



Onaabadin-Giizis
(Snow-Crusted Moon)

TRIBAL OBSERVER

MARCH
2026

Working Together For Our Future

www.sagchip.org/tribalobserver

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Tribal Council members attend National Congress of American Indians winter session in Washington, D.C.

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPT.

Tribal Council members – Sub-Chief Craig Graveratte, Secretary Christina Otto, Sgt.-at-Arms Frank Cloutier, and Gayle Ruhl – convened with other tribes affiliated with the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) in Washington, D.C. from Feb. 9-12 for the annual meeting.

This event serves as a vital platform for Tribal Nations to engage with legislators on pressing issues that affect Indian Country.

This year, the discussions centered on several key topics, including Prediction Markets, the Law Enforcement Parity Act, the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act, and Education Consultation. Each of these subjects holds significant implications for the tribal community, highlighting the importance of advocacy and legislative engagement.

The mornings were dedicated to a general assembly session, featuring presentations from Cabinet officials and NCAI representatives, covering critical initiatives such as the Violence Against Women Act Task Force, Tax & Finance Task Force, the Climate Action Task Force, and the Addiction Task Force.

The afternoons were specifically allocated for direct interactions with legislators,



Courtesy photo

(Left to right) Aurene Martin of Spirit Rock Consulting LLC, Tribal Council member Gayle Ruhl, Congressman John Moolenaar, Sub-Chief Craig Graveratte and Sergeant-at-Arms Frank J. Cloutier pose for a photo during a meeting in Washington, D.C.

which proved to be a highlight of the week.

Notable meetings included discussions with Congressman John Boozman, the chair of the Agricultural Committee, as well as U.S. representatives Tina Smith, Mike Rounds, and Cory Booker. The willingness of these lawmakers to engage with Tribal representatives, whether in group settings or one-on-one with individual tribes, marked a significant advancement in communication and advocacy efforts.

Congressman John Moolenaar graciously hosted a meeting in his office, and the

Tribal Council representatives also had the privilege of attending one of his events later in the day. Additionally, Tom Cole demonstrated professionalism and a deep understanding of the intricate political landscape in Washington, D.C., further enriching the discussions.

These legislative engagements provide an invaluable opportunity for the Tribe to articulate its perspectives on issues that directly affect Indian Country and Saginaw Chippewa community.

“I was honored to be one of the Tribal Council



Courtesy photo

Council members Frank J. Cloutier, Gayle Ruhl and Secretary Christina Otto, Congressman Tom Cole and Sub-Chief Craig Graveratte

representatives that attended the NCAI’s winter session on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.,” said Sub-Chief Craig Graveratte. During our visit we were able to meet with senators and representatives of Congress to advocate for issues that will greatly improve tribal resources such as the Law Enforcement Parity Act, FAA assistance, the Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act and our infrastructure improvements that are needed for water and wastewater plants.”

Graveratte continued, “As we look into the future this would be a great opportunity to begin to include a couple

members of the SCIT Youth Council. Attending these meetings in Washington, D.C. could spark interest and enthusiasm within our Youth Council regarding the initiatives our leadership undertakes to enhance our communities.”

Strengthening government-to-government alliances is essential for establishing a robust relationship grounded in mutual advocacy. By fostering these connections, we can ensure that our voices are heard and that the unique challenges faced by our communities are addressed effectively within the legislative framework.

PROPOSED SCIT CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Introduction

Tribal Members Joseph Sowmick, Darlene Chippewa, Jo Ann James, and Bernard Sprague have filed a petition with the BIA for an election to amend the Tribe’s Constitution.

The Amendment is to change SCIT Tribal Council elections from a two-year term to four-year staggered terms in District 1 and four-year terms in Districts 2 and 3.

Why is this needed?

- More stable government,
- More productive for business purposes,
- Still have elections every two years since they will be staggered; so five District 1 Council Members will be up for election every two years.
- No other changes are made by this amendment.
- This election process is completely separate from the Tribe’s usual elections and will be run by the BIA.

For more information, please contact:

Joseph Sowmick, Spokesperson
• Email: jvsowmick@sagchip.org



Process

The Tribe’s Constitution only allows amendments through the federal Secretarial election process.

• Article VII of the Constitution provides:

This constitution and By-Laws may be amended by majority vote of the qualified voters in each of the three voting districts at an election called by the Secretary of the Interior: Provided that, at least thirty (30) percent of those entitled to vote in each district shall vote in such election; but no amendment shall be effective until it shall have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

It shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Interior to call an election on any proposed amendment upon receipt of a petition signed by one-third of the resident qualified voters of the three voting districts.

• Therefore amend the Constitution is a two-step process:

1. Getting signatures of at least 1/3 of adult Tribal members in each of the three voting districts. If successful then...
2. The BIA holds an election for the amendment and at least 30 percent of eligible voters must vote and a majority of the voters must approve the amendment.

• The filing of the petition for an election starts the process and this began Jan. 5, 2026.





Dianna Lee Goodwin

September 7, 1948 – February 9, 2026

Dianna Lee Goodwin, age 77, of Clare, Mich., passed away Monday, Feb. 9, 2026, at U of M Health-West in Byron Center, Mich.



Dianna was born Sept. 7, 1948, in Mount Pleasant, Mich., the daughter of Iva (Collins) Ritter. She graduated from Coleman High School, Class of 1966.

On March 23, 1969, Dianna was united in marriage to Harold W. Goodwin. Together, they enjoyed many years together raising their family and taking day trips throughout Michigan. Harold passed away May 8, 2023.

Dianna had been one of Jehovah's Witnesses since 1969. She was zealous in her love for Jehovah God and especially enjoyed informal witnessing, always ready to share her faith. She loved staying busy and going out to eat with friends and family. She also found joy in sewing, creating with her hands. Above all, Dianna treasured time spent with her family, and nothing brought her greater happiness than being with her grandchildren.

Dianna is survived by her children, Sheila (Gregory) Guiney of Gladwin, Corina (Michael) Grim of Shelby, Jennifer Goodwin of Midland, Tonya (Jacob) Rosa of Davison, Harold (Helen) Goodwin II, of Phoenix, Ariz., Ashley (Angela) Goodwin of Clare, Allen (Angie) Goodwin of Farwell; grandchildren Vanessa Guiney, Sean Guiney, Kenedi Miller, Tobijah Rosa, Alyxczia Thurlow, Chazz Goodwin, Spencer Goodwin, Allen Goodwin II, Corban Goodwin, Emmett Goodwin; and five great-grandchildren; brother Wayne (Karen) Ritter of Twin Lake; and many beloved nieces and nephews.

Dianna was preceded in death by her mother Iva; husband Harold; brothers Carl, Gene, and Charlie; and sisters Doris Thompson B.1936-D.1939, Kathleen Sue Ritter B.1950-D.1950.

Funeral services for Dianna took place at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 8065 E. Broadway, Mt. Pleasant, on Sunday, Feb. 22, 2026, at 4 p.m. with Jeff Galla officiating. Visitation was held Saturday, Feb. 21, from 4 until 8 p.m. at Clark Funeral Chapel. Burial will take place at Denver Township Cemetery in the spring.

Memorial contributions may be made to JW.org.

Donald Emerson Nelson

July 15, 1965 – February 12, 2026

Donald Emerson Nelson, 60, a lifelong resident of Au Gres, Mich., passed away at home on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2026, after a hard fought battle with cancer. He remained a strong warrior until the end. He is finally at peace and no longer in pain.



Donald was born on July 15, 1965 to parents, Bernice and Lawrence Nelson.

He was a devoted son, brother, uncle, and friend. More than anything in this world, he was a dad and a grandpa ("Grampy") who loved his family deeply. His six children and three granddaughters meant everything to him. Being there for his kids was the most important role in his life.

Donald had a huge love for music and always seemed to have a soundtrack for his life. Being in his house felt like stepping into a record shop that honored all decades. He was also a dedicated Detroit Lions fan who stayed loyal through every season and never stopped cheering them on. As he said, he was a Lions fan before it was cool.

Donald will be remembered for his unique sense of humor. He could make anyone laugh in the most unexpected ways. He had the biggest (mechanical) heart and the deepest love for his family. The memories he created with the people closest to him will be forever treasured. He will be missed beyond words and endlessly loved.

He is survived by his six marvelous children Lindsay (Christopher), Madalynn (Ray), Elizabeth, Sophia, Donovan, and Parker (Maleah); three beloved granddaughters Emery, Rosalina, and Dakota; loving mother Bernice; amazing siblings Linda (Terry), Donna (Tim), Ronald (Lugean), Diane, Sandra (Dale), Timothy (Peggy), Brenda (Scott); many wonderful nieces and nephews.

Donald is preceded in death by father Lawrence and brother Larry.

Funeral services for Donald were held on Feb. 16, 2026. Visitation was held at Buresh Funeral Home in Au Gres, Mich. from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The service began at 1 p.m. with precession following.

Obituary lovingly written by his family.

Sydney Marie Martin

September 14, 1943 – February 18 2026

Sydney "Syd" Marie (Harper) Martin, Ogemaquay (Boss/Chief/Leader Woman), Wolf Clan, gave her last breath back to the Creator and began her journey to the Forever Place surrounded by her family on Feb. 18, 2026 at Faith Hospice at Trillium Woods in Byron Center, Mich.

Sydney was born on Sept. 14, 1943, in Grand Rapids, Mich. She attended Hopkins Public Schools and lived along the Rabbit River in the Salem Indian Settlement with her Anishinaabe-way adoptive mother Gladys (Pigeon) Sands (Kesoquay – Full Moon Woman), a full-blood Pottawatomi and Mt. Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School survivor, whom Syd lovingly called Nana. Taught to weave black ash baskets, to sew and gather sacred medicines and foods, Syd learned early how to make a living from her Anishinaabe work.

