Upper Peninsula had several opportunities to participate in activities

made possible through the EUP Foster Family Enrichment Fund.

Activities included the monthly Foster Family Support Group at Sault Wesleyan Church, an oppor-

tunity to attend Shrek the Musical at Soo Theatre, and a foster family meetup at the new waterpark and pool area at Bay Mills Resort in Brimley.

The EUP Foster Family Enrichment Fund was established in late 2022 to provide meaningful opportunities for children in foster care throughout the Eastern Upper Peninsula. The fund helps make experiences like these possible by giving children and foster families opportunities to build connections, create memories, and enjoy activities they may not otherwise be able to attend. The fund is managed through the Chippewa County Community Foundation.

An advisory committee made up of caseworkers from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Bay Mills Indian Community, Anishnaabek Community and Family Services (ACFS), UP Kids, along with a Regional Resource Team member from Great Lakes Recovery Centers, all work together throughout the year to plan enrichment opportunities for foster families across the region.

The committee strives to offer monthly enrichment opportunities for foster families throughout the Eastern Upper Peninsula.

While these events provide valuable opportunities for foster families, the need for foster homes continues to grow. ACFS is currently looking for foster families to help care for children in need.

Whenever possible, ACFS places children in tribal foster homes to help them stay connected to their Native American culture, traditions, and community. The agency also oversees tribal

child welfare cases nationwide and works to locate tribal resource foster homes, even outside of its seven-county service area.

For more information about becoming a foster or adoptive parent, contact Anishnaabek Community and Family Services at (906) 632-5250, toll-free at 1 (800) 726-0093, or email acfs-fosterhomes@saulttribe.net.

To learn more about the EUP Foster Family Enrichment Fund or to make a donation, visit chippewacountycommunityfoundation.org/donate.

Bellant graduates

Sault Tribe member Brayden Bellant earned his high school diploma from Lighthouse Connections Academy on June 2, 2026. Born and raised in Pontiac, Mich., Bellant will take a year off before joining the workforce. His favorite hobby is building with Legos. He cherishes his Grandma Peggy and helps her whenever she needs it.



Unit I elders July birthday

The Unit I Elders celebrate monthly birthdays at each of their Elder Sub-Committee meetings, purchasing cake and ice cream to share with everyone at the meeting. This month, Sault Meal Program Cook Phillip Nertoli Jr. was the lone July birthday to celebrate.

Happy Birthday, Phil!



Bringing Our Community Together Newberry Powwow



Ice Circle singers



Mukwa Giizhik performs.

Rain stitched the edges of the powwow grounds in Newberry on June 13, softening the dust to dark earth and beading on feathers, shawls, and folded chairs. The drums rose anyway, steady as a heart under a gray sky, while bells answered in silver flashes and voices carried warmth through the cool, wet air. There was coffee in paper cups, smoke and sweetgrass, damp grass underfoot, and a circle small enough to feel like family. Even in the rain, the colors stayed bright.



Frog Hills



Nicole Maudrie of Newberry joined by her 10-year-old daughter, Alexandria.



Les Ailing with the Agent Orange Staff and Nick Van Alstine with the Prisoner of War Staff lead Grand Entry



Alec Lindenberger travelled to Newberry from Marquette.



Preparing to post the colors.



Joseph, Carlton, 12, of Kinross, received \$20 from Arena Director Bud Biron in the day's first spot dance.



Photos by Scott Brand

Heartbeat under the grass

BY BRENDA AUSTIN

You hear it before you understand it. The drum starts low, a heartbeat under the grass, under the soles of your shoes, under your ribs. Then the singers rise around it, voices braided together, high and strong, carrying something older than the microphone and the folding chairs and the parked cars shining beyond the arena. The sound does not ask permission. It enters you.

The powwow grounds are alive with color. Ribbon skirts flicker like moving flowers. Beadwork catches the sun one tiny flash at a time. Feathers lift and dip. Bells sewn to dancers' legs answer the drum with a bright metallic rain. A child in tiny moccasins watches the older dancers with solemn eyes, then stamps one foot, testing the earth, testing himself.

The air smells of dust and trampled sweet grass, of sun-warmed canvas, of cedar smoke drifting from somewhere you can't see. Fry bread browns in hot oil, and the scent rolls through the crowd sweet and heavy, mixing with coffee, grilled meat, sunscreen, damp earth, and the faint sharp smell of leather warmed by skin.

Every breath tastes like summer and smoke.

Around the circle, people sit in lawn chairs beneath pop-up tents, laughing, visiting, fanning themselves with paper plates. Aunties call across the way. Elders watch with faces calm as stones in a river. Babies sleep through the drum as if they heard it before they were born.

Then the dancers move.

Not all at once, not the same way. Some step light and quick, fringe flying from their sleeves like sparks. Some move with a deep, grounded grace, each footfall placed with care. Some spin, bright shawls opening behind them like wings. The bells, the beads, the feathers, the breathing crowd — all of it gathers into one pulse.

You feel the drum in your chest.

You feel the dust lift against your ankles.

You feel the heat of the day, the press of bodies, the ache of history, the joy that has survived being tested. This is not a performance only. It is reunion. Memory. Prayer. Family. A circle wide enough to hold grief and laughter at the same time.

And when the song ends, the silence does not fall.



44th annual Bahweting Homecoming Powwow held July 3-5 at Sault Tribe powwow grounds



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Tribe’s board meets June 16, passes resolutions

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors met at the Kewadin Casino and Convention Center on June 16 where they passed a dozen resolutions.

The only measure that prompted real debate came in the form of a Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget modification to Facilities Capital Expenditures for an increase of \$1.26 million earmarked for critical repairs and maintenance on various buildings. A proposed amendment to remove the Greenough Building and two other structures known as Inland A and Inland B, which had formerly housed Natural Resources

employees and equipment, was passed as the majority of directors wished to have more information before moving ahead with expenditures on these structures.

In other action the board approved the following resolutions:

- Approved the FY 2026 budget for the John Hopkins Family Spirit’s Syphilis Project with other revenue from ITC of \$5,400.
- Approved a FY 2026 budget modification to Big Bear Building Operatiins bringing \$17,599 in Third Party Revenues in for replacing worn out piec-

es associated with the walking track and to bring in new shower heads.

- Approved FY 2026 and FY 2027 budgets for IT Cybersecurity with State of Michigan Revenue for \$37,557.75 and \$112,673.25, respectively.
- Awarded a three-year contract with Hunt’s Maintenance to provide cleaning services for all administrative, health and community buildings for \$1.76 million as the entity was the lowest bidder by a substantial amount.
- Approved the Health Division’s FY 2025 and 2026 Small Ambulatory Program appli-

cations as it pursues up to \$3.5 million in grant money from Indian Health Services for the Sault Ste. Marie Health Center and Expansion Project.

- Awarded a contract to JAMA Development, L.L.C., in the amount of \$91,801.48 to bring approximately 7,300 square-feet of new flooring to the Manistique Health Center.
- Approved a residential land lease modification for a parcel in Kincheloe’s Cedar Grove Estates.
- Approved a Natural Resources Division request to apply for up to \$50,000 in

Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Youth Initiative funds earmarked for hunter safety education which will also include cultural teachings, treaty rights and indigenous values.

- Authorized the Natural Resources Division to apply for up to \$150,000 in Bureau of Indian Affairs Fish Hatchery Maintenance Program funding for future work in Barbeau and Nunn’s Creek.
- Authorized the Governmental Human Resources Director to negotiate an offer to hire for the Chief Judge position.

Sault Tribe Elder Employment Program positions open

PRC Program Clerk – Sault Ste. Marie

The Sault Tribe Elder Employment Program is accepting applications for a part-time PRC Program Clerk at the Sault Tribe Health Center in Sault Ste. Marie. This position is 14 hours per week at \$14.50 per hour and will assist Purchase Referred Care staff with mail, filing, copying, faxing, and use of the PRC Access program. Applicants must be Sault Tribe members age 60 or over and reside within the seven-county service area. A high school diploma or equivalent and

office experience are preferred. The closing date is Aug. 7, 2026.

Elder Meal Program Aide – St. Ignace

The Sault Tribe Elder Employment Program is accepting applications for a part-time Elder Meal Program Aide with the Elder Service Division in St. Ignace. This position is 14 hours per week at \$14.50 per hour and assists with Elder congregate meals, meal delivery, kitchen and dining room cleanup, grocery shopping, inventory, and food preparation. Applicants must be Sault Tribe members age 60 or

over and reside within the seven-county service area. A high school diploma or equivalent is preferred. No experience is required. Serve Safe Certification is preferred. A valid driver’s license and insurability by the Sault Tribe Insurance Department are required. The closing date is Aug. 7, 2026.

Elder Transportation Driver – Unit 2

The Sault Tribe Elder Employment Program is accepting applications for a part-time Elder Transportation Driver for the Elder Service Division, Unit 2 location, including Hessel, Newberry, and surrounding areas. This position is 14 hours per week at \$14.50 per hour and provides prearranged transportation for elders to non-emergency medical appointments, including hospitals, clinics, and doctor offices. Duties include vehicle inspections, maintenance records, vehicle housekeeping, and passenger safety. Applicants must be Sault Tribe members age 60 or over and reside within the seven-county service area. A valid

driver’s license and insurability by the Sault Tribe Insurance Department are required. A chauffeur’s license must be obtained upon employment. The closing date is Aug. 7, 2026.

Elder Assistant – Youth Education and Activities Program, Marquette

The Sault Tribe Elder Employment Program is accepting applications for a part-time Elder Assistant for the Youth Education and Activities Program in Marquette. This position is 14 hours per week at \$14.50 per hour and assists YEA staff with student monitoring, program preparation, supplies, snacks, lunch preparation, copies, messages, and general program support. Applicants must be Sault Tribe members age 60 or over and reside within the seven-county service area. A high school diploma or equivalent is required, and experience working with youth is preferred. Applicants must undergo and pass a background check. The position is open until filled.

Education & Activities Program – Marquette

An elder assistant for the Youth Education & Activies Program (YEA) is needed for 14 hours per week at \$14.50 per hour. Sault Tribe members 60 and older who live in the seven-county service area may apply.

The elder assistant will assist YEA staff with preparations for activities and workshops, provide direct services to youth along side YEA staff, and assist with YEA program operations as needed.

High school diploma or equivalent is required. Experience working with youth is preferred. The successful candidate will be required to undergo and pass a background check. See the attached job description for more information.