Syd and Nana supported themselves through selling their black ash baskets, seasonal fieldwork, and sharing cultural knowledge with museums, schools, pageants, and trading posts. They traveled throughout Michigan selling their wares and offerings, living a life rooted in skill, movement, and relationship. These early teachings shaped how Syd moved through the world—carrying knowledge from practice, protecting cultural ways of living, honoring her ancestors, caring for the land and water, and holding responsibility to those who would come after her.

Sydney met the love of her life, George Martin (Odawa – A Quiet, Peaceful Place), one night in 1959 after she performed in an 'Indian pageant' at Chapel Lake, near Wurtsmith Air Force Base in Oscoda, Mich. Air Policeman George saw the beautiful Sydney on stage and fell in love at first sight. The next night he showed up in his sparkling car, spit-shined shoes, and in his military dress uniform to attempt to meet Sydney. A love story for The Anishinaabe Ages began, and over the years they became cultural icons. Sydney and George eventually made their home of 56 years near the same place that Sydney grew up along the Rabbit River in the Salem Indian Settlement and raised their four children.

A First Degree Midewiwin, Sydney was the Three Fires Lodge Chief for the State of Michigan, Midewaunaquay (Water Line Chief), and served on the Three Fires Midewiwin Grandmothers' Council. As a spiritual leader, Syd was always open to sharing teachings and lifeways and never judged or limited those with a sincere desire to learn. She carried her spiritual roles with steadiness and humor, and with a clear sense of what it meant to care for the Anishinaabe people.

Syd's contributions to Anishinaabek culture and the world extended beyond ceremonies, powwows, and intercultural education.

- Served on the Board of Directors for the Grand Rapids Inter-Tribal Council and Board of Directors for the West Michigan Environmental Action Council where she contributed to the establishment of Michigan's Adopt-a-Highway Program

- Appointed as the NAGPRA Representative for her Natch-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi (2008-2019) – attended every quarterly meeting for the Michigan Anishinaabek Cultural Preservation and Repatriation Alliance – worked to bring home thousands of ancestors and over ten thousand funerary belongings

- Presented at the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education in Aotearoa (Hamilton, New Zealand) in 2005

- Initiated the Seed Rematriation movement in 2015 (University of Michigan)

- Assisted authoring "Journeys to Complete the Work," a graphic novel launched in 2017 at Indigenous Comic Con hosted by Isleta Pueblo. Sydney was a featured character in the comic (www.nagpracomics.weebly.com) which tells the story of her work to repatriate Anishinaabe ancestors from the University of Michigan and Harvard University

- Featured in two documentaries: "Black Ash Basketry: A Story of Cultural Resilience" (2010) and "Aanikoobijigan [ancestor/great-grandparent/great-grandchild]" (2026) – "Aanikoobijigan" was recognized with an Audience Choice Award at the 2026 Sundance Film Festival

On paper, these accomplishments looked different, but they pointed to the same work: Protect what matters, carry it forward, and make sure it returns to the people.

Sydney led her family, her Tribe, and the Anishinaabek people in community and cultural representation with a spirit of resilience that is her legacy. She truly lived her Spirit Name, as a fearless Ogemaquay of the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi, especially in her advocacy for the return of our ancestors and their funerary belongings. During NAGPRA consultations, Sydney would always tell the institutions, "It's simple. Just follow the law. Give them back to us." People knew what Syd stood for because she said it plainly and followed it through – she didn't "frog around."

She loved to laugh and speak irreverently (shockingly so, at times), travel (especially to Bay Mills and Red Cliff), bird watch, write poetry, play cards, complete daily crosswords, read books, listen to music, throw horseshoes, support environmental and wildlife protection organizations, and watch sports of any kind – baseball, basketball, curling, football, golf, tennis, etc. Above all, she loved caring for and watching her wild birds and feral cats. Those everyday joys were part of her medicine – and, how she stayed present, sharp, and true to herself.

Sydney is survived by her devoted husband of 64 years, George Martin; cherished daughters Punkin Shananaquet (David-baa), Natalie (Amos) Pond, Shannon (Lisa "Tiger") Martin; and son, Jeff Martin. Sydney's beautiful grandchildren who shared in her life include Paul, Carly, Crystal, Boots, and Wakody; and great-grandchildren Cryssa, Mzhakwod, Lily, Cadence, Cena, and Maizie. She loved her Anishinaabe-way taken siblings David "DK" Sprague, Dr. Valorie Johnson, Joann Sebastian Morris, and Judy and Joseph "Buddy" Raphael; and her Anishinaabe-way taken daughters Dr. Sonya Atalay (Ted) and Cyndee Fox-Starr; and sons Isadore Toulouse, Frank Sprague, and Joe Reilly who will carry her stories forward. Countless extended and special "you're the only good one" nieces, nephews, and very dear friends and colleagues will always keep her in their hearts.

Sydney joins her mother Gladys "Nana" (Pigeon) Sands; grandsons Jamesteller Pond and George Martin III; Anishinaabe-way taken siblings Patricia "Butchie" Weiss, Mooz Pamp and Kathy Genereaux, Paul Johnson, Robert Van Alstine, and Dan "Bee" Spears in the Forever Place.

Sydney and her family acknowledge the assistance, care, compassion, and love given by Dr. Rebecca Werner, Samantha Bowsher, and the team at Gun Lake Tribe Health and Human Services; as well as the Faith Hospice at Trillium Woods team who cared for her and her family with comfort, compassion, and dignity.

Sydney hoped you will always remember the black ash basketmakers, ancestral repatriators, cultural artists, language speakers and learners, seedkeepers, traditional teachers, musicians, land and water protectors, dreamers, and instigators in your daily life and gift giving. She asked that this remembering show up in how we live—who we support, what we purchase, what we share, and what we choose to carry forward.

In honor of Sydney's wishes, the preparations and ceremony for her journey are private.

Baamaapii kiwaabamin, Ogemaquay, giizhaagin, pané. (We will see you again, Boss Lady, we will love you for all time.)

Memorials in honor of Sydney's legacy may be mailed to: Michigan Anishinaabek Cultural Preservation and Repatriation Alliance (MACPRA), C/O Gun Lake Tribe, Attn: Rebecca Rupe, MACPRA Treasurer, 2872 Mission Dr., Shelbyville, MI 49344.

Rickie Al Burnham

March 23, 1967 – January 29, 2026

Rickie Al Burnham of Caro, Mich., age 58, passed away on Thursday, Jan. 29, 2026 with his family by his side.



Rickie was born March 23, 1967, in Caro, to late William and Gladys (Davis) Burnham.

Rickie was a proud member of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and known to be a happy-go-lucky guy who was always smiling.

In his free time, he enjoyed nature walks, shopping, cookouts, and baking. More so than anything else, Rickie loved spending time with his family, especially his special buddy, his second great-nephew, Charles.

Rickie leaves to cherish his memory: his siblings, Mary North, Betty (Jerry) Brief, Dorothy Brown, Rose Clouse, Larry Burnham, James (Mary) Burnham, and Daniel (Rose) Burnham; and many nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, Rickie was preceded in death by brothers, William, Robert, Jerry, and John Burnham; and sisters, Judy and Edna Burnham.

Wendy Sue Chapman

April 10, 1961 – January 14, 2026

Wendy Sue Chapman passed away on Jan. 14, 2026 in Harrison, Mich.

A memorial visitation was held on Saturday, Jan. 24, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Clark-Stocking Funeral Chapel in Harrison, Mich.

A Celebration of Life began that same day from 1 to 2 p.m. with a luncheon immediately following in the Reflections Reception Center. Inurnment was held at 3:30 p.m. at the Pleasant Plains Cemetery on East Cranberry Lake Road in Harrison, Mich.



Check out the
Tribal Observer
ONLINE

www.sagchip.org/tribalobserver



Attention Tribal Members Tribal Council Regular Session Meetings are held at 9 a.m.

Regular Tribal Council Sessions

- ▶ First Tuesday of each month at 9 a.m.
- ▶ Inside the Council Chambers of the Black Elk Government Complex
- Meetings are open to Tribal Members
- Anyone wanting to be added can call 989-775-4004

Regular Council Session Dates

- March 3 • April 7 • May 5

Lisa Starkey

July 24, 1964 – February 1, 2026

Lisa Starkey, age 61, of Shepherd, Mich. passed away Sunday, Feb. 1, 2026, at her home.

Lisa was born July 24, 1964, in Mount Pleasant, the daughter of Keith Mandoka and Florence (Kahgegab) White. She graduated from Mt. Pleasant High School.

Lisa was a member of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, where she also worked in various positions for the Tribe and Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort.

She married Richard J. Starkey on July 25, 1988; spending 36 years married before Richard passed away Nov. 19, 2024. Lisa loved spending time with Richard and all of her family, playing cards, dancing, and going to concerts. One of her favorite pastimes was to visit Texas Roadhouse, where she was well loved by the staff.

Lisa is survived by her daughter Stephanie (John) Spanne of Mount Pleasant; son Matthew Starkey of Lansing; grandchildren Adrianna, Miingin, Aanzhenii, Jordan, Aaron, Lucas, Nizhoni, and Binoojiing; mother Florence (Mike) White of Clare; siblings Jeanette Mandoka Carpenter of Mount Pleasant, Brad (Michelle) Mandoka of Clare, Greg Mandoka of Clare, Rachel Mandoka of Mount Pleasant; George Mandoka; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Lisa was preceded in death by her father Keith and husband Richard.

Funeral services for Lisa were held on Friday, Feb. 6, 2026, at the Tribal Gym with Sam McClelland officiating. Interment of remains will take place in the spring.

Memorial contributions may be made to the family.



Helen Marie Black

December 26, 1951 – January 23, 2026

Helen Marie Black, of Montrose, Mich., age 74, died Friday, Jan. 23, 2026 at Medilodge of Montrose.

Helen was born Dec. 26, 1951 in Saginaw, Mich. to the late Russell Byce and Mary Ashmun.

Helen grew up in Montrose, Mich. as the eldest of seven children, and later moved to Tawas City, Mich. where she spent 40 wonderful years of marriage with her beloved husband, David Black. He preceded her in death in March 2025.

Helen was a member of the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe and was very proud of her heritage.

She enjoyed photography and loved taking pictures of nature. She enjoyed arts and crafts, cooking, reading, sewing, and gardening. However, her greatest joy in life was her family, especially her grandchildren.

Surviving are: son, Donald (Brittany) Black; grandchildren, Gavin, Eva, Nola, Miah; as well as several siblings, nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents and husband, David Black.

Honoring Helen's wishes, cremation has taken place and no service will be held at this time.

Memorial contributions can be made to the family for future designation.



2026 SCIT GOLF Membership

Memberships on sale until:
Monday, Feb. 23, 2026 at 8 a.m.

Sales end: Friday, May 15, 2026 at 5 p.m.

- Open to Tribal Members, employees and their families.
- Includes green fees and discounts on apparel, range, food and drink at participating courses.

Memberships cost \$300 each

- Memberships and cart raffle tickets available for purchase at the Tribal Operations Accounting window in the Black Elk Building.
- Payment plans are also available.

Participating courses:

- Pleasant Hills Golf Club
- Firefly Golf Links
- Hidden Oaks Golf Course
- Eagle Glen Golf Club
- PohlCat Golf Course

Cart Membership Raffle (optional)
Drawing on Friday, April 10, 2026 at 12 p.m.

- Win a cart at your favorite course (limit may only win once).
- One cart membership available at each course.
- Tickets: One for \$5, or five for \$20

Important Reminder:

MyMichigan and UHC have reached an agreement!

We are pleased to remind you that MyMichigan will continue to be a participating (in-network) provider in 2026. You should no longer be asked to pay up front or sign documents pre-procedure/pre-appointment. If you are being asked for anything like this, please contact the Benefits Team at 989-775-5770 before making any payment or signing anything.

Michael Layne Pashenee

February 11, 1957 – Nov. 22, 2025

Michael Layne Pashenee, age 68, of Ann Arbor, Mich., passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, Nov. 22, 2025.

Mike was born in southwest Detroit on Feb. 11, 1957 as the eldest son of Kenneth and Mary (Marquis) Pashenee. He will be deeply missed by his wife, Ellen Guise; his sisters, Poullette Pashenee and Constance Pashenee; his nieces, Angela Sedoskey and Caroline Sedoskey; as well as by his many friends, fellow musicians, coworkers, and dear neighbors.

He is preceded in death by his father, Kenneth John Pashenee; his mother, Mary Eva Pashenee; his sister, Carol Pashenee; his brother, Glenn Pashenee; his brother-in-law, John Sedoskey; and his niece, Kayla Sedoskey.

Michael was a proud elder of the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe. He carried his heritage with deep respect throughout his life; honoring those from whom he had descended.

He was a well-respected professional trombonist who spent decades in the southeast Michigan region where he performed with numerous classical, jazz, and chamber ensembles. He was a familiar supporting stage presence at the Detroit Jazz Festival (formerly the Montreux-Detroit Jazz Festival), often performing with several groups over that long weekend. Mike even played for years in support of his beloved Lions in the Silverdome Band. He cherished his time playing and performing with his fellow musicians.

In support of and in parallel with his long musical career, Mike pursued and maintained a skilled trades path, starting as a machinist then concluding as an AutoCad and CNC software programmer. He celebrated and appreciated his co-workers and teachers in this work.

In addition to all his professional pursuits, Mike was an avid sports fan who loved cheering on the Detroit Lions and Detroit Red Wings. He also enjoyed golfing whenever he had the chance.

Michael Layne Pashenee had a life filled with love of family, music, friends, heritage and art, and appreciation and support of others' talents, and love of Detroit sports!



Rez Pets

"It's Raining Cats and Dogs!"



Attention tribal members and employees, please submit a photo of your pet(s) to show them off in the April 2026 Tribal Observer. Households with two or more pets, please submit one group photo!

Email your photos to Observer@sagchip.org or turn them in to the Tribal Observer office located inside the Black Elk Government Complex.

Please include:
Owner's name, name of pet, age and breed
Deadline: Monday, March 16



HONORING SAGANING TRADITIONAL POWWOW

ARBOR HELPERS NEEDED

The SCIT Powwow Committee is looking to hire three helpers to build the arbor for the Saganing Powwow.

- ▶ **When:** June 1 - June 3, 2026
- ▶ **Wage:** \$150 per day *Lunch provided

If interested, email: Powwowcommittee@sagchip.org

Anishinaabe Language Revitalization Committee

TWO VACANCIES

Seeking two individuals who are committed to revitalizing Anishinaabemowin.

Vacant positions:
Two tribal member community representatives age 25 & over

- Candidates must be a SCIT member and able to attend monthly meetings
- Meetings held monthly with dates/times/location TBD.

For more information, please contact:
Mary Perez at MAPerez@sagchip.org or 989-775-4026

Send letter of interest to:

Howard Webkamigad
ALRD program manager

By email:
HWebkamigad@sagchip.org

By mail:
Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
ATTN: Howard Webkamigad
2875 Gikendaaso Way
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858





Tribal Council

Chief

Luke Sprague | District One

Sub-Chief

Craig Graveratte | District One

Secretary

Christina Otto | District One

Treasurer

Alice Jo Ricketts | District One

Sergeant-at-Arms

Frank J. Cloutier | District Three

Chaplain

Jennifer L. Wassegijig | District One

Council Member

Brad Bennett | District One

Council Member

Tim J. Davis | District One

Council Member

Ronald F. Ekdahl | District One

Council Member

Shirley Houle | District Two

Council Member

Mary Quigno | District One

Council Member

Gayle Ruhl | District One

REQUEST FOR QUOTES: Lawncare Services (Mt. Pleasant)

Project overview:

The Saginaw Chippewa Housing Department (SCHD) is requesting quotes for professional lawn care services for the duration of the 2026 growing season. The Department is seeking a reputable firm to provide the following services only: fertilizer, weed control, grub and mole control. Service area will include approximately 17.2 acres at four (4) separate locations, listed below.

Project goals:

- Maintain lawn areas in a safe, timely and professional manner
- Communicate with the owner in a timely and professional manner

Project scope of work:

Scope of work will include four site locations as listed. Companies are encouraged to visit the locations to assess the areas to be covered. Please call Housing's front office reception at (989) 775-4595 to inform us when you plan to be on site. **Four locations in Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858:**

1. Otto Park – 2379 Otto Drive
2. Broadway Park – 2473 Nishnabeang Drive
3. Little Elk Park – 7701 Little Elk Drive
4. Housing and Planning offices – 2451 Nishnabeang

Submission procedures:

- Submit on sheets no larger than an 8½ x 11, clear and legible lettering.
- Email the requested information to: RoMaloney@sagchip.org and MiPelcher@sagchip.org or
- Send via U.S. mail or
- In-person delivery to the Saginaw Chippewa Housing Department, 2451 Nishnabeang Drive, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858.
- Submissions must be received by the deadline listed below.
- Submission received later than the deadline will not be considered.

Provide the following information:

- The principal address of the firm
- Company profile (principals, years in business, key staff contact information)
- Copy of the firm's certificate of insurance (indicate level of professional and general liability coverage)
- Signed statement indicating the firm is not on the federal government's debarred list of entities debarred from doing business with the federal government of the United States. For more information visit the official website of the U.S. Government - System for Award Management at <https://sam.gov/content/home>
- An itemized cost estimate for all services requested in this RFQ and a schedule showing frequency of applications

Submission deadline: March 2, 2026 by 5 p.m.

Drop off or mail proposals to:

2451 Nish-Na-Be-Anong Dr.
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858

Or emailed to:

- RoMaloney@sagchip.org
- MiPelcher@sagchip.org

For more information: 989.775.4581 or 989.775.4538



REQUEST FOR QUOTES: Lawncare Services (Standish)

Project overview:

The Saginaw Chippewa Housing Department (SCHD) is requesting quotes for professional lawn care services for the duration of the 2026 growing season. The Department is seeking a reputable firm to provide the following services only: mowing and weed whipping. Service area will include ten (10) separate locations, listed below.

Project goals:

- Maintain lawn areas in a safe, timely and professional manner
- Communicate with the owner in a timely and professional manner

Project scope of work:

Scope of work will include ten site locations as listed. Companies are encouraged to visit the locations to assess the areas to be covered. Please call Housing's front office reception at (989) 775-4595 to inform us when you plan to be on site. **Ten locations in Standish, MI 48868:**

1. 4522 Cedar Trail
2. 4542 Cedar Trail
3. 4256 Cedar Trail
4. 4272 Cedar Trail
5. 4283 Cedar Trail
6. 4271 Cedar Trail
7. 4259 Cedar Trail
8. 4545 Cedar Trail
9. 4268 Cedar Trail
10. 4502 Cedar Trail

Submission procedures:

- Submit on sheets no larger than an 8½ x 11, clear and legible lettering.
- Email the requested information to: RoMaloney@sagchip.org and MiPelcher@sagchip.org or
- Send via U.S. mail or
- In-person delivery to the Saginaw Chippewa Housing Department, 2451 Nishnabeang Drive, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858.
- Submissions must be received by the deadline listed below.
- Submission received later than the deadline will not be considered.

Provide the following information:

- The principal address of the firm
- Company profile (principals, years in business, key staff contact information)
- Copy of the firm's certificate of insurance (indicate level of professional and general liability coverage)
- Signed statement indicating the firm is not on the federal government's debarred list of entities debarred from doing business with the federal government of the United States. For more information visit the official website of the U.S. Government - System for Award Management at <https://sam.gov/content/home>
- An itemized cost estimate for all services requested in this RFQ and a schedule showing frequency of applications

Submission deadline: March 2, 2026 by 5 p.m.