To apply for any of the above openings, contact WIOA/Senior Employment Program, Attn: Brenda Cadreau, 2 Ice Circle, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783, (906) 635-4767, or email to: bcadreau@saulttribe.net.

Region 9 Agency on Aging seeks advisory council members

The Region 9 Area Agency on Aging is seeking interested individuals to serve on its advisory council, the Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging.

Council members help share ideas, discuss issues affecting older adults, support advocacy efforts, and provide feedback on programs and services for seniors throughout the region.

Region 9 serves the counties of Alcona, Alpena, Arenac,

Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle and Roscommon.

We are currently seeking representation from Arenac and Oscoda counties, as well as from minority groups, tribal, and healthcare organizations.

Individuals interested in joining the council are encouraged to contact Connie McQuarrie by email at mcquarriec@nemcsa.org.

Unit 4 Manistique elders start BINGO fundraiser

The Unit 4 Manistique elders are excited to announce they will offer BINGO as a fundraiser for their various elder activities. The elder and volunteer led BINGO will be held on the second and fourth Mondays each month, starting with July 3 BINGO will be played in the Community Room at the Manistique Tribal Community Center, located at 8 W US Hwy 2 in Manistique.

The doors will open at 8: 0 a.m., and the group will start selling cards at 2 p.m., with play to start at 1 p.m. The public is wel-

come, and this BINGO is open to players ages 8 and older. The Manistique elder lunch will be served at 11 0 a.m. and guests are welcome to make a donation and join the elders for lunch before BINGO starts. Jackpot payouts will be based on sales.

The Unit 4 Manistique elders would like to thank Mike Pins from the Gaming Commission and Ron Neal and Dave Kucharczyk from Kewadin Casinos for their assistance and guidance in getting the elders established.

Scholarship for trades students

A new scholarship is available for Sault Tribe members, in memory of the late Joni Talentino. The annual \$1000 Joni R. Talentino scholarship is for students pursuing a career in the trades.

Talentino spent over 30 years serving her community, creating an everlasting contribution to her life’s work at Sault Tribe Housing Authority. She believed in pushing everyone to further their education, especially in the trades programs.

The deadline to apply is Aug. 20. To learn how to apply, see saulttribe.com.

Walking on...

BERNARD “BERNIE” FREDRICK ROY

Bernard “Bernie” Fredrick Roy, 40, of Kincheloe, Mich., passed away June 15, 2026. He was born April 4, 1986, in Toledo, Ohio, to Geoffrey Michael Patman and Kellie Sue (Roy) Parker.



enjoying time with loved ones, Bernie’s adventurous spirit and easygoing nature left a lasting impression on those around him.

Bernie is survived by his beloved children, Hailey Shea Hiatt, Koal Alan Roy, Alec Caine Roy, and Geoffrey Fredrick Roy; his parents, Geoffrey Michael Patman and Kellie Sue (Roy) Parker; and his siblings, Phillip Roy, Matthew Roy, and Kathleen Roy.

He was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Bernard and Marjorie Roy; and paternal grandparents, John and Kathleen Patman.

Bernie will be remembered for his hardworking nature, his love of adventure, and the many memories he created with those who knew and loved him. His presence will be deeply missed, but his memory will live on in the hearts of his family, friends, and all whose lives he touched.

Per Bernie’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.

DORIS JUNE (GARDNER) NELSON

Doris June (Gardner) Nelson, 86, left this earth to complete her family circle in Heaven on June 27, 2026, after a brief illness.

She was born April 15, 1940, on Neebish Island to Charles and Violet (Perry) Gardner.

Known to everyone as “Gramma Dee,” Doris was also known for her signature closing, “Jesus loves you more.” She spent her years at home in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., where she inspired her family with her belief that children should always come first. Doris lovingly cared for her mother and her sister, Grace, for many years, demonstrating a lifetime of selfless devotion to those she loved.

Doris enjoyed crocheting, working puzzles, and visits from her many grandchildren. She was especially admired for her delicious French toast, fried potatoes, and famous fried spaghetti.

Doris is survived by her daughter, Rose King; sons, Ronnie (Karla) Nelson and Philip (Mary) Nelson; grandchildren,

See “Walking on,” page 19



Sault Tribe member Renee St. Andre helps lead Colorado wolf awareness campaign

BY SCOTT BRAND

A member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and a former resident of St. Ignace is playing an important role in Colorado’s efforts to restore gray wolves, not through wildlife management in the field, but through a public education campaign designed to support coexistence between wolves and livestock producers.

According to a June press release from the Colorado Parks and Wildlife agency, Red Hawk, a division of Native American Broadcasting Company, owned by Renee St. Andre and publisher of SaultTribeGuardian.com, has been awarded \$20,000 to help raise awareness about Colorado’s “Born to Be Wild” specialty license plate program.

The project is a collaboration between Red Hawk and two clients; the Mesa County Fair and Rocky Mountain News Network. Mesa County Fair is Western Colorado’s largest county fair. Rocky Mountain News Network is a radio news network that pro-



Renee St. Andre

duces Colorado-focused news and sports reports distributed to 35 radio stations and FM translators across the state.

The campaign aims to educate thousands of Colorado residents about the benefits of the Born to Be Wild license plate and the role it plays in supporting non-lethal wolf management strategies.

The Born to Be Wild license plate has become one of Colorado’s most successful spe-

cialty plate programs, with more than 26,000 plates sold since becoming available in January 2024. Each plate generates \$50 annually to support wolf conflict mitigation efforts, and the program has raised more than \$1.3 million as of May 31.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Director Laura Clellan said the program has become a significant source of funding for the agency’s wolf management efforts.

“The Born to Be Wild license plate continues to be a valuable funding source for Colorado Parks and Wildlife as we work to build a sustainable gray wolf population in the Centennial State and minimize conflict between livestock and wolves,” Clellan said. “This program has provided vital contributions that fund ongoing non-lethal conflict minimization techniques, particularly the Colorado Range Rider Program. CPW is grateful to Coloradans for making the Born to Be Wild license plate such a success and assisting our



The Born to Be Wild campaign is designed to help the wolf population.

important work of supporting wolf-livestock conflict minimization on working lands.”

According to project organizers, the Born to Be Wild license plate is currently the only license plate program in the United States specifically dedicated to funding non-lethal methods of addressing conflicts associated with growing wolf populations.

“Our hope is that this promotional effort will result in

selling enough license plates that Michigan and other states with a growing wolf population will consider launching similar license plate programs to support their non-lethal wolf conflict programs,” St. Andre said.

Although she currently resides in Colorado, St. Andre has deep ties to the Eastern Upper Peninsula having grown up in St. Ignace and is an enrolled member of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

Protect local waterways from invasive species

BY AMY SCHNEIDER, FISHERIES BIOLOGIST

A concern for environmental and outdoor enthusiasts is the presence of non-local beings, which are plants and animals that have spread outside their native habitat. When non-local beings are harmful to local ecosystems, they are referred to in western science as Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).

The Sault Tribe has a rich history and connection with the St. Mary’s River, surrounding waters, and the local beings that call them home. Therefore, monitoring aquatic non-local beings is very important to Gidayaangwaami’idimin Ezhi-inawendiyang (Sault Tribe Natural Resources Division).

Working with federal, tribal, state, and provincial agencies in the United States and Canada, the Natural Resource Division’s Fisheries Program participates in sampling focusing on the early detection and monitoring of non-local fish species in the St. Mary’s River.

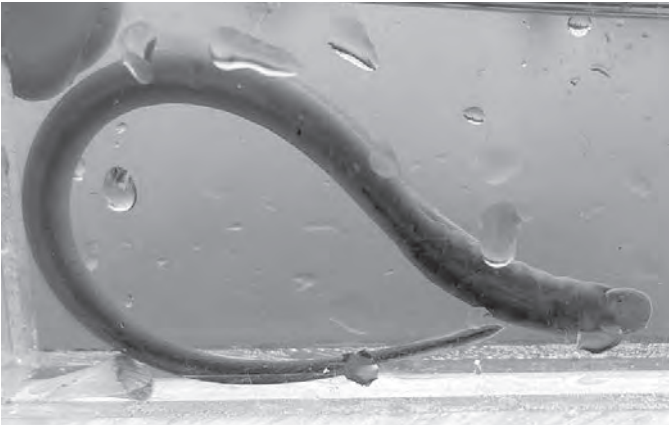
This work helps biologists detect newly introduced species, understand how non-local spe-

cies move through the river, and remove newly detected species before populations become too large. Some examples of harmful non-local species that have been found in the St. Mary’s River include sea lamprey, Eurasian ruffe, and round goby. These fish can compete for food and habitat used by local fish, such as walleye, perch, and whitefish.

Aquatic invasive species have been introduced and spread through pathways such as freighter ballast water, the pet trade, and contaminated boats, trailers, and trucks. Everyone can help to slow the spread of non-local beings by carefully cleaning, draining, and drying all personal gear before moving to a different lake or river.

By being mindful of the potential for transporting non-local aquatic beings, you can help slow their spread and protect local waters.

For more information regarding aquatic non-local beings and what can be done about them, please go to <https://stopaquatic-itchhikers.org/> or reach out to the Natural Resources Division at naturalresources@saulttribe.net.



Photos by Sault Tribe Natural Resource Department
Left: Sault Tribe fisheries technicians prepping a fyke net for an overnight set. Right top: A sea lamprey captured during aquatic invasive species monitoring in the mouth of the Charlotte River. Right center: A Eurasian ruffe captured during aquatic invasive species monitoring.

Tribe stocks 1 million walleye fingerlings this spring

The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Natural Resources Division Fisheries Program has completed another successful spring stocking season, introducing more than 1 million fish into waters across the Upper Great Lakes to help strengthen regional fisheries and support culturally significant fish populations.

During this year’s efforts, Sault Tribe Fisheries Program staff collected 901,995 walleye fingerlings from the tribe’s Barbeau Hatchery before transporting them to carefully selected stocking locations throughout the Upper Peninsula and Northern Lower Michigan.

Staff also collected approximately 279,000 lake whitefish from rearing hatcheries and ponds at Barbeau and Odenaang

in Sault Ste. Marie.

“This work represents months of planning, research, and long hours by our Fisheries program,” said Sault Tribe Chairman Austin Lowes. “Every fish stocked is a part of the Sault Tribe’s long-term commitment to supporting healthy fisheries and protecting culturally important species while making sure resources remain available for future generations.”

The Barbeau Hatchery plays a critical role in the tribe’s fisheries management efforts. Since 1999, the Fisheries Program has stocked more than 22 million walleye throughout the region. The hatchery’s carefully managed rearing process helps young fish survive one of the most vulnerable stages of their life cycle before they are

released into the wild.

The Fisheries Program has also become an early leader in rearing lake whitefish in ponds, a technique rarely practiced in North America. Since launching the effort in 2020, the program has continued refining its methods to help bolster declining whitefish populations throughout the Great Lakes.

The annual stocking effort supports healthy fisheries throughout the region while helping sustain species that are culturally, ecologically, and economically important to Sault Tribe and communities across the Upper Great Lakes.

At right, Fisheries’ Rusty Aikens nets walleye fingerlings from the rearing pond.



Walking on continued...

From “Walking on,” page 19
KELLY ANN CONSTANTINO

Kelly Ann Constantino, 63, of Gladstone, Mich., passed away peacefully at her home with her loving family by her side on Sunday, June 28, 2026.



Born Sept. 24, 1962, in Escanaba, Mich., Kelly was the beloved daughter of Eli and Clara (Bingham) Constantino. She was raised in Rapid River and graduated from Rapid River High School.

Kelly dedicated much of her career to serving others. She worked for many years at Wal-Mart before finding her true calling with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, where she proudly served as the Youth Education Coordinator in Delta county. Kelly took great pride in her work and was passionate about making a positive impact on the lives of the youth and families she served.

A woman of unwavering faith, Kelly was a devoted Christian who found strength, hope and peace in her relationship with God. She faithfully attended Grace Church in Gladstone for many years before becoming a devoted member of Wellspring Community Church in Escanaba when it was established in 2017. Her faith was evident in the kindness, compassion and love she shared with everyone she met.

Kelly found joy in the simple blessings of life. She had a deep appreciation for God’s creation and especially loved spending time in nature, often feeding the deer that visited her home. One of her greatest treasures was her beloved pink case tractor, which she proudly owned and lovingly refurbished alongside her fiancé, Tony Mathias. Together, they made many wonderful memories attending tractor shows, enjoying the outdoors and sharing a life filled with love. Above all else, Kelly’s greatest love was her family. She cherished every moment spent with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchild, creating lasting memories through laughter, unconditional love and unwavering support.

She loved family gatherings, celebrating milestones and simply being surrounded by the people she loved most. Her home was always filled with warmth and she made everyone feel welcome. Her beloved dog, Kiwi, affectionately known as her “baby,” was a constant source of comfort and companionship.

Kelly is survived by her loving fiancé Tony Mathias, her children Vincent Jarvey, Nichole Jarvey, Ryan (Dawn) Jarvey and Larissa Wils. Her siblings Stan Constantino, Steve Constantino, Rhonda Constantino and Karla Constantino; her cherished grandchildren Hayley, Keaton, Rakyah, Ryayna, Deenanika, Kylie, Liveah, Jaeger, Kruzz, Zander and Xavier, one great-grandchild Paisley; several nieces, nephews, cousins and extended family members and many dear friends.

Kelly was preceded in death

by her parents, Eli and Clara Constantino, her former husband, Greg Jarvey; her sisters, Maxine and Marcia Constantino; her beloved granddaughter, Kazyah Jarvey; her sister-in-law, Sally Constantino; and her great-nephew Wyatt Smith.

Kelly will be remembered for her unwavering faith, compassionate heart, gentle spirit, infectious smile and the unconditional love she gave so freely to her family and friends. She touched countless lives through her kindness, generosity and genuine concern for others. Her legacy of love, faith, devotion and selflessness will continue to live on in all who were blessed to know her.

The family would like to extend their deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to the entire team at OSF Hospice for the exceptional care, compassion and dignity they provided to Kelly during her final journey. A very special thank you goes to Carrie, whose kindness, support and loving care brought comfort not only to Kelly but to her entire family during such a difficult time. Your compassion and dedication will never be forgotten.

Though our hearts are broken by her passing, we find comfort in knowing that Kelly is at peace in the presence of the Lord and Savior. While she will be deeply missed every day, her love, faith and beautiful spirit will remain in the hearts of all who knew and loved her. She will be forever loved, forever remembered and never forgotten.

MARISSA SHAY NANCY MION

On Sunday afternoon, July 5, 2026, Marissa Mion’s life was tragically taken from her.

Marissa is survived by her two children, whom she loved more than anything in the world, Eliana and Jovani; her loving



brothers Brandon (Alicia) Mion, and Michael (Citlali) Mion; her parents, Lori and Joseph Mion; her nephew, Giuseppe; many close family members, including aunt, Cyndi (Steve) Thomas, and cousin, Josh (Ashley) Thomas, and friends. She was preceded in death by her maternal grandparents, Robert and Nancy Boven and by her paternal grandparents, Remo and Barbara Mion.

Marissa was born to Lori and Joseph Mion in Plainwell on Sept. 19, 2000, the youngest of her siblings. While in school at Mattawan, she met her lifelong best friends, Taylor and Natalie, who were like sisters to her, and excelled in track, specifically in the long jump.

Marissa was known first and

foremost by being the most loving mother to her children. She welcomed Eliana into the world in December 2018 and Jovani in September 2024. They were everything to her and she adored being their mom. She lived and breathed for her children, and went above and beyond to be the very best mother, and she was. There was not a soul that knew Marissa that didn’t know how much she loved her children and how amazing of a mom she was. Additionally, she was a proud Zia to her nephew Giuseppe and a remarkable friend who touched so many lives with her laughter, tenacity, and kindness. She was exceedingly loyal and a friend to all.

Marissa loved to go shopping and enjoyed reading as well. She garnered a large following on social media from her love of GTA; Fortnite was another favorite video game of hers. Marissa was also proud of her heritage and member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

She dreamed of one day visiting Italy where her paternal grandfather was born and spoke fondly of her travels to Puerto Rico and Florida. More recently, Marissa obtained her GED, got into cooking, started a fitness group, and was signed up to attend KVCC in the fall to get her associates degree in social work.

For the last 2.5 years, she worked providing direct support services to adults with disabilities where she very much enjoyed taking care of her residents and bringing them on outings and to community events.

Her last day was a joyous day, spent surrounded by family on the Fourth of July. Eliana jumped off the dock and swam in the water with her aunts and uncles, while Jovani hung out with his cousin and refused to nap because he was having too much fun.

Marissa made a delicious banana pudding and the night concluded with a boat ride around the lake and a firework show. Her family is eternally grateful that her last day was the best day, and one spent together.

May she rest in peace, knowing that she will never have to fear for her safety again. She will forever be in our hearts as we carry on her legacy and support her beloved children. As a tribute to Marissa, her father has chosen “Just the Way You Are” by Bruno Mars as a song of remembrance.

A private service for immediate family and close friends will be taking place at this time. A celebration of life will be set for a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to support Marissa’s children, Eliana and Jovani, and her memorial service: <https://gofund.me/9234091d4>.

PENNY ANN PATZ

Penny Ann Patz passed away May 26, 2026. She was born Penny Ann Farley on May 2, 1948, and grew up in Garden, Mich. Grounded in the deep roots of her parents, Doris Boudreau and Norval Farley, she developed the joyful spirit and strong values she carried throughout her life.

Penny was the beloved wife of Murray Patz, her highschool sweetheart, and together they were in their 60th year of marriage. She was a devoted mother of her three boys — Todd, Tabb, and Tyler — as well as a loving grandmother, sister, aunt, niece, and friend.



Penny is survived by her husband Murray; her sons Tabb (Andi) and Tyler (Gina); her sister Patty Heslip; and grandsons Aaron and Milo, who lovingly called her “Grammy.” She was tragically preceded in death by her son Todd in 2020.

Keeping family traditions alive was incredibly important to her - a lifelong value she shared lovingly with her children and grandchildren. She shared herself with those outside the family as well, giving as compassionately as she could.

Penny was not just a woman of strong values; she was fun. Forever a kid at heart, she was bubbly, kind, and quickwitted. Her great sense of humor and warmth made her a delight to be around for people and animals alike. A devoted catlover, Penny referred to herself as “Grandmeow.” She especially adored her dear cat, Torby, who was a constant companion and a source of joy and solace over the last several years.

A point of tremendous pride for Penny was her Native American ancestry. She had recently been recognized as a lifetime member of Upper Michigan’s Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of the Chippewa Indians. The family is deeply grateful that she received this connection and recognition before her passing.

“I give you this, one thought to keep: I am with you still, I do not sleep. I am a thousand winds that blow, I am the diamond glints on snow. I am the sunlight on ripened grain. I am the gentle autumn rain. When you awaken in the morning’s hush, I am the swift, uplifting rush, of quiet birds in circled flight. I am the soft stars that shine at night. Do not think of me as gone. I am with you still, in each new dawn.”

(Native American poem)

Penny’s passing has been very difficult for those she leaves behind, but her life, filled with love, generosity, faith, and exuberant energy, will be remembered with deep affection. In accordance with Penny’s wishes, there will be no public gathering. Arrangements by: Reinbold – Novak, of Sheboygan.

TAD EDWIN RICHARDSON

Tad Edwin Richardson, 65, passed away unexpectedly on June 2, 2026, in Cheboygan, Mich., where his life began on Oct. 7, 1960. Tad lived a life of



adventure and resilience maintaining a deep love for family. He put himself through college, became a nurse then moved to Phoenix, Ariz., where he could be closer to his father.

Maintaining a strong work ethic, he followed many paths before eventually returning to Cheboygan to be closer to his Michigan family. His hobbies included fishing, camping, and riding motorcycles.

The last several years of his life he made great effort to learn of his heritage. When the rolls were opened, he applied the first day he was able to. Upon receipt of his membership credentials, he went to work in a tribal fishing endeavor with his lifelong friend Duke White. He flourished in this traditional work. He traced his lineage back to nookomisens imaagizid Catherine Andrus who was raised by the Biddles of Mackinac Island. He had great joy upon being an elder in the Sault Tribe.

Tad is survived by daughters, Tabitha (Andy) Goldsmith of Lowell, Mich., and Tonya Richardson of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., stepson Collin Winemiller, along with his 10 grandchildren: Elijah, Emery, Ethan, Easton, Ezra, Kamber, Travis, and Violet of Lowell and Paisley and Tatum of the Sault. Also surviving are his mother Fay (Tom) Scheske of Cheboygan, brother Kenneth (Calien) Richardson, niece Krystyn (Andrew) Grinell, nephew Aaron (Allison) Richardson and his cherished nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his father, Guy Richardson.