Drop off or mail proposals to:

2451 Nish-Na-Be-Anong Dr.
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858

Or emailed to:

- RoMaloney@sagchip.org
- MiPelcher@sagchip.org

For more information: 989.775.4581 or 989.775.4538



The Seven Grandfather TEACHINGS

Nbookaawin – Wisdom

To live with wisdom is to acquire and use experiences as guides for making equitable and mature decisions.

Zaagidowin – Love

To live our lives with love is to understand our capacity to realize, empathize, and nurture the needs of others.

Minaadendamooing – Respect

To live with respect is to give mutual consideration for shared and differing ideas as well as for the world around us.

Zoongide'ewin – Bravery

To be brave and have courage is to recognize our moral and mental strength and to do what is appropriate.

Gwekwadiziwin – Honesty

To be honest is to recognize that we have the ability to live our lives with honor and integrity.

Dibaadendiziwin – Humility

To live with humility is to recognize that we are all equal, we all make mistakes, we all like to have our success rewarded and to put others before ourselves.

Debwewin – Truth

To live in truth is to recognize the difference between right and wrong and to be faithful to ourselves as well as the world around us even when the right way is not the easiest way.

Calling: Tribal Members, Descendants

Are you looking for medical or behavioral health services in Detroit?

We offer the following services:

- ▶ **Medical Care:** Primary care, pediatrics, sick and well visits for all ages, diabetes management, physicals, referrals, immunizations and more!
- ▶ **Behavioral Health:** Family and individual counseling, psychiatric services, case management, outpatient substance abuse treatment and more!



Now offering Telehealth and prescription delivery

CALL FOR MORE INFO: 313-846-6030



4880 Lawndale
Detroit, MI 48210
www.aihfs.org



Anishinabe Ogitchedaw Veteran and Warrior Society is in need of VETERAN MEMBERS

Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at 2 p.m. at the Ziibiwing Center.

For more information, please contact:

Paul Walker at PWalker@sagchip.org



TRIBAL OBSERVER

Boozhu! The Tribal Observer, a monthly newspaper, is published on the first of each month.

- To contact Tribal Observer staff, please call 989-775-4096 or email observer@sagchip.org.
- To change your mailing address, please contact the Tribal Clerk's office at 989-775-4055.
- Community advertisements will not be accepted over the phone.

Submissions from the Tribal community are encouraged and can be sent to:

Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
c/o Tribal Observer
7500 Soaring Eagle Blvd.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858



Subscription rates are \$30 per year.

Story ideas, articles and photographs from the community are always welcome. The Tribal Observer reserves the right to edit and/or refuse any submissions or advertisements for publication. The Tribal Observer is published by the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan and is subject to an editorial review process.

The views expressed within the Tribal Observer do not necessarily reflect the views of the Tribal Observer, the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, the Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Council, Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort or its employees or any other enterprise of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. The Tribal Observer works to uphold the highest integrity in news reporting and supports the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968.

Tribal Observer Advertising

To place an advertisement, please contact the Tribal Observer at 989-775-4096 or Observer@sagchip.org for more information.

Announcements - Including birthday, wedding, engagement, congratulations, etc., costs \$10 and is open to Tribal Members, community members and employees. Double-sized announcements are \$20.

Political ads - All political ads will be 1/4 page and have a red border stating as such. The cost is \$250. Political ads may include, but are not limited to, any opinion or advertisement that is political in nature and/or any Letter to the Editor that does not conform to guidelines.

Tribal Observer Subscription Form

Please send \$30 for the annual subscription. Make checks out to SCIT.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please mail form to:

Tribal Observer
7500 Soaring Eagle Blvd.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Contact Information:

- Phone: 989-775-4096
- Email: Observer@sagchip.org
- www.Sagchip.org/TribalObserver



REQUEST FOR QUOTES: Asphalt Pavement Replacement

Project overview: The Saginaw Chippewa Housing Department is requesting quotes for pavement reconstruction for nine residential homes, one pole barn, and the entire length of Cedar Trail road in Arenac County, Mich. The Department is seeking a reputable firm to provide the following services and products only: Work will include all steps necessary to demolish existing asphalt, prepare the base and install new asphalt, as well as any cleanup. Service areas will include 10 separate addresses as listed below. Contractor must provide owner with the warranty information for asphalt.

Project goals:

- Demolish old asphalt and install new asphalt in a safe, timely, and professional manner.
- Removal of debris and clean up at each of the 10 sites.
- Communicate with the owner in a timely and professional manner.

Project scope of work: Scope of work will include all 10 locations as listed. Companies are encouraged to visit the locations to assess the areas to be covered. All required permits are the responsibility of the contractor. Permits can be obtained at the SCIT Planning Department 989-775-4014, <https://www.sagchip.org/Planning/Services.aspx>. Please call Housing's front office reception at 989-775-4595 to inform us when you plan to be on site.

Four locations in Standish, MI, 48658:

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. 4256 Cedar Trail | 5. 4272 Cedar Trail | 8. 4522 Cedar Trail |
| 2. 4259 Cedar Trail | 6. 4283 Cedar Trail | 9. 4542 Cedar Trail |
| 3. 4268 Cedar Trail | 7. 4502 Cedar Trail | 10. 4545 Cedar Trail |
| 4. 4271 Cedar Trail | | |

Submission procedures:

- Submit on sheets no larger than an 8½ x 11, clear and legible lettering.
- Quotes should be legibly printed on company letterhead.
- Email the requested information to: RoMaloney@sagchip.org and MiPelcher@sagchip.org or
- Send via U.S. mail or
- In-person delivery to the Saginaw Chippewa Housing Department, 2451 Nishnabeang Dr., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858. Hours: M-F, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Submissions must be received by the deadline listed below.
- Submissions received later than the deadline will not be considered.

Provide the following information:

- The principal address of the firm
- Company profile (principals, years in business, key staff contact information)
- Copy of the firm's certificate of insurance (indicate level of professional and general liability coverage)
- Signed statement indicating the firm is not on the federal government's debarred list of entities debarred from doing business with the federal government of the United States. For more information visit the official website of the U.S. Government - System for Award Management at <https://sam.gov/content/home>
- An itemized cost estimate for all services requested in this RFQ and a schedule showing frequency of applications

Submission deadline: April 1, 2026 by 5 p.m.

Drop off or mail proposals to:

2451 Nish-Na-Be-Anong Dr.
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858

Or emailed to:

- RoMaloney@sagchip.org
- MiPelcher@sagchip.org

For more information: 989.775.4581 or 989.775.4538



Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan Housing Department Advisory Committee

If you are a leasehold home owner or a tenant of the SCIT Housing Program

THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A VOICE IN THE PROGRAM

The Housing Department is currently accepting letters of interest from Leasehold Home Owners and HUD Residents for the Housing Advisory Committee (HAC).

Please include the following:

Name, address, phone number, photo, membership number (if applicable), and a letter of interest.

Letters of interest can be submitted:

► **In person at the Housing front office**
Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

► **Or mailed to:**
SCIT Housing Department
2451 Nish Na Be Anong Rd.
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858



For more information:

• **Call:** 989-775-4595 • **Or visit:** www.sagchip.org/housing



SUPPORT THE WORK OF MIIBS

Donate Today!

The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School Committee is dedicated to documenting, preserving, and sharing the school's history.

Your contribution ensures that the stories of the children who attended are honored, protected, and never forgotten. Every gift strengthens the preservation of this history and supports ongoing truth-telling and healing.

Your donation directly supports:

- Renovation work to stabilize, protect, and preserve the school buildings
- Promote healing from intergenerational trauma
- Sustain annual events that helps to heal intergenerational trauma
- Create a memorial in honor of the children who perished while attending the school
- Incorporate language and art revitalization programming
- Establish a museum that serves educational and historical purposes



Every tax deductible donation supports community healing, preservation, remembrance, truth and repurposing the center for healing.

DONATE TODAY!

Scan QR code ►



For more information:
MIIBS@sagchip.org

The Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School (MIIBS) Committee deeply appreciates the support of those who share our commitment to dedicating energy and focus to serve the students, families, and descendants of the Mount Pleasant Indian Industrial Boarding School as they learn, heal, and seek justice in the aftermath of federal industrial boarding school and genocidal policies.

Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan

HONORING SAGANING TRADITIONAL POWWOW

June 6 & 7, 2026

Powwow Grounds — 2750 Worth Rd. Standish, MI
Next to the Saganing Eagles Landing Casino & Hotel and the Saganing Tribal Center

Saturday, June 6

- **Dancer/Drum Registration:** 11 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.
- **Grand Entry:** 1 p.m.
- **Special**
- **Re-Registration:** 3-3:45 p.m.
- **Grand Entry:** 4 p.m.
- **Special**
- **Retiring of Flags:** Dusk
- **Bingo at Tribal Center**

Sunday, June 7

- **Breakfast:** 9 a.m.
- **Dancer/Drum Registration:** 11 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.
- **Grand Entry:** 1 p.m.
- **Special**
- **Raffle Drawing:** 3 p.m.
- **Hand Drum Contest:** 3 p.m.
- **Blanket Giveaway**
- **Retiring of Flags**

Admission:

- \$3 Daily/\$5 Weekend
- \$1 for Children

**Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.*



For more information, please contact:
PowwowCommittee@sagchip.org or 989.775.5643

Call for Artists

As a part of its Land Acknowledgement commitment, the Ann Arbor District Library is seeking Indigenous artists from the Great Lakes region to create artwork for the land acknowledgement plaques that will be on display at each of the library's five branches as well as the AALF (Archives, Acquisitions, and Logistics Facility). Each selected artist will create an 18" x 24" piece of artwork in a 2D or 3D medium of their choice, incorporating the AADL land acknowledgement statement, which reads: "The Ann Arbor District Library acknowledges that it benefits from the colonization of Indigenous lands. The Library pledges to support Indigenous people and culture through partnership with, and recognition of, Anishinaabek artists, writers, teachers, and performers."