Tad often said he had more than he deserved and believed that if God blessed him with another day, it was a good day. We find comfort knowing he was called home.

Visitation and funeral mass were held on Monday, June 8 at the Northshore Community Church in Cheboygan. Interment will take place at the Oak Hill Cemetery in Aloha Township.

CARD OF THANKS

On behalf of the family of LaRaine Wiggins, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the unwavering support from community members, businesses, relatives, and friends who shared wonderful stories about our Mom, words of kindness, condolences, understanding, letters, cards, food, generous donations and services.

We would like to recognize our Chippewa Tribal Health Care employees for assistance in defraying costs, referrals and to Nurse April Morgan for her house calls.

Thank you for treatment from the many medical specialists at Helen Newberry Joy, Mack Straits and War Memorial hospitals, their nurses, reception staff, pharmacies, emergency room staff and lab personnel.

My Mother experienced exceptional care from Straits Area Assisted Living where activities were provided daily, special holiday meals were served to residents and families, end of life care was provided, staff and residents were so very helpful

See “Walking on,” page 21

Beyond honey bees: Seeking alternative pollinators

By LINDSEY KERR, MSU EXTENSION

While many of us spend time looking for pest insects in our gardens, we should also be looking for beneficial insects. Among beneficial insects are those that help pollinate flowers, including the flowers that grow into fruits and vegetables. Most plants cannot pollinate themselves; pollen grains must be carried from flower to flower of the same species in some way, through wind, water, animals, or insects. Bees are some of our most efficient pollinator insects and are essential to sustaining life on earth. As populations of insects decline, it is important that we find ways to attract and retain native pollinators in our gardens.

European honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) are helpful pollinators in many crops, but not all crops



Photo by Nate Walton, MSUE

Bumble bee (*Bombus impatiens*) inside of a blue lobelia flower (*Lobelia siphilitica*).

are easily pollinated by honey bees. Some plants such as blueberries and tomatoes need pollinators that can “buzz” the flower, shaking the pollen loose rather than go in to collect it. Native bumble bees are better at this than honey bees, making them valuable for setting fruit in these crops. Other plants might depend solely on flies to pollinate, such as the pawpaw.

To bring alternative pollinators to your yard or garden, Michigan State University Extension recommends creating gardens or spaces that provide habitat for native pollinators. This will invite them to visit, pollinate flowers, make nests, and reproduce nearby. There are generalist bees that live in Michigan that switch easily between fruit and vegetable crops, non-native flower gardens, and native plants. Other bees are

specialists and require specific plants to survive. One example in Michigan is *Melissodes denticulatus*, the denticulate long-horned bee that only feeds its larvae pollen from ironweed (*Vernonia*) species.

It is easy to attract and support bees with native plants and other flowers that are selected to bloom at a variety of times throughout the growing season.

Other organisms not generally thought of as pollinators are butterflies, wasps, beetles, and hummingbirds. Some of these even look like bees! While these animals are not the best at pollination, they do contribute to the process. Some are specialists, for example the goldenrod soldier beetle frequently visits and pollinates goldenrod species and yarrow.

Non-bee pollinators are just as important as bees because they may be the only animal that is active during the plant’s blooming time. They may also be able to reach pollen in flowers that are difficult for others to access. Carrion feeding flies and beetles pollinate skunk cabbage when it blooms while snow is still on the ground in Michigan.

The difference in the size, shape or color of the flower determines which pollinators can access it for nourishment. Long, narrow flowers require organisms with long tongues or proboscis. Smaller, delicate flowers require short tongues or proboscis or a smaller bodied insect like a sweat



Photo by Nate Walton, MSUE

Goldenrod soldier beetle (*Chauliognathus pensylvanicus*) on a flower at Dow Gardens.

bee or a hover fly. Some flowers have evolved to accommodate hummingbirds, like Cardinal flower, while others require the weight of a bumble bee to open them enough to expose the pollen for collecting. The flowers of bottle gentian never fully open and need the weight and strength of a sturdy bumble bee to climb inside to access nutrition, inadvertently cover itself in pollen, and then fly to another bottle gentian nearby and spread the genetic material. Any animal that visits a flower for its nectar or pollen is a potential pollinator.

Supporting a diverse ecosystem is the best way to promote pollination by a variety of species. You can help increase populations of alternative pollinators by planting native plants and

reducing or eliminating pesticide usage. Targeting only pest species when they are present and active is key to reducing pesticides. You can identify plants and pests correctly by submitting photos and asking for advice to Ask Extension (www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/ask-an-expert/#Ask).

Follow pesticide label directions—the label is the law, and more is not better. Do not use pesticides near your native plant gardens. Also, consider creating more wild spaces on your property to encourage alternative pollinators to visit.

Get outside, look closely, and pay attention to fully appreciate the diversity of pollinators in your own backyard.

— Updated from an original article written by Beth Clawson.

“Walking on” continued — Card of Thanks

From “Walking on,” page 20 and careful in delivering care and became friends and advocates. They went above and beyond to make special meals, provide live music, entertainment, holiday décor, special events, maintenance of their beautiful facility, and accommodated any requests. We were grateful for Lynne Yoder, Manager; Amanda, LPN; Melissa, CNA; Brooke, CNA; Rhonda, Recreational Director; Tabitha, Cook and all the rest of the staff.

Also, the St. Ignace Fire Department came to Mom’s rescue one day when a sewing machine caught on fire. It was embarrassing for her, but they

handled it with grace. Marykay Tamlyn, thank you for your beautiful Christmas basket. It brought a smile to Mom’s face with many personal items she loved. Special heartfelt thanks to the Shimkovitz family, Carla Freeman, Mary Brown, Diane Lehto, Pam Pickleman, and my many cousins for your visits to listen to Mom’s history lessons and photos about the area, 40 years of haircuts at Carla’s Curls, for the wonderful family reunion, for cleaning, moving her furniture three times over, calling, sending notes and comforting her in her time of need.

We cannot thank McLaren Hospice enough for the end-of-

life hospice care our Mother received as Karen, RN came daily to check on her, administer any pain meds the doctor prescribed, ordered and brought necessary specialized equipment and to the Bereavement Counselor Dave Johnson in after care of the family.

Chris Beaulieu, Mike Duflo, and Tom Evans were extremely organized in funeral preparations, assisted us the night she passed, and did a lot of work behind the scenes. Pastor Kyle Kuehl and Cindy Dagleish were instrumental in spearheading the Grief Share Group, provided services at my Dad’s funeral, and Pastor’s wife Kaitlynn was

Mom’s right-hand nurse. Can’t thank Dr. Raghu Rao enough for his many years of service to my Mom.

Keith Shrader, Sextant saw to it that the grave sites were prepared and continues to clean up and mow grass at Caffey Cemetery. We could not have maintained the driveway, sidewalks, decks, and roofs this past winter without Inside Out Home Services and fall clean up by Josh Morningstar. We certainly appreciated Betsy Costa and staff at Cummings-McCraney for handling the sale of my folk’s home and preparing paperwork. Tony and Kristen Salter were so efficient

in handling the sorting through and selling of all the furniture, china, tools, equipment, household items and a life-time of memories.

They say it takes a community to raise a child but it also takes a community to care for the elderly.

Please excuse me if I have failed to mention anyone that assisted us during this sad time. We were very blessed for all the assistance given to both my folks Skip and LaRaine Wiggins and their estate. We appreciated it more than you know. Janice and (Glen) Pittman of Newberry and Daniel (Cyndi) Wiggins of Marquette.

Traditional healers have a gift to heal through spiritual powers

From “Tradtional Healing, Pg. 7 who we are, we know where we belong, we know where we are going and we know where we came from.

We can approach a traditional healer or medicine person for healing. We can also approach our elders who heal through the sharing of their wisdom and the teachings. when we go to a healer or elder, they ask the Creator for help on our behalf.

They have a gift to heal through spiritual powers which come from the Creator and their spirit helpers and from within themselves.

Healers and medicine people work in a variety of ways. Each healer has their own way and special gift. Healing involves ceremony. When a person comes for

doctoring, that is a certain kind of ceremony. When medicine people call in the spirit of the medicines to help, that is also a kind of ceremony.

Some healers know and work with the plants through their connection with the spirits of those plants. Healers and medicine people prescribe medicines specifically for an individual. the way in which the medicine works is not exactly known and is sometimes referred to as “The Great Mystery.”

Great respect is shown for the plants that are used in healing. Healers say that the spirit force of a plant directs them to the plant to use for an individual. Before the plant is picked, the healer puts down a tobacco offering to acknowledge the spirit of the

plant. The plant is addressed by its Native name as, it is said, at least half of the healing is done by the spirit of the plant.

Some healers do doctoring, which may involve the extraction of illness. Some Healers describe their way of working as working with energy, the mind and the spirit. Some are seers, some are counsellors, and some heal with their hands.

All traditional healing is holistic. If a person seeks help for an ulcer, it is not only the ulcer that is treated. The root cause of the condition is addressed. The whole person is worked on. Maybe the whole family will be involved in the healing process. Or maybe the person will need to do something for the community.

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.

To obtain a referral to a

Healer, Elder or Medicine Person in your area, or to make an appointment in the seven-county service area, call Sault Tribe Traditional Medicine at (906) 632-0236.

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.

Reprinted with permission from Anishnawbe Health Toronto, aht.com.

St. Ignace receives 2% funding for boardwalk

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 required to disburse 2% of its slot revenue to local units of government.

In the latest round of funding, the St. Ignace Downtown Development Authority (DDA) received \$3,000, as its request for that amount to maintain the Huron Waterfront Boardwalk was fully funded.

“I am absolutely grateful for all the support the Sault Tribe has given us,” said DDA Director Ryan Sigmon, noting that support extends well beyond the boardwalk, helping to fund various projects throughout the City of St. Ignace, benefitting the community in a multitude of ways.

Sigmon added the Museum of Ojibwa Culture greatly benefits from tribal support and is a staple for residents and visitors, alike

thanks to the tireless efforts of Tom and Francie Wyers. “I want that relationship to go on forever,” he said.

The Huron Waterfront Boardwalk has been a centerpiece of Downtown St. Ignace since its construction in 1984. The 6,000-foot boardwalk extends more than a mile, creating walking routes connecting the waterfront to businesses, parks and cultural sites. The Sault Tribe has dispensed 2% funding to maintain the boardwalk in good condition, as recently as the fall of 2024 when it kicked in \$6,300.

The \$3,000 will be used to replace 40 feet of boards that have deteriorated due to time, weather and wear, near Dollar General.

The boardwalk is maintained by the DDA in conjunction with the St. Ignace Department of Public Works, ensuring that it receives the necessary maintenance and repairs each year.



Photo by Scott Brand

Erica Brickner and Nic Moody of Wisconsin with Evalynn, 9, and Olivia, 6, on the City of St. Ignace Huron Waterfront Boardwalk as they wait to catch the ferry over to Mackinac Island.

Breastfeeding is better for baby’s dental health

BY JESSICA A. RICKERT DDS, ANISHINAABE DENTAL OUTREACH

The United States Breastfeeding Committee designates August as National Breastfeeding Month. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Dental Association recommend nursing for the first year of a baby’s life. Why? Nursing is a healthy choice for both moms and babies, with many benefits, including a fast and strong bond between baby and Mom.

Breastfeeding reduces the risk for baby bottle tooth decay. This type of tooth decay often occurs when a baby is put to bed with a bottle containing formula, milk, or fruit juice.

The ADA found that babies who were exclusively breastfed for 12 months or more were less likely to have teeth alignment issues such as open bites, crossbites, and overbites. Still, a breastfed baby may need braces someday. Other factors, including genetics, pacifier use, and thumb sucking affect alignment. But why not control those factors that

you can control?

Breast milk and baby:

- Is easier for babies to digest than formula
- Is the best source of nutrition for baby
- Changes to meet the nutritional needs of a growing baby.
- Helps protect baby from infection and illnesses like ear infections by providing immunities from mom to the baby
- May lower a child’s risk of obesity and asthma
- Can also help lower baby’s risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Breastfed infants tend to have fewer speech problems than bottle-fed infants

Breastfeeding and mom:

- Moms who breastfeed have lower rates of ovarian and breast cancer
- Moms who breastfeed have lower rates of high blood pressure
- Moms who breastfeed have lower rates of Type 2 diabetes
- Breastfeeding helps the mother’s body return to normal and decreases blood loss after the baby is born

To get ready to breastfeed, while pregnant, mom can:

- Talk to the doctor or midwife about breastfeeding
- Do her own research
- Ask family members for support
- Realize that in the first couple of months, babies need to nurse every few hours, even at night
- Learn about breast pump-

ing, especially if mom wants other family members to be able to feed the baby

- Find out how to eat healthy while breastfeeding

Once baby is born:

- The doctor, nurse or midwife know that immediate skin-to-skin contact with baby is important, and nursing is the best way to do that
- Nurse whenever baby is

hungry

— Ask health professionals for help anytime. They can answer questions about nursing. Breast milk is the perfect food for baby. Breastfeeding gives mom and baby a closeness that is delightful.

The emotional satisfaction is intense and is so unique for each mom and her baby, truly a time to be cherished.





32nd annual

Gathering of the Eagles

Traditional Powwow

August 15 & 16

Hessel, Mich., Located next to the Kewadin Hessel Casino

Aug. 14 Spiritual Gathering at the Powwow Grounds: Gathering Cedar at 12 p.m., Gathering/Circle at 3 p.m., Feast to follow

Aug. 15-16 Powwow: Grand Entry Saturday at 1 & 7 p.m., Sunday at 12 p.m.

HEAD STAFF	
Emcee:	Josh Homminga
Head Veteran:	Nick Van Alostine
Host Drum:	Mukwa Gilzhik
Co-host Drum:	Ice Circle
Invited Drum:	Frog Hill
Arena Director:	Tyler Bouschor
Firekeeper:	Jeff Causley
Spiritual Leaders:	Les Ailing & Bud Biron
Head Female Dancer:	Melissa Causley
Head Male Dancer:	TBD
Head Female Youth Dancer:	Bella Fisher
Head Male Youth Dancer:	William Ruthruff



Vendor Contact: Charlie Treleaven, ctreleaven1@saulttribe.net, (906) 379-8329

Chairman Lowes updates the membership —



AUSTIN LOWES
TRIBAL CHAIRMAN
General Election

The Sault Tribe’s General Election concluded on June 25, and our newly elected board of directors were officially sworn into office on July 6. I would like to sincerely thank our outgoing board members—Kim Hampton, Isaac McKechnie, and Shawn Borowicz—for their years of service to our tribal government. Serving our citizens is a significant responsibility, and I appreciate the time and commitment each of them dedicated to our tribe.

I would also like to congratulate and welcome our newly elected board members—Cole Goudreau, Sue St. Onge, and Ashley Gravelle. I look forward to working alongside each of them as we continue moving our tribe forward.

Following the installation of the new board, Tyler LaPlaunt was selected as vice chairman, Ashley Gravelle as secretary, and Michael McKerchie as treasurer. Congratulations to each of them on their new leadership roles. Together, we have several important initiatives before us, including our upcoming Secretarial Election, continued investments in our gaming operations, and major infrastructure projects such as our new Health Center Annex and Odenaang apartment complex. I am excited to work collaboratively with the entire board of directors as we continue building a stronger future for our tribe.

Secretarial Election Update
As many tribal citizens know,

the Sault Tribe has spent years working toward meaningful constitutional reform. When the Sault Tribe was federally recognized, the Bureau of Indian Affairs established a corporate-style government structure centered around a board of directors. While this structure served an important purpose at the time, many tribal citizens have long believed our government should better reflect the needs and values our community.

Recognizing this, the tribe established a Constitutional Committee approximately 15 years ago. Comprised of respected community leaders and elders, the committee spent several years carefully studying potential reforms while working alongside legal experts. After extensive work, the committee unanimously recommended transitioning towards a three-branch government consisting of executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

Under this model, the board of directors would focus on policymaking rather than operations, while an independent judiciary would provide tribal citizens with standing in Tribal Court. Tribal judges would be elected by the people instead of serving at the pleasure of the board, creating an additional system of checks and balances within our government.

Although the Constitutional Committee unanimously supported a three-branch government, the board of directors later authorized a constitutional survey—at a cost of tens of thousands of dollars—to determine their governmental reform preference. Every registered voter received a survey that included three options: a one-branch government, a two-branch government, and a three-branch government. Notably, neither the one-branch nor two-branch models had been recommended by the Constitutional Committee.

When the results were counted, the outcome was overwhelming. More Tribal citizens participated in the constitutional survey than in our recent General Election, and more than twice as many participants selected the three-branch government compared to the other



options.
Secretarial Election Next Steps

Registration cards will be mailed directly from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to Sault Tribe households on or before Aug. 10. Completed registration cards must be returned by Aug. 31. Official ballots will then be mailed on Sept. 2, with ballots scheduled to be counted on Sept. 26. For this election to be valid, at least 30% of eligible voters must return their ballots.

This is an incredibly important moment in our tribe’s history. Opportunities to amend our Constitution through a Secretarial Election are rare and may not come again for many years. Regardless of how you intend to vote, I strongly encourage every eligible tribal citizen to register and participate in this historic election. The future structure of our government should be decided by the people.

Visit from Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist

On July 13, I had the opportunity to meet with Michigan Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist, who is currently running for Secretary of State.

The Sault Tribe has developed a strong working relationship with current Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson. Secretary Benson has volunteered alongside me during our monthly Feeding America food distributions at Big Bear and has been a strong partner in our efforts

to improve services for tribal citizens.

One initiative that Secretary Benson has supported is allowing the Sault Tribe to develop official tribal license plates that could be made available throughout our seven-county service area. During our meeting, Lt. Governor Gilchrist pledged that, if elected Secretary of State, he would continue supporting this initiative. We appreciate his commitment and look forward to continuing these conversations.

Powwow Season
Summer continues to be one of my favorite times of the year as our communities gather to celebrate our culture through our annual powwows. Most recently, we welcomed thousands of visitors to our Homecoming Jiingtamok in the Sault. It was an incredible weekend filled with singing, dancing, culture, amazing food, and the opportunity to celebrate who we are as Anishinaabe people.

Events like these do not happen without tremendous effort from countless volunteers and staff members. I would especially like to recognize our Language and Culture Director, Cody Jodoin, whose leadership helped make this year’s jiingtamok another tremendous success. Chi miigwech as well to every dancer, drum group, vendor, volunteer, staff member, and community member who helped create such a welcoming atmosphere. Your dedication ensures that our traditions remain

strong and continue to be shared with future generations.

Lansing Community Meeting and Washington, D.C.

On July 20, the tribe will host a community cultural event at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. During this gathering, we will distribute bison meat free of charge to attendees. The bison was generously donated by Woodstone Inc., a construction company that has partnered with many tribes throughout Indian Country.

The following day, on July 21, I will chair our annual downstate meeting at the DoubleTree Hotel, followed by another community gathering. These meetings provide an important opportunity for tribal citizens living downstate to hear updates, ask questions, and connect with tribal leadership.

Immediately following these events, I will travel to Washington, D.C., where I have meetings scheduled with five members of Congress. The primary focus of these discussions will be prediction markets and the significant threat they pose to tribal sovereignty and Indian gaming. Protecting our gaming operations is critical because it supports essential governmental services that our citizens rely upon. I look forward to sharing an update on these Congressional meetings and other federal advocacy efforts in next month’s unit report.

As always, it’s an honor to serve the people.

Updates on Unit 5 powwows, housing, culture



TYLER LAPLAUNT
DIRECTOR, UNIT V

Aanii, Boozhoo,
July is here and summer has finally arrived in the U.P. From harvesting to powwows to relaxing days on the beach or BBQs with family and friends, I hope everyone takes the time to enjoy our amazing and short summer. With the heat wave rolling in, please be sure to stay hydrated and keep cool. If you are able, check on your elders and those in need.

A little helping hand can go a long way when someone is struggling.

I want to thank everyone who participated in our election process and took the time to vote. I am absolutely honored to have the ability to continue to serve and lead Unit 5 and the tribe into the future. Chi miigwech for the tremendous outpouring of support, kind words, and encouragement throughout this process. I also want to thank my fellow board members for having the trust and faith in me to lead another term as vice-chairman of the tribe. I will continue to serve and represent our tribe at all levels of government to ensure our voice is heard. Congratulations to all the newly elected and returning candidates. I look forward to working with you all.

Kitchi-Miniss Jiingtamok
The jiingtamok is almost here thanks to the amazing work of all of our committee members. They have done an absolutely amazing job putting this all together for you and you are in for a treat. The Kitchi-Miniss Jiingtamok will be

hosted at Bay Furnace Park across the highway from the Kewadin Casino in Christmas. The jiingtamok will be held on Saturday, Aug. 8 with a Sunrise Ceremony at 6:30 a.m., Grand Entries at 12 p.m. and 6 p.m., and a feast at 4:30 p.m. Rooms are being held at the White Pine Lodge; just call and say you are booking for the powwow to receive the discounted rate. We look forward to seeing everyone there.