TIMELINE:

- **Open call until:** April 1
- **Projects due:** Nov. 1
- **Artists notified:** May 1
- **Reception:** Nov. 19

COMMISSIONS AND PAYMENT:

\$2,000 payment total. \$1,000 on selection and \$1,000 on completion. Additional funds may be available for production expenses.

APPLY: <https://aadl.org/callforartists>



July 24, 25 & 26, 2026

Grand Entry:

- **Friday:** 7 p.m.
- **Saturday:** 1 p.m.
- **Sunday:** 12 p.m.

The Hill Campground

7525 E. Tomah Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Hotel Information:

- **Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort** | 1.888.732.4537
- **Soaring Eagle Waterpark and Hotel** | 1.877.232.4532
- **The Retreat at Soaring Eagle** | 1.877.232.4532

www.sagchip.org/pow-wow

**Free Admission **Drug and Alcohol Free Event*

For more information, please contact:
PowwowCommittee@sagchip.org or 989.775.5643

Request for Quotes: Powwow Caterer

The SCIT Powwow Committee is looking for a tribal-preference caterer for the Honoring Saganing Traditional Powwow.

- **When:** Saturday, June 6
- **What:** Dinner feast for 200-400 people

Submit quote to: Powwowcommittee@sagchip.org

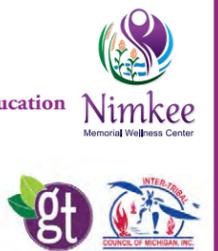
Food Pharmacy PROGRAM

A program to educate clients with diabetes at Nimkee Memorial Wellness Center to help manage their A1C by consuming healthier foods and increase consumption of fruits, vegetables, and lean meats.

12-week program
May 20 - July 22, 2026

► **Participants must attend health education classes at Nimkee Public Health.**

► **Each participant receives \$40 per week in credit to buy groceries at: GreenTree Co-op Market (410 W. Broadway St., Mt. Pleasant)**



Pre-registration is required. Space is limited.

To pre-register, please contact:

- **Toni Smith:** 989-775-4638 or ToSmith@sagchip.org
- **Tamara House:** at 989-775-4612 or THouse@sagchip.org



Human Resources Department welcomes new benefits manager, introduces staff members

JOSEPH V. SOWMICK

Public Relations Manager

On Jan. 17 at the State of the Tribe community meeting, Sub-Chief Craig Graveratte introduced the new Interim Benefits Manager, Paquieka “Sharie” Granison, as she shared the following remarks.

“I want to begin by saying how meaningful it is to stand before you, not only as an HR leader, but also as a proud member of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, who has grown both personally and professionally within this organization.

“My journey here started in 2008 at Saganing Eagles Landing Casino, where I worked as a finance cashier. In 2011, I was promoted to count team supervisor, and like many of us, my path has been shaped by growth, learning, and community. In 2013, I stepped away to focus on education, earning my bachelor’s degree in public administration from Central Michigan University in 2019, and most recently, graduating in 2025 with my master’s degree in human resources administration.

“Since returning in 2021, I’ve served our organization as an HR assistant and an HR generalist, primarily supporting team members at the SECR Satellite Office. These experiences have shaped my understanding of the importance of benefits, not only as programs but also as support systems for individuals and families.

“As interim benefits manager, my focus is simple and steady: Ensuring continuity of coverage, providing clear and timely communication, strengthening processes and communication, and supporting both team members and tribal members with care, respect, and accountability.

“I am pleased to reassure everyone that MyMichigan will remain an in-network provider through 2026. This partnership is important to us, and we recognize the significance of strong provider access for our members and patients. At this time, there are no changes to our in-network status, which means you can continue to receive services without disruption. Maintaining access to your trusted healthcare providers remains a priority.

“We are committed to maintaining this relationship and will keep you updated on any future developments. Your health and well-being are our primary concern. I step into this interim role with deep respect for the responsibility it carries. Benefits represent health, stability, family, and peace of mind. I am committed to listening, learning, and leading in ways that reflect our Tribal values and our shared responsibility to one another.

“I look forward to continuing to serve our community with integrity and care. If you have questions, concerns, or simply want to introduce yourself, I encourage you to connect with the Benefits team and me. We’re here to support you.”

The Benefits team provided the following introductions:

“My name is Lisa Ayling (Peters) and I serve as assistant benefits manager. I recently received 30 years with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe; 23 of those years were focusing on tribal member healthcare, Medicare, Medicaid and marketplace health coverage. One of the biggest questions asked is, ‘When I turn 65 do I need to opt into Medicare?’ The answer is yes, unless you or a spouse are actively working full time with healthcare benefits. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the benefits team as navigating health



Observer photo by Joseph Sowmick

The Benefits team: (left to right) Lisa Ayling, P. Sharie Granison, Brandy Pelcher, Heather Haynes, Leanne Worgess and Jodi Friend

coverage can be challenging know we are here to assist.”

“Hello, my name is Jodi Friend and I work in the Benefits department as benefits specialist. I have been working with the Tribe for 22 years. I work mostly with team members in the Gaming department and other departments as well. I look forward to working more with and assisting our tribal community. I’m grateful for the opportunity and happy to offer my support as needed. Medical benefits are through UMR, dental benefits are through Delta Dental and vision benefits are through Vision VSP.”

“My name is Heather Haynes and I work as your benefits specialist. I am a direct descendent of SCIT. I am currently in my 30th year of service in the Tribe and have worked in the Benefits department since March 2005. Part of my duties is to process medical leave for SCIT, SECR

and Saganing employees and associates. One of the most frequently asked questions I encounter is, ‘Is medical leave paid time off?’ The answer is no, unless you have PTO, sick, annual or personal time.”

“Hi, my name is Brandy Pelcher, I am a member of the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe. I grew up on the reservation and still reside here. I transferred into the Benefits department in January 2007. I feel servicing our employees is top priority. If I don’t know the answer, I will get the answer for you.”

For more information, the Benefits hotline can be accessed at 989-775-5770 or one can use the toll free number at 1-800-225-8172. The Benefits office is located at the Black Elk Tribal Government Building, 7500 Soaring Eagle Boulevard in Mount Pleasant. The office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Office of Tribal Licensing & Regulations Announcement

Elder Parking Permits

Elder Parking Permits for 2026-2028 are available at the Office of Tribal Licensing and Regulations.

Please be aware of the following changes:

- First replacement permit is free
- All replacements after will be \$5 each.

License Plates

Friendly reminder for any tribal member who carries a SCIT License Plate on their vehicle:

Please stop by the office any time there is a change in your personal information since your last renewal, including name, contact information, physical/ mailing address, or Driver’s License renewal.

Phone: 989-775-4175 or 989-775-4105 • Email: OTLR@sagchip.org



SAGINAW CHIPPEWA ROUND DANCE

Saturday, March 14, 2026
Wii Maajikwad Tribal School Gym

2875 Gikendasso Way, Mt. Pleasant MI 48858

Free admission

Doors open: 5:30 p.m.

Event schedule:

- 6 p.m. – Pipe Ceremony
- 6:30 p.m. – Feast
- 7 p.m. – Round Dance
- 8 p.m. – Student Honoring
- 9 p.m. – Memorial Dance
- 12 a.m. – Midnight snack
- 1 a.m. – Closing

Emcee: James “Bud” Day

Stickman: Jordan Mowat

Pipe Carrier: Steve Pego

Invited Singers:

- Harvey Dreaver
- Littleman Quintero
- Niizhik Quintero
- Zhaawan Smith
- Caden Pego
- Kwake Hale
- Owyn Zapata
- Aaron Chivis

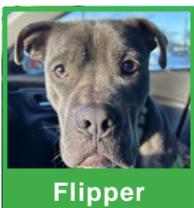
Important information:

- All singers will be acknowledged.
- All children 17 and under must be accompanied by an adult.
- All youth required to sign in upon arrival.
- Bring photo of your loved one that passed on for memorial dance.
- Live streamed by IT at www.sagchip.org



For more information, contact: Wii Maajikwad at 989.775.4453

Adopt a Pet



Flipper

Flipper is a male Pit Bull Terrier mix. Flipper earned his name because when he’s excited he lets out the most adorably ridiculous dolphin noises. He also loves to swim and play in the water. Flipper is a goofy and charming pup, as well as a cuddle machine. He loves attention and belly rubs and might even attempt parkour in your backyard.



Snickers

Snickers is a medium female Calico. She is a sweet girl who is a little shy at first; she just needs a little time to feel safe before she is happily glued to your side. She previously lived in a home with multiple cats so a friendly feline companion could help her blossom even faster. If you’re looking for a tender, devoted companion whose affection feels truly earned, Snickers might just be your match.

Humane Animal Treatment Society • Hatsweb.org
Address: 1105 S. Isabella Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 | Phone: 989.775.0830
Email: hats.caninesupervisor@gmail.com or hats.felinedepartment@gmail.com
Walk-in hours: M-F, 1-5 p.m. *Other times available by appointment*





Leading with heart: Youth Co-op Student Nikodin Davis sets sights on sustainability

KAMIE MANDOKA

Tribal Development Coordinator, Human Resources

Whether he is auditing data in the office or throwing strikes on the bowling lane, Nikodin Davis is a young leader who understands the value of hard work and community mentorship.

Over the past school year, Davis has served as a youth co-op student; balancing his professional development between the Human Resources and Business Regulation and Tax departments. His daily tasks involve critical data entry and auditing, providing him with a firsthand look at the administrative foundations of the Tribe.

Davis' leadership shines just as brightly outside of the office.

A three-year veteran of the Mt. Pleasant High School Varsity Bowling team, he stepped into the role of co-captain this season. His passion for the sport goes beyond his own performance: He recently dedicated his weekend to coaching the JV team and continues to mentor his peers both on the lanes and in the classroom.

This commitment to his community was officially recognized in November when his Peer-to-Peer teacher nominated him for Student of the Month, highlighting his consistent leadership and positive influence on those around him.

The same dedication Davis applies to athletics is evident in his academic life. His hard work has earned him consistent honor roll recognition and various student-athlete awards. These achievements have paved the way for his



Courtesy of Amanda Flaughter
Nikodin Davis



Courtesy of Amanda Flaughter

Davis (right) and the Mt. Pleasant High School Varsity Bowling team.

next chapter at Northern Michigan University, where he has already received early acceptance and a scholarship. Nikodin plans to begin his studies in Fall 2026, pursuing a degree in environmental studies and sustainability.

Beyond his technical skills and academic accolades, Davis

is a recipient of the PEACE making award, reflecting his reputation as a warm and caring individual. Known for his great energy and his constant willingness to lend a helping hand, he has become a valued presence in every department he touches.

As he prepares for his future in environmental advocacy, the community celebrates the leadership and heart he brings to the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe.

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Central Michigan University
37TH ANNUAL
Celebrating Life

Pow wow
John G. Kulhavi Events Center | McQuirk Arena
MARCH 21-22, 2026

GRAND ENTRIES
Saturday 3/21 at 1pm & 7pm
Doors open to the public at 11am
Sunday 3/22 at 12pm
Doors open to the public at 10am

ADMISSION
General Entry (11+) - \$10
Children (10 & under) - Free
SCIT Members (with I.D.) - Free
CMU Students (with I.D.) - Free

DIGNITARIES
EMCEE
Mike Medawis
HOST DRUM
Meskwaki Nation
HEAD VETERAN
Walker Stonefish
ARENA DIRECTOR
Little Man Quintero
HEAD DANCE JUDGE
Onyleen Zapata

PRIZES
Drum Contest
1st - \$4,000 | 2nd - \$3,000 | 3rd - \$2,000
Dance Contest
Youth (6-11)
Traditional, Grass, Fancy Bustle
Traditional, Jingle, Fancy Shawl
1st - \$100 | 2nd - \$75 | 3rd - \$50 | 4th - \$25
Teen (12-17)
Traditional, Grass, Fancy Bustle
Traditional, Jingle, Fancy Shawl
1st - \$200 | 2nd - \$150 | 3rd - \$100 | 4th - \$50
Adult (18-49)
Traditional, Grass, Fancy Bustle
Traditional, Jingle, Fancy Shawl
1st - \$400 | 2nd - \$300 | 3rd - \$200 | 4th - \$100
Golden Age Dance Contest (50+)
Men Combined / Women Combined
1st - \$400 | 2nd - \$300 | 3rd - \$200 | 4th - \$100
Dancers must provide SSN, Canadian Nationals must fill out W-BBEN. CMU is required to withhold 30.00% tax payments made to all non-US citizens.

Facebook, Instagram, Email icons
@CMUIndigenous
indigenous@cmich.edu



The Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Library

The Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Library is a public library open to everyone, located inside and also serving the SCTC. Being a library card holder gives you access to our entire library collection, online resources, our partner libraries, and our interlibrary loan system. We have books, DVDs, audiobooks, CDs and materials for all ages organized using Maawn Doobiigeng (Gather Together), an Anishinaabe system of library organization created by and for this community.

Services we provide:

- Computer access
- Free Wi-Fi
- Paper shredder
- Microsoft Office
- Copying
- Curbside pickup
- Free printing
- Laminating
- No overdue fines!



Online resources for finding more information:

- Newsbank for local, national, and international news
- ProQuest History Vault for historical documents from the U.S. National Archives
- ProQuest Indian Claims Insight for treaties, claims, and other historical documents
- Ebooks and e-audiobooks with the Libby app
- Streaming video from Kanopy
- JSTOR for scholarly monographs and ebooks

Services for Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College:

- Textbooks and supplementary books for classes
- Research databases for articles and peer reviewed literature
- Librarian assistance with research and other class support
- Interlibrary loan: Over 6 million items



Anne Heidemann
Tribal Librarian

Kimberly Condon
Library Assistant

Lee-Anne Disel
Library Assistant

Visit <https://mel.org> to borrow books from any participating library in Michigan

Use your Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Library Card at our partner libraries:

- Veterans Memorial Library (Mount Pleasant)
- Faith Johnston Memorial Library (Rosebush)
- Tate Memorial Library (Blanchard)
- Shepherd Community Library (Shepherd)
- Fremont Township Library in (Winn)



CREATE = Your Own = FUTURE

Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College is a tribally controlled land grant institution that reflects and promotes the unique culture of the Anishinaabek community, designed with educational excellence to empower learners to reach their educational goals.

Register Now!

SCTC is a tribally controlled land grant institution that reflects and promotes the unique culture of the Anishinaabek community, designed with educational excellence to empower learners to reach their educational goals.

We're excited to announce the official launch of SCTC's online store!

Now you can shop your favorite SCTC apparel, accessories, and spirit gear anytime, anywhere. Whether you're a student, alumni, faculty member, or proud supporter, there's something for everyone to show off your SCTC pride!

- Convenient online shopping
- Exclusive SCTC merchandise
- Perfect gifts

Don't miss out — browse the collection today and represent SCTC in style! Visit the online store now and start shopping!

sctcstore.itemorder.com/

SAGINAW CHIPPEWA TRIBAL COLLEGE Merch Store

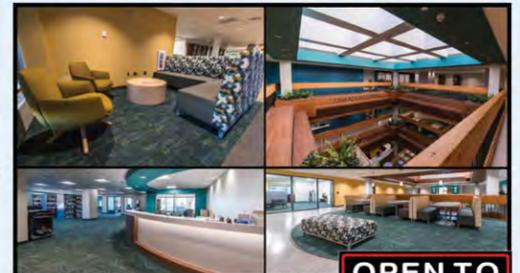
ORDER ONLINE!
sctcstore.itemorder.com

Tribal College Open House



Friday,
March 6, 2026
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Light refreshments
For more information:
989-317-4821



OPEN TO PUBLIC

Experience our Campus

Our team is excited to show off our main campus during a general campus tour as well as sharing their personal experiences as to why tribal college is so special.

IMPORTANT DATES



- **March 2-6** | Midterm week
- **March 20** | Last day to withdraw
- **March 30-April 3** | Spring Break: No classes
- **April 6** | Easter Monday: No classes, campus closed
- **May 4-8** | Exam week
- **May 8** | Spring semester ends
- **May 21** | SCTC Graduation at SECR



Graduation Commencement Thursday, May 21, 2026

BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE



Follow us on **TikTok**

Success Is Within Reach

GED
Adult Education Program

For more Info:
Lori Vincent
GED Program
Phone: (989) 317-4963

OPEN TO PUBLIC





Editorial: Nimkee Dental staff give presentation to Wii Maajikwad students

LISA WAKEFIELD
Dental Assistant

On the morning of Feb. 3, 2026, Nimkee Dental Clinic staff – Dr. Jeff Dulude and Jami Toch, with the assistance of Jennifer Powell and Lisa Wakefield, – gave a presentation to the students of Wii Maajikwad.

Dr. Dulude gave a presentation about tooth care and the sugar in the students' favorite drinks and food. A good-versus-bad foods for teeth game was played by all students, reinforcing their understanding to which foods are better to eat based on their sugar content.

Toch gave a demonstration on brushing and flossing, and Powell and Wakefield assisted and presented each student with a take-home bag containing dental hygiene supplies.

A total of 104 students participated including the Immersion classes and K-5 classes.



Courtesy photo

Nimkee Dental Clinic staff gave a presentation to Wii Maajikwad students on Feb. 3: (left to right) Hygienist Jaime Tosch, Dental Clinic Specialist Jennifer Powell, Dental Assistant Lisa Wakefield, Dentist Dr. Jeffery Dulude.

It was wonderful to see the students engaged and interested in the presentation.

This was the second year for the clinic to coordinate with the school staff for this type of program. Everyone was very cooperative and helpful in making it

all run so smoothly. We greatly appreciate and thank each one that helped bring this education to the community's children.

I'm looking forward to making next year's program a little bit grander. Once again, thank you all.

MARCH 6 • 10AM - 2PM
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College
5805 E Pickard St, Mt Pleasant

Local organizations will come together to provide a one-stop shop for community members to access resources directly.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Recovery Speaker
- Community Resources
- Treatment Providers
- Harm Reduction
- LGBTQ+ Resources & Advocacy
- Lunch will be provided

Contact Nadia with questions or for more information:
(989)773-5921 EXT: 1460
nashitari@cmdhd.org

Additional organizations will be in attendance!

Ziigwan (Spring) Celebration

Join SCIT's Environmental Team and SCTC's Land Grant Office in celebrating spring activities, community Water Song illustration challenge, and educational booths.

Friday, March 20, 2026
1-5 p.m. | SCTC, Main Lobby (5805 E. Pickard Rd.)

Learn about the Great Lakes watershed, pollution prevention and reduction, environmental/human health, water resources, environmental impacts, actions you can do to improve water quality, and local water recreation opportunities while promoting community involvement and awareness on water issues. Your everyday choices impact water resources. Clean water starts with you.

Free and open to the public.