Marquette Powwow
We are continuing to partner with NMU Center for Native American Studies and the Native American Student Association to bring our annual partnership Pow Wow together again this year. The tentative date is Sept. 26 and planning is underway. We will have more information as soon as all of the wonderful students come back from Summer break. This is a fun one to put on with both our students and other Tribes from across the U.P. Can’t wait to keep it going.

Kewadin Christmas and

Wetmore Update
You will soon start to notice some changes to the Kewadin Christmas property in the coming months. The Kewadin team is working to install new RV areas at each of our Kewadin sites. In doing so, the two houses that were hidden in the back between the MidJim and the Kewadin will be removed this fall and sent up to one of the housing sites, where they will be installed for tribal housing within the next year.

The Kewadin team, EDC, Housing, and government all worked together on a plan to best utilize all space available to us and they all agreed that those houses do not belong behind the casino. Additionally, the old Wetmore Health Clinic that has been sitting stagnant will be transferred over to Housing, where they will eventually be able to build out 6-8 units of housing. This will be in addition to the 15-acre Wetmore reservation expansion that is in process. Hopefully, over the next several years, between the reservation

and the old clinic site, this will be enough to address the housing shortage in the greater Munising Area. More to come!

Cultural Events
We have a full lineup of events over the next few months, thanks to Stacie Chambers and the amazing work she has been doing as our Cultural Coordinator in Unit 5. We also have to give recognition to all of the amazing teachers that have been stepping up in our communities. From birch bark harvesting to language classes to ribbon skirts and shirts, people have been stepping up across Unit 5 to help share their knowledge and it is absolutely beautiful to watch unfold. Night (July 23, Aug. 13 and 27), Kitchi-Miniss Jiingtamok (Aug. 8), Hand Drum Workshop (Aug. 15), Ribbon Skirt Workshop (Aug. 26), Birchbark Quilling Workshop (Sept. 12), Upcoming events: Culture Fish Cleaning Workshop (Sept. 19), Community Jiibay (Ghost Feast) Dates TBD in October, Pucker Toe

See “LaPlaunt,” Page 24

Director Goudreau: Serving you, the members



COLE GOUDREAU
DIRECTOR, UNIT IV
Aanii, Boozhoo, Unit 4 members!

I am honored to present my very first Unit 4 report as your Director. I want to begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported me throughout the campaign. I also want to thank my opponent, Abbrielle Hoholik, for running a clean campaign and wish her the best in her future endeavors. My sincere appreciation goes out to Kimberly (Hampton) Andersen for her four years of service and her ongoing advocacy for Indian Country.

Chi Miigwech to the Election Commission, all volunteers, and everyone who helped plan and organize the board installation ceremony. Congratulations to Tyler LaPlaunt on being voted in as vice chairman, Michael McKerchie as treasurer, and Ashley Gravelle as secretary. I look forward to working alongside all of you to serve our tribe.

My first week as a board member was busy and productive. Director Barbeau and I have been working together with the U.P. State Fair (Skerbeck Entertainment Group) to secure wristbands for our youth, as we have in the past. With the cost of wristbands rising to \$35 each and nearly 600 purchased last year, we are negotiating to ensure our youth can continue enjoying Honored Citizen Day. We are hoping the U.P. State Fair will work with us on the price so we can continue to fund our cultural events for the year remaining. We will keep you updated as we hear

back from the U.P. State Fair.

I am excited to share that our Manistique Elders recently held their first bingo event at the Manistique Community Center. This success was made possible by Sherry Boudreau and the dedicated Manistique Elders, who worked tirelessly to organize, gather supplies, and volunteer their time. I also want to thank Kewadin Casino for their essential support in making this possible.

Look for more information about future events in this month’s tribal newspaper.

Congratulations to T.J. Derwin for being selected to the Secretarial Election Committee. Four members put their names forward, and T.J. will represent Unit 4 with dedication. I am grateful for members like T.J. who step up for these important roles.

At our last board meeting, we approved the appointments to the Elderly Subcommittee and the Health Board Committee. Congratulations to Tom Tuffnell, who was reappointed to both committees for Unit 4 in Manistique. I look forward to collaborating with Tom and learning from his many years of experience and dedication to our tribe.

In August, both the Manistique and Escanaba Elders will hold their annual picnics, Manistique on Aug. 5 and Escanaba on Aug. 12. These gatherings are a wonderful opportunity for our elders and guests to come together for food, laughter, and community. To join the festivities, please contact the Elder Committees at least one week in advance.

A special thank you goes to Unit 5 Elders for welcoming our Unit 4 Elders from the western end at their meetings and activities. Because we recognize the challenges of travel, we are working to better accommodate all members and ensure everyone receives the support they need.

For those with questions about enrollment, there are currently 3,300 applicants in process. Our enrollment office is processing about 100 applications a week. The Board of

Directors approved hiring an additional employee to expedite the process, and we will continue working as efficiently as possible.

Chi Miigwech again for your support and guidance. I am excited to work for you over the

next four years. Enjoy the beautiful weather, and please reach out with any questions or concerns. My contact information, as well as that of our Unit 4/5 liaison Mary Jenerou, is included below.

Cole Goudreau, Unit 4

Director
cgoudreau@saulttribe.net
(906) 286-2966
Mary Jenerou, Unit 4/5
Liaison
mjenerou@saulttribe.net
(906) 450-7011 or (906) 341-8469

Planning Unit 3 meetings



SUE ST. ONGE
DIRECTOR, UNIT III
Aaniin,

The past few weeks have marked a significant transition in my life. After 22 years with YEA, I officially retired from a career that has been filled with meaningful relationships, memorable experiences, and, most importantly, incredible students. While I am excited to begin this new chapter serving our commu-

nity as a tribal board member, I already miss seeing the students each day. They have had a lasting impact on my life, and I will always be grateful for the time I spent with them and the relationships; we’ve built along the way.

Last week, I was honored to be sworn into office and attend my first board meeting. It was a privilege to officially begin serving alongside my fellow board members, and I appreciate the warm welcome I have received.

As I begin my service, one of my priorities is being accessible to community members. I plan to hold regular office hours to provide an opportunity for residents to ask questions, share concerns, and discuss ideas. I will advertise the dates and times for these as I finalize the logistics.

We are also planning Unit 3 meetings and will be posting those dates as soon as possible. We have tentatively scheduled an Elder’s Picnic for Friday, Aug.

14 and look forward to hosting and visiting with all our Unit 3 elders.

I will be attending committee meetings whenever possible so I can stay informed and actively engaged with our team members so that I can be fully informed and involved in the work of the board. These meetings and conversations will help me better understand our governing responsibilities and prepare me to serve effectively. I believe learning is an ongoing process, and I look forward to continuing to grow in this role.

Thank you to everyone who has reached out with words of encouragement and support during this transition. I am honored by the trust you have placed in me and remain committed to serving our tribal community with integrity, transparency, and respect.

Chi Miigwech
Sue

Thank you for your support



ASHLEY GRAVELLE
DIRECTOR, UNIT 1

I am just getting into my role as your Unit 1 Board Director, and since this is only my first

week, my report will be brief.

First, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who voted for me and placed your faith and trust in me to serve as your representative. I am honored by your support, and I am excited and ready to get to work on your behalf.

As of writing this report, I have attended my first board of directors meeting. I had the opportunity to visit with the individual board members, hear their perspectives, and get to know them a little better. Every board member was welcoming and respectful, and I truly appreciated the support shown by our chairperson.

Although we had a full agenda, the meeting was conducted in

a respectful and positive manner. I look forward to working alongside each and every board member. We may not always agree, but I believe we can continue to respect one another’s thoughts and opinions while focusing on what is best for our tribe.

I believe each of us is serving because we want the very best for our membership. I remain committed to listening, learning, working together, and helping move our tribe toward a stronger future for the next seven generations.

Thank you again for your trust and support. It is an honor to serve you.

Sincerely,
Ashley Gravelle
Unit 1 Board of Directors

From “LaPlaunt,” page 23
Moccasin Workshop (Oct. 10), and Indigenous Foods/Diets Workshop (Oct. 22), and much more to come.

If you are interested in helping to teach a workshop, or looking for something that isn’t yet provided in Unit 5, please reach out to Stacie Chambers at schambers1@saulttribe.net or (906) 379-8061.

Health Updates Electronic Health Records (EHR)

As I mentioned last month, our new Electronic Health Record through NextGen has now gone live. As we anticipated, there have been quite a few bumps in the road, but they are slowly smoothing out and our patients and provider both should see a better continuity of care along the way. We appreciate you being patient with this transition.

In addition to the exciting new changes with EHR, Unit 5 will soon be piloting an open to the public model for Primary Care services. This will help our clinics become more sustainable while prioritizing our Tribal Citizens health needs. By opening to the public, we expand the need and recruitment capability for talented physicians, and increase our revenue streams through other 3rd party (insurance) billing to patients outside of Indian Health Services. This, in turn, will also help us continue to increase and expand services as our Health Division and patient needs continues to grow.

Secretarial Election
The Secretarial Election will soon be under way and it’s coming up quick. All of our Sault Tribe Secretarial Election volunteers were selected during

a meeting live on camera with a random hat draw application. Congratulations to all of those who were selected for this historic election process. As a reminder, the feds will be in charge of this process, with our selected volunteers being the only ones who can assist on the night of the election count, which is set to occur on or before Sept. 26.

The first step that will happen is that a voter registration will go out to all citizens that are eligible to vote in our elections. Everyone 18-plus with the correct addresses on file will receive the registration form. This is only to register for the Secretarial Election. Even if you are already a registered voter, you must register in the Secretarial Election to take part in it.

Next, once voters have been registered, official ballots will go

out to everyone who registers for the Secretarial Election. In order for the election to be official, over 30% of voters who registered must vote. Once ballots are counted, if it meets or exceeds that threshold, the highest number of votes will win. There will only be two choices on your ballot and I do not know how it will be worded at this time, but the citizens of this tribe will either vote to accept the new Constitution or vote to deny it. More information will be coming out shortly from our new PR Department, but please reach out if you have any questions.