For more information:
khager@sagchip.org or 989-775-4585

**Program funded by the Great Lakes Initiative Restoration (GLRI), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), USDA-NIFA, and the SCTC Land Grant Office.*

Water Song ILLUSTRATION CHALLENGE

- **Theme:** World Water Day, Water Celebration, Water Resources, Water Protector, Water Walker, Indigenous, Tribal
- **Must include:** Water Song, Anishnaabemowin and phonetics (below).
- **Voting held:** Friday, March 20 from 3:30-4:30 p.m.
- **Judging criteria:** Creativity, originality, adherence to theme, and correlations of Indigenous values or cultural teachings.
- **Recognition and prizes:** The winning illustrations will be saved and distributed at future water-focused events such as youth camps, river cleanups, wild rice harvesting, etc. Prizes include gas cards and water educational or recreational items.

Submissions:

- ▶ **Email:** Katie Hager at KHager@sagchip.org
- ▶ **Drop off or mail to Planning Department:** 2451 Nish-Na-Be-Anong Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

For more information:
KHager@sagchip.org or 989-775-4585

Water Song

Heya Heya Heya Hey (Hey-ya Hey-ya Hey-ya Hey)

Heya Heya Heya Ho (Hey-ya Hey-ya Hey-ya Ho)

Nibi Waabo endayin (Nee-bee Wah-boo en-dah-yin)

Water liquid you are
You are water

Aki Miskwe Niibi Waabo (Ah-key Misk-way Nee-bee Wah-boo)

Earth Blood Water Liquid

STEAM^{AG} Student Organization

Wednesday, March 11
12-1 p.m. | SCTC Community Room (5805 E. Pickard Rd., Mt. Pleasant MI, 48858)

Pi π Day Celebration

Come Celebrate Pi Day with us - for some irrational fun and fascinating facts!

Presenters: Dr. Wesley Rich, SCTC Mathematics Instructor

- ▶ Pi eating contest
- ▶ Pie walk

For more information, contact: Kathleen J. Hart at 989.317.4827 or khart@sagchip.org

Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College STEAM^{AG} Student Organization

SPRING STEAM^{AG} Raffle Fundraiser

Drawing: April 13 at 1 p.m.
Tickets: One for \$5 or three for \$10

For more information:
989.317.4827 at khart@sagchip.edu

PRIZES:

- **1st place:** Two SECR concert tickets of choice with \$50 dining credit (valued at \$450-\$750) *Donated by SCIT Public Relations
- **2nd place:** SECR overnight stay with \$50 dining credit (valued at \$250) *Donated by Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort
- **3rd place:** SEWPH overnight stay with \$50 dining credit (valued at \$230) *Donated by Soaring Eagle Waterpark and Hotel

**Proceeds help pay for events, activities, youth camps, community donations and student travel to a conference.*

June 22-26, 2026
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College
(5805 E. Pickard Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858)

- ▶ Registration open to the first 20 to sign up
- ▶ Open to middle school students (entering 6th grade or leaving 8th grade)
- ▶ Schedule: Field trips and outdoor activities
- ▶ Snacks and lunch will be provided

To register, please contact:
Kathleen Hart at 989.317.4827 or khart@sagchip.org

Offering fun, hands-on, engaging activities in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics and Agriculture, incorporating traditional knowledge.



Country music artist Jo Dee Messina presents memorable, compelling performance

NATALIE SHATTUCK
Editor

She may not have flipped a coin for heads Carolina, tails California, but country music artist Jo Dee Messina landed right in Michigan for her show at the Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort on Saturday, Jan. 31.

The 55-year-old country superstar has charted six number-one singles on the Billboard country music charts.

Messina and her band got the show started with the fiery and sassy “My Give a Damn’s Busted,” a Joe Diffie cover which she also recorded.

The concert continued on with “Downtime,” “That’s the Way,” and “Stand Beside Me.” This was followed by a medley of well-known hits including: Bon Jovi’s “Livin’ On A Prayer,” Toto’s “Hold the Line,” Journey’s “Faithfully,” Pat Benatar’s “Hit Me with Your Best Shot,”



Observer photo by Natalie Shattuck

American country music artist Jo Dee Messina performs during her Jan. 31 concert at Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort.

The Outfield’s “Your Love” and Joan Jett’s “I Love Rock ‘n’ Roll.”

The up-tempo “I’m Alright” (1998) was performed next. The single became Messina’s

second consecutive Number One hit.

Messina’s father unfortunately passed away eight days prior to this performance. She did not speak of it directly but



Observer photo by Natalie Shattuck

Chase Matthew opens the show shortly after 8 p.m.

mentioned the past month has been difficult. She performed several songs that highlighted her strong faith. “If He Knew Jesus,” “Carry On My Wayward Son” and “The Jesus I Know” were featured.

In between songs, Messina took several moments to share stories with the audience. She also gave a shout out to Soaring Eagle employees for “being so kind and helpful.” She mentioned she thoroughly enjoyed her experience at the Soaring Eagle Spa.

The show continued on with the anthem “Heads Carolina, Tails California,” her 1996 debut hit single, and also with “Lesson in Leavin’,” “Desperate” and “Bye Bye.”

The encore included the sentimental ballad “Bring on the Rain” and a lively cover

of Journey’s “Don’t Stop Believin’.”

It was a memorable and compelling performance as Messina’s strong vocal ability and connection to her fans were on full display.

Backstage and prior to the show, Messina met with the evening’s opening act, Chase Matthew, and recorded humorous videos for social media platforms.

Matthew, 28, hails from Tennessee, and has charted with the country singles “Darlin’” and “Love You Again.”

His other singles include “County Line,” “Holdin’ It Down” and “All My Exes,” which was recorded with Lauren Alaina.

He gave a vivacious performance that set the tone for the evening.

“The Long Island Medium” Theresa Caputo returns to present her “Live: The Experience” show

NATALIE SHATTUCK
Editor

Theresa Caputo, aka “The Long Island Medium,” brought her “Live: The Experience” show to the Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort once more on Saturday, Feb. 7 in the Entertainment Hall.

Caputo is known as a medium and reality TV star in which she shares her claimed gift and ability to communicate with deceased loved ones.

The show began at 8 p.m., and consisted of Caputo sharing messages of healing, comfort, and love to emotional audience members.

Known for not only her emotional delivery but her comedic performance as



Observer photo by Natalie Shattuck

Theresa Caputo (left), aka “The Long Island Medium,” poses for a backstage photo with Scott Sheahan, entertainment coordinator for the Soaring Eagle, before her live show at the Soaring Eagle on Feb. 7.

she has a great sense of humor, audience members

have described both her TV series and live show as a “rollercoaster of emotions.” Audience members were visibly in tears one moment,

and uproariously laughing the next.

Caputo’s TV series “Long Island Medium” and “Theresa Caputo Raising Spirits” are both available for viewing on streaming services.



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Contact:
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8 a.m. - 8 p.m., M-F
989-358-4611
nwdne@nemcsa.org
8:30 am - 4:30 pm, M-F

This project has been made possible through a grant awarded to NEMCSA Region 9 AAA by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

www.nemcsa.org



KC and The Sunshine Band help Soaring Eagle 'get down tonight'

MATTHEW WRIGHT

Staff Writer

Judged by the party atmosphere inside the Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort's Entertainment Hall, you would have to believe that disco was still alive and well. KC and The Sunshine Band were in town on Feb. 21, and everyone there had on their boogie shoes, ready to get down that night.

Led by front man Harry Wayne Casey, the band whisked the audience back in time to the '70s and '80s. With a horn section, back-up vocalists, and supporting dancers, the band surrounding KC really brought the disco era back to life.

The night began with the hit songs "(Shake, Shake, Shake) Shake Your Booty" and "Boogie Shoes."

Next, the band left the stage, leaving KC alone to give an extended monologue with the audience. He reminisced about his time in the band, life and growing older.

The 75-year-old artist had the audience roaring in laughter, after mentioning his weight gain had left him contemplating changing the group's name to "KFC and The Sunshine Band."



Observer photo by Matthew Wright

KC and The Sunshine Band perform during the Feb. 21 concert at the Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort. The band features a horn section, back-up vocalists, and supporting dancers.

The band returned to the stage for performances of "I Hear a Symphony," "Yes I'm Ready" and "Please Don't Go."

Next up were the hit songs "I'm Your Boogie Man," "Keep It Comin' Love" and "I Like To Do It."

The nostalgia continued with "I Get Lifted," a cover of George McCrae's "Rock Your Baby" and "Give It Up."

The party came to a close with spirited performances of "That's the Way (I Like It)" and "Get Down Tonight."

For more information on upcoming shows, please visit the Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort's website at www.soaringeaglecasino.com.



Observer photo by Matthew Wright

Flanked by dancers, front man Harry Wayne Casey (center) performs "Boogie Shoes."

PAYING FOR COLLEGE OR CAREER TRAINING

STARTS WITH FAFSA

No matter your household income, it's worth it to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (also known as the **FAFSA**). It's the key to unlocking **money for college or career training** — including some scholarships that aren't as income based as you might think (like the **Michigan Achievement Scholarship & Community College Guarantee**).

Most families complete the FAFSA in 30 minutes or less.

What you'll need:

- StudentAid.gov accounts
- Social Security numbers
- Income and bank info

DON'T WAIT! YOUR SENIOR COULD QUALIFY FOR MORE THAN YOU EXPECT.

FILL OUT THE FAFSA TODAY.



FAFSA.gov



Andahwod Continuing Care Community and Elder Services Elders' March 2026 Newsletter

Boozhoo elders! The 2026 Elders Powwow Homecoming Trip registration forms have been mailed. All registration must be returned by postal mail only and will be entered as a first come, first served basis.

Andahwod has medical equipment for tribal elders to borrow when needed. We also have medical supplies available. Please call Lucinda at 989-775-4307 for more information.

SHAMROCKS ACROSS AMERICA



Courtesy photo

This program encourages sending and collecting letters with other elder care facilities or schools. Here are the letters Andahwod has received so far!



Courtesy photo

Patty Kequom, Judy Banister, and Bernice Hendrickson at the Andahwod Valentine's Day party.