Elder Meetings
The next Unit 5 Elder Meeting in Munising will be on Thursday, August 6 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 Marquette will be on Thursday, August 6 at 5 p.m. at the Marquette Tribal Community Center, followed by the dinner at 6 p.m. Marquette is open to both Unit 4 & 5 Elders of Marquette County. Please feel free to join if you aren’t already a part of these gatherings.

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

Sorenson reports on board meeting, Unit 3 events



**BRIDGETT SORENSON,
DIRECTOR, UNIT III**

At the June 16 meeting, the 2026 summer tribal interns were in attendance. This year we have eight interns in departments such as Natural Resources, Legal, Education, Health and Communications. When I was an intern in 2002, I believe we had 20 students. It was a very valuable program for me that sparked my interest in working for the tribe and was hired on full-time in Human Resources after the internship that summer.

There were some lifesaving awards presented to law enforcement officers as well as casino staff. It is important that we recognize these individuals to show our appreciation for their efforts.

Thankfully, the election is over but I had hope for a little more change. It seems that some are not very humble and still a little too arrogant. I do think it is a good thing that the board is more balanced with six women and six men, not including the chair. We are taught the importance of balance in our culture. I had hoped that we could also get a balance in the officers but that did not happen.

I had been asked if I would be interested in being the vice chair after the election. I said I would be interested if Lana would not

be interested out of respect for her years of service. She was not interested, so I said I would be honored. During the special meeting swearing in and election of officers, Kim Gravelle tried to motion to nominate me and Austin ignored her while Larry motioned for Tyler. At that time, Austin was not taking any other nominees unless there were not enough votes. Aaron was allowed to grand stand and try to discredit me. The votes were cast with all women but Kim Lee voting “no” to Tyler and Mike McKerchie the only “no,” man vote. So, it was a tie and Austin broke the tie.

Now the nominations for the secretary and treasurer took place and Austin even asked for more nominations for those two officer positions but not for the vice chair. What a joke! I knew they had a plan to cut throats like they did in 2022 not allowing any of us with experience an opportunity and in 2024, Aaron owing them motioned to keep the officers the same. Aaron was writing his big speech during the swearing in. It is rarely about what is best for the tribe but what is best for the Boys!

Mike McKerchie was voted in as treasurer and Ashley Gravelle as secretary. Those were unanimous votes. They will both do a great job. I do not have an issue with Tyler being the vice and had a conversation with him on Tuesday about it. He does a good job running a meeting and for the most part keeps us on task and doesn’t allow bad behavior. My concern was that I am beginning year 15 and come from the second largest unit and should be also given an opportunity. I also told him I did not appreciate them sitting back while Aaron continues to run women in the ground at the table. I said that was something I would have called out as VC.

Part of Aaron’s speech was

to say that the VC seat carries this clout that is important to get or stay on committees and appointments but yet put his foot in his mouth on Tuesday’s board concerns that each board should sit on two to three committees. He made his normal digs about board members going to Vegas, too. It is common sense that conventions take place in big cities that have tourist amenities for a reason, so people want to go. It also is common sense that Vegas is the gaming capital of the world so that is where a global gaming expo would be held. As board members, we oversee the casinos. I came from casino administration and have a business degree so I do take interest in this conference. I do not see him dogging any others that attend conventions, either he doesn’t know the dirty secrets that are held or he is protecting those with them. I actually attend things.

I know there was mention of someone having a picture of me having a beer with prior general counsel. Pretty sure we are adults, was after the conference was over and we graduated high school together. Also, that there were others drinking with him as well, but only I am being targeted and pictures taken? Anyone who knows me knows I rarely drink, but that doesn’t mean I should be called out for it, either. I know people have also made comments about board members that bring a spouse or guest, just know those others have to pay their own expenses.

This travel thing has gotten out of control with an attitude that some deserve to and others do not. I think many members realize that it is important for board members to learn and advocate at these conferences.

Same dirty pool happened with the chair of the JKL Fiduciary Committee. In the workshop last

Tuesday, Lona had mentioned we couldn’t have a meeting on the 14th because Isaac was the chair and we had no vice chair. Kim G. nominated Mike, who was not in attendance due to a family emergency and Aaron, of course, nominated Austin because he is the tribal chair. Rob said he’s the only one that the entire membership votes on. Well, then, why did you guys nominate Issac in 2022 to be the chair and not Austin? It was later voted on at the meeting with some vote changes and Austin is now JKL chair.

At the Tuesday meeting there were only two or three members in attendance besides staff. The election is over and it is sad, but I understand why people do not attend. So much has changed over the years, even including the attendance at the swearing in ceremonies over the years. It was packed when I attended my first one in 2002 and has dwindled to only a couple tables of members; it seemed this year other than staff, family and drum participants. Obviously, we do much more recording and access than previously, as well.

During Tuesday’s workshop, one name was drawn from each unit and two from at large to sit on the Secretarial Election Board with BIA staff for the vote on the Constitution. Names had been drawn prior to coming to the board and I was one that said the members already do not trust the board, so the drawing should happen it public. Colleen Utter will be representing Unit 3. Thank you to all those that submitted their name to participate.

Sue and I had a meeting to go over questions she had and to get updated as it is a lot to absorb, but she will do fine as she has the experience of being a 23-year tribal team member. Unit 3 has always had monthly unit meetings but we will be making some

changes with them beginning in September. We have decided to host the Unit 3 elder picnic on Friday, Aug. 14, at 11:30 a.m. at the elder complex. Sue and I will be providing the meat and buns and if anyone want to bring a side that would be great, but not required.

On July 20, the board will travel to Lansing to attend at Drum and Dance Expo and dinner at the Kellogg Conference Center at 5:30 p.m. Tribal members in the area were sent postcards if they wanted to attend, limited to 150 people. Anyone interested should call Cody Jodoin at (906) 635-6510. There will also be a board meeting on July 21 at 5 p.m. at the Double Tree in Lansing with a community meeting following.

The Rendezvous at the Straits Powwow will be taking place at the St. Ignace Little Bear with some activities at the Museum of Ojibwa Culture on Aug. 28-30. There will be a community basket making workshop at the Museum of Ojibwa Culture starting Wednesday, Aug. 26 through Saturday, Aug. 29, from 12 to 6 p.m. each day. Each participant will be able to make their own basket to take (limited to one for the week) and also put strips on the community basket. Stay tuned for more announcements and flyers in the community and on social media.

I would like to thank Shawn, Kim H. and Isaac for serving on the board. Although we didn’t always agree, I respect you each for stepping up to the plate to serve your tribe.

Enjoy these summer days as they are already half over.

Any questions or concerns please reach out to bsorenson@saulttribe.net, bridgett91@yahoo.com or (906) 430-0536. My Facebook page is “Bridgett Sorenson Unit 3 Sault Tribe Board of Directors” as well.

Lee thanks community for their trust and support



**KIMBERLY LEE,
DIRECTOR, UNIT II**

Aanii,
First, I want to say Chi miigwech from the bottom of my heart to everyone who supported me and placed their trust in me during this election. I am truly honored and grateful for the opportunity to continue serving and representing our tribe. Your encouragement, kind words, and confidence mean more to me than I can express, and I will continue to work hard to represent you.

I want to acknowledge the concerns about the delays in our

new community and wellness building, located in front of Bear on the Mountain golf course. I understand the frustration, and I share it. Our community has been looking forward to this space for a long time, especially our youth, who deserve a safe and welcoming place to gather, learn, and grow. The good news is that we are getting closer. While the delays have been difficult due to unforeseen circumstances, including supply chain disruptions and weather, I remain hopeful and supportive of every effort being made to bring this project across the finish line. I truly believe it will become a place that strengthens our community, fostering connection and resilience, and creating lasting opportunities for generations to come. Our ancestors and elders have long advocated for such spaces, as our youth are our future.

One of the greatest strengths of Unit 2 is the way we come together to celebrate and preserve our culture. On June 13, our community gathered for the Newberry powwow. It was wonderful to see so many members, families, dancers, drummers, and visitors, and to see that community come



together to celebrate our traditions.

I want to extend my sincere appreciation to our Language and Culture Department, the many volunteers, including youth and elders, and everyone who worked behind the scenes to make the event such a success. Your dedication, planning, and preparation do not go unnoticed. Miigwech for everything you do to strengthen our community and keep our traditions alive.

As we continue through the

summer, I hope you’ll join us for the 32nd Annual Gathering of the Eagles Hessel Powwow on Aug. 15-16 right next to the Hessel Casino. Powwows are a beautiful reminder of who we are, where we come from, and the importance of gathering together as one community. Whether you’re dancing, singing, drumming, volunteering, supporting local vendors, or spending time with family and friends, I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Thank you again for the trust

you’ve placed in me. My commitment remains the same. To listen, advocate, and work alongside our members while always keeping the best interests of the people at heart. Together, we will continue building a stronger future for our families, our youth, our elders, and the generations yet to come. Chi Miigwech for your time and trust.

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

Honoring our past: planting seeds for our future



Planting Unit 1 Elder Garden with my Cousin Elaine (Young) Clement

CHAIR LOWES’ GARDEN PROJECT

Over 25 years ago, Unit 1 elders asked if they could have a plot of land on Sault reservation to plant a garden. For all of the enthusiasm, however, only two or three individuals routinely showed up to tend the garden. At the time, Clarence “Bouncer” Cadreau, Norma Castro, and my cousin Friskie Young, maintained our garden. Without new help to tend the garden, it fallowed. Last year, Chair Austin Lowes, Dr. Tara Maudrie, Elaine (Young) Clement and board members Rob McRorie, Isaac McKechnie, and I planted our first Unit 1 Elder garden in 20 years.

This year, most of the same crew came forward along with Ron McKechnie and some JKL School staff to plant our 2026 summer garden. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for restarting this and for your efforts with Feeding America monthly on our Sault Rez.



With Cousin Elaine & Chair Lowes.

HEALTH UDPATE

While I had a few setbacks, my symptoms are mostly gone and I feel good. Recently, I got my post cancer treatment screening and met with the oncologist. My PSA scores have dropped from 6 to 4.2, so I am healing. Normal is 1 to 2. In three months, I will have another screening. I

am optimistic. Fingers cross and continued prayers accepted.

ELECTION OVER: LET’S GET BACK TO WORK

I want to thank those who served and invite new board members to step up and forge a new path away from a *laissez faire* government. With a three-branch separation of powers impending, the role of the board is about to change for the good. Will new board members join us in supporting our tribal chairperson rather than the petty hate and move away from micromanagement and let our staff do their jobs? We hire qualified people in specified fields. It is a demonstration of arrogance when politicians purport to know better than qualified, experienced, and credentialed individuals who are hired to do their jobs. Where are the traditional teachings of respect and wisdom in a top down, domineering, dictatorial board approach? Some believe they are advocating for our people when they demand answers but too often this crosses a line and breaches client-based confidentiality. For the new board orientation, I requested legal and professional training on a “need to know” basis to protect client privacy.

MORE ELECTION REFORM NEEDED

This is the third election cycle that I have had to endure false claims I violated our Election Code only to have our Appellate Court overturn such malicious attacks. I don’t blame the elders on the Commission as commissioners are dependent on the assigned attorney for legal analysis and opinion. In all three cases (2022, 2024, 2026), the Appellate

Court ruled that the Committee/Commission violated my US constitutional rights. The most recent claim was that I was campaigning on tribal property at a board workshop for which I was sick receiving cancer treatments 85 miles away. During my appeal hearing, the judges could not believe the attorney was admitting I was not present (therefore not possible to campaign in person) but still argued I should be found guilty for campaigning in person on tribal property. Presenting facts not in evidence sure seems like malpractice.

Two years ago, I made an argument that in order for an election complaint to proceed, a basic *prima facie* should have to be made (meaning, if the facts are true, the allegation would constitute a violation). Presenting false claims to the court is not only harassing, it should be libelous and actionable with damages to cover all legal fees. I have had to spend my own personal funds to defend myself each time to the tune of over \$15,000! In their questioning, the Appellate Court admonished the attorney for arguing I campaigned in person when I was not even there. Their ruling against violations of constitutional rights and due process of law should come with a consequence. If no consequence, it will just continue to happen.

NEW ROLE FOR TRIBAL BOARD?

There is so much work to do. In the past, as chair, I nominated several board members to serve on national tribal advisories to help shape how the federal government serves our people. Recently, I found that several of these board members neglected to attend these meetings on a routine basis. Last year, the board voted appoint Director Sorenson over Chairman Lowes for a seat on the National Housing Inter-Governmental Advisory. In most cases, tribal leaders already serving on such advisories simply get reappointed. The Secretary of HUD, however, refused to reappoint Sorenson. Our chair should never be passed over for a board member who can’t get reappointed.

LOTS OF WORK TO GO AROUND

With the new form of government, the role of representing our

people at the highest level will be the ogema’s (chairperson). Nonetheless, there is a valuable role for the tribal council to play in assisting our ogema in representing our tribe. For years, voters have demanded that we promulgate a board job description. As a show of good faith, I invited the board to serve on at least three committees of the tribe and step up to serve on national advisories. Most refused. A few got appointed to national advisories but never showed up.

There is a rightful and respectful role for the board to play. Hopefully, the board will see and embrace a new more productive role rather than voting against everything the chair advocates. I envision a board that will move away from micromanaging and hauling staff in for reprimands and terminations. Hopefully, we can replace this toxic approach for respectful government oversight.

I have some experience



With Sen. Carl Levin and Jocelyn Benson.

with government oversight as I served alongside our current Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson on the Carl Levin Congressional Oversight Commission. I also trained her Michigan Political Leadership Program cohort on tribal sovereignty; she respects it and will be an amazing ally as governor.

OPEN MEETINGS REFORM NEEDED

The recent tribal election returned the notion of the need for a tribal Open Meetings Act with teeth. The Constitution is clear that voting behind closed doors to expend tribal funds or enter contracts is not lawful. Making such decisions behind closed doors is a removal act. This is directly and expressly called out as a violation in the removal code and our meeting rules. Entering a contract and obligating the tribe to financial liability is a crime under tribal

law. There is no statute of limitations under tribal law so while some may feel immune from being held accountable under a one-branch system, an independent court system under a three-branch government will demonstrate otherwise.

WELL RESPECTED AT



Swearing in at NCAI.

THE NATIONAL LEVEL

I was recently unanimously elected to serve once again on the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Executive Council. This comes at a critical time when the US Office of Management and Budget is threatening to extinguish the treaty and trust obligation that was foreshadowed in the infamous Project 2025 Report for which the architect — Russel Vought — is now the director of the OMB. I pushed for enactment of a resolution at NCAI and sponsored a resolution at the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes to urge Congress to oppose. Ask yourself what the oppositional defiant board faction are doing to protect our tribe from these threats... anything?

Most recently, with Chairman Lowes’ nomination of me, I was also appointed to serve once again on the HHS Office of Minority Health Center for Indigenous and Innovation Health Tribal Advisory. I served on this in 2022 before being forced to resign from all national appointments. I will continue to work with (not against) our chairperson to fight to protect our funding as we prepaid for every penny we get.

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

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

Director Barbeau announces upcoming meetings



LARRY BARBEAU,
DIRECTOR, UNIT IV

Aaniin,
I hope everyone had a wonderful Fourth of July and is enjoying a great summer so far. July has

brought plenty of opportunities for our tribal members and staff to relax, spend time with loved ones, and participate in community events. We hope many of our families have had the chance to attend and enjoy all the powwows that have been taking place, celebrating our culture, traditions, and community together. I want to wish everyone a safe, enjoyable, and memorable remainder of the summer.

Upcoming meetings for the month (subject to change)

We have a few scheduled meetings coming up for the month of July; including, board workshops and meetings (one in Lansing), JKLFC meetings, Kewadin Gaming Authority meetings, Enterprise Authority meet-

ings, Conservation Committee meetings, etc.

July 7, 2026 – Board workshop at 10 a.m. and the board meeting starting at 5 p.m. in the Whitefish Point Room at Kewadin Casinos, Sault Ste. Marie.

July 13, 2026 - Conservation Committee meeting starting at 5 p.m. in the Whitefish Point Room at Kewadin Casinos, Sault Ste. Marie.

July 14, 2026 – Board workshop and JKLFC meeting starting at 9 a.m. in the Whitefish Point Room at Kewadin Casinos, Sault Ste. Marie.

July 21, 2026 – Board workshop and Enterprise Authority meeting starting at 9 a.m. and the board meeting starting at 5 p.m.

in Lansing, Mich.

July 28, 2026 – Board workshop and KGA meeting starting at 9 a.m. in the Whitefish Point Room at Kewadin Casinos, Sault Ste. Marie.

Unit 4 Elder Meetings

We encourage all tribal elders to attend the elder meetings. The next meeting in Manistique will be held July 8, 2026, at 12 p.m. EST at the Manistique Tribal Center. The next meeting in Escanaba will be held July 8, 2026, at 5 p.m. EST at the Escanaba Community Center. The Elder Advisory meeting is July 17, 2026, at 1 p.m. EST at the Newberry Tribal Center.

Contact information:

Larry Barbeau, Unit 4 Representative. Phone (906) 259-

3040. Email: lbarbeau@saulttribe.net.

As we continue through the summer, I encourage Unit 4 members to remain connected with our tribal community by attending meetings, supporting local events, and participating in cultural activities whenever possible. Staying involved helps strengthen our tribal community and provides valuable opportunities to share your perspectives and priorities. I always welcome your questions, feedback, and suggestions, as your input plays an important role in informing the decisions we make and the work we do on behalf of our members. Miigwech for your continued support, and I wish everyone a safe, relaxing, and enjoyable remainder of the summer.

Update on the good things happening in Unit 2



LANA CAUSLEY-SMITH,
DIRECTOR, UNIT II

I want to congratulate all the new elected representatives who garnered support in the communities to be entrusted with the honor of holding a seat to represent our tribe. I am looking forward to working with them and creating relationships that will focus on our growth and stability. I would also like to thank the outgoing representatives that I have worked with the past four years; those leaving have had valuable input and steering toward good work and I appreciate the time you all have put in. I would also like to say “Chi Miiigwech” to those who did run for the seat, it takes a lot and to those that kept a steady, respectable voice through the process is noticed and appreciated. Let’s move forward for steady and stable government.

I would like to update on the good things that have happen-

ing in the past couple months in our unit. We held our annual Newberry powwow this past June and it was a very good gathering, captured in a picture we were able to see that our new Elder quadplex had been finished and occupied by elders. The picture at right shows an elder, Mr. David Cody, standing for grand entry right outside his back deck! This moment in time was close to my heart as it shows the vision and the uniqueness of the placement of the homes. I’m very thankful for the help the Sault Tribe Housing and Construction did to make this vision and project happen and look forward to working in any way to gain more housing in our Unit 2 areas. Chi miiigwech to the Language and Culture Division for planning the gathering and all the people who dedicated their time to run the powwow as head helpers and staff. Thank you.

Our new fitness and youth center is slated to open to the public this month with a timeline scheduled for the fitness area. This should be noticed this month as we are waiting on the Internet hook up and phone lines — our Youth Education and Activities Program has opted to wait until mid-August to open when its summer program is complete and it can fully move in but again, the fitness area should be very soon. I understand flyers are being created now and I’m very excited for our communities to have a



place for our healthy wellness as well as a place of gathering and making our youth activities stronger and vibrant. I know that the program would like to expand and reach out to all areas of our unit and I’m looking forward to seeing that growth.

Our annual Hessel powwow will be Aug. 15 and 16 with a spiritual gathering planned for Friday the 14th around noon at the grounds. We plan to have a ceremony to open our newly constructed teaching lodge and look forward to that. We would like

to plan to build one out on the Newberry area. I would like to thank all who helped us make this happen and the hard work and dedication it took us to do this.

The ballots to register for the secretarial election will now be coming in your mailbox soon. You do have to register for this as it’s not the same as being registered in a unit for tribal representative elections. There is a question and answer in this issue of the paper on how this work and timelines to go with

it (please see page 5). Please make sure you read through the entire document before you vote — there is crucial changes to our form of government, some I agree with and some I don’t. It’s important as a tribal member that you use your voice and your position of voting on how you would like to see us govern. Please see our website www.saulttribe.com for the final document as well as it being mailed to your household to review. This is a monumental turn for our nation so please be aware and educated on what will change or not.

In closing, I want to express and state that I know the Artificial Intelligence (AI) use is inevitable in areas of our world now but I want to assure you, all my words, unit reports and statements are absolutely my own and I will not use that to describe my positions, my reports, or any statements I make. I do pride myself in my ability to communicate and my dad always told me, “Geez, Sis — you could be a good author if you put your mind to that.” I take pride in that and will always use my own thoughts and words to communicate with my people.

As always if you would like to meet with me or have any needs or input or questions, please contact me at (906) 322-3818 or lcausley@saulttribe.net. Baamaapii.

Lana Causley-Smith
Unit 2 Representative



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