Courtesy photo

Brent Jackson, Stuart Jackson, Carol Jackson, Janice Ash, Darlene Wilson, Bobby Starkey, and Lily Olson enjoying Elders Lunch.

MARCH 2026 Tribal Elder Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Edith Murdoch
James Schneider
Verna Mc Ewan | 13) Sherry Bame
Douglas Snyder |
| 2) Janice Hill
Arthur Miller Jr.
Daphane Eggleston | 14) Ronald Judson Jr.
Linda Davis |
| 3) Angela Bennett
Winona Hancock
Susan Pretzer
Terri Verga-Nassif
Barbara Walraven
William Walraven | 15) Alice Jo Ricketts
Coy McCollum
Michael Watson |
| 4) Elizabeth Cabay
Judith Bennett
Herbert Robinson Jr. | 16) Fredrick Bailey Jr.
Gregory Pigeon
Michael Jackson |
| 5) Wanda Brodie
Nancy Chippewa
Kenneth Vasquez
Teresa Bailey
Terri Cummings
Clifford Saboo Jr.
Sandra Tabako | 17) LeeAnn Ruffino
Joseph Kowalski
Patrick Smith
Merton Flory
Bobbie Valtierra |
| 6) Diane Morley
Roland Jackson Jr. | 18) Marion Williams
Thomas Bates
Rhonda Dutton
Wanda Wallace |
| 7) Daniel Cloutier
Danny Stevens
Quinn Pelcher | 19) Rita Redman
Janice Roach
Carmen Deaton |
| 8) Margaret Rosario
Michelle Eddy
Timothy Stevens
Lorraine Walker
Michael Griffus | 20) Etta Ayling
James Cates |
| 9) Marsha Gibson
Theodore Kowalski
Robert Stanton
Russell Stevens
Kelly Hawkins | 21) Elaine Kraska |
| 10) Maynard Sharp
Stella Bennett | 22) Kim Aasved
Paige Vanderlooven
Kim Oneill |
| 11) Michael Jackson
Jolene Quinlan
Clifton Chippewa II
Bernadette Reyes
Stephen Walraven
Darwin Ziehmer
Jeremy Stevens
Tonya Bird | 23) Harry Jackson
Lisa Zangara |
| 12) Julia Wixson
Brandy Judkins
Toni Smith
Christina Perry | 24) Kevin Jenkins
Larry Bearden
Karen Mills |
| | 25) Joseph Chamberlain
Carolyn Crawford |
| | 26) Paul Bird
Clifford Chamberlain |
| | 27) John Miller Sr. |
| | 28) Dawn Hunt
Kelly Huyser
Thelma Henry-Shipman |
| | 29) Brian Wray
Craig Waynee
Sabrina Karras |
| | 30) Janet Barnhart
Esther Chatfield |
| | 31) John Rhodes |

March 2026 Andahwod events

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Coffee Break / Daily / 2:30 p.m. | Poker / March 9, 30 / 2 p.m. | BH Bingo with Friends
March 20 / 1-3 p.m. |
| Sewing / Tuesdays / 10:30 a.m. | Elders Breakfast
March 11, 25 / 9-10 a.m. | Language Bingo
March 24 / 1-3 p.m. |
| Exercise w/Patty / Tuesdays / 1 p.m. | Birthday Celebration
March 12 / 2:30 p.m. | Elm Creek, Rock Store, Conlay's Café
March 26 / Leaving at 10 a.m. |
| Euchre / Thursdays / 5:30 p.m. | St. Patrick's Day
Cookie Decorating
March 16 / 1-3 p.m. | Birthday Bingo & Potluck
March 28 / 12-3 p.m. |
| Billiards / March 2, 23 / 2 p.m. | St. Patrick's Day Party
March 17 / 2:30 p.m. | Energy Therapy
March 31 / 1-3:30 p.m. |
| Community Elder Bingo
March 3 / 1-3 p.m. | | |
| Elders Lunch
March 4, 18 / 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. | | |

For more information, please call Andahwod at: 989.775.4339

Elder Perishable Food Grab & Go

Wednesday, March 4, 2026
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. (During Elders Lunch)

Andahwod CCC&ES
2910 S. Leaton Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
• While supplies last
• The purpose is to expand nutrition for tribal elders

For more information, contact: 989.775.4300

March 2026 Andahwod CCC & ES Menu

Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Dinner: 4:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Chef's Choice	2 Beef Tips w/Brown Rice Cheeseburger w/fries	3 Wet Burrito Pork w/Hominy Soup	4 Elder Lunch Taco Buffet Pork Steak w/Gravy	5 Quiche Bbq Chicken	6 Chicken Noodle Soup Fish Fry Friday	7 Chef's Choice
8 Chef's Choice	9 BBQ Ribs w/Baked Mac Chicken Ceaser Salad Wrap	10 Beef Fajita Ham w/Sweet Potato	11 Elders Breakfast Tomato Soup w/Grilled Cheese Pork Chops w/Red Potatoes	12 Pancakes w/Sausage Hot Face Roast Beef	13 Pizza Fish Fry Friday	14 Chef's Choice
15 Chef's Choice	16 Patty Melt Chicken Alfredo	17 Corn Beef N Cabbage Ruben Sandwich	18 Elder Lunch Pasta Buffet Pork Loin	19 Spaghetti w/Salad Smothered Chicken Sandwich	20 Potato Soup Fish Fry Friday	21 Chef's Choice
22 Chef's Choice	23 B.L.T Chili	24 Steak Fritters Chicken Pot Pies	25 Elders Breakfast Bean Soup Pulled Pork	26 Chicken Bacon Swiss Surf and Turf	27 Goulash Fish Fry Friday	28 Chef's Choice
29 Chef's Choice	30 Egg Salad Meatloaf	31 Chili Dogs w/ Fries Sweet n Sour Chicken	*Warning: Consuming under cooked foods or eggs could lead to a food bourne illness. **Warning: Please inform cashier/staff of any severe food allergies you may have prior to sitting down. Thank you		*Menu subject to change* Sugar free available upon request. Call kitchen for lunch and dinner at 989-775-4314.	



Sowmick retires after 30 years of service to the Tribe

ERIK RODRIGUEZ
Public Relations Director
&
NATALIE SHATTUCK
Editor

After three decades of unwavering commitment to the Tribe, Joseph Sowmick, interim public relations manager and a respected tribal elder, officially retired on Friday, Feb. 20.

In recognition of his significant contributions, a special ceremony was held on Wednesday, Feb. 18, in the Tribal Council chambers. During this event, Council members, along with staff from Public Relations and the Tribal Observer, expressed their heartfelt appreciation for Sowmick's service. As a token of honor, the Tribal Council presented him with a green and white Pendleton blanket, symbolizing his admiration for Michigan State University and serving as a lasting reminder of his dedication to the community.

On Feb. 19, from noon to 2 p.m., a cake reception was organized for tribal employees to celebrate Sowmick's retirement, providing an opportunity for colleagues to share their congratulations, express gratitude, and reminisce about cherished memories.

Looking ahead, Sowmick has expressed his intention to embrace retirement by traveling more



Observer photo by Natalie Shattuck

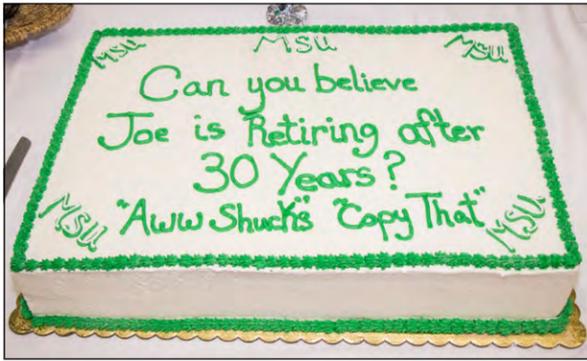
After three decades of service to the Tribe, Tribal Elder Joseph Sowmick (second from left) is honored for his retirement with a Pendleton blanket from Tribal Council on Feb. 18 (left to right: Chief Luke Sprague, Sowmick and his wife Sue Sowmick, and Sub-Chief Craig Graveratte).

extensively while remaining actively engaged in supporting the tribal community.

He also plans to continue his involvement by volunteering on several committees, including the BIA Constitutional Amendment Petitioners, the Elders Advisory Board, and the SCIT Caucus Committee, ensuring that his legacy of service and commitment to the tribe endures.



Observer photo by Matthew Wright



Observer photo by Matthew Wright



Observer photo by Natalie Shattuck



Observer photo by Natalie Shattuck



Foundations of Investing

Wednesday, April 25, 2026

1 p.m. | Andahwod CGA (2910 S. Leaton Rd.)

► Open to tribal elders and the community

Building your investor IQ starts with understanding the basics. Whether you are new to investing or want a refresher, our Foundations of Investing presentation will help you learn about:

- The importance of developing a workable strategy
- Ideas for focusing on what you can control with your finances to achieve financial goals
- The impact of asset allocation

Seminar overview:

- Key steps to financial success
- EdwardJones process

Rules of investing:

- Strategy
- Quality
- Time
- Diversification
- Horizon
- Controllables



Facilitator: Brianna Bitzer
Financial Advisor, 989-772-0153



For more information, contact:
Andahwod CCC&ES at 989.775.4300

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) NOW AVAILABLE

The Elder Services Office is now assisting with the LIHEAP grants for heating, year-round crisis, and weatherization assistance.

Program Eligibility: Determined by gross income, including wages, self-employment, contract income, and a payment from mortgages, SSA benefits retirement, and other types of income. Minimum and maximum benefit amounts for assistance are based on household income and individuals residing in the home for qualifying tribal member households.

Priority is given to older adults 60 years and older, individuals with disability or young children in the home. Applications can be picked up and assistance with completing the application with the Elder Services program.

Michigan Indian Elders Conference - Hannahville, MI

Andahwod Elder Services will be taking interested SCIT elders to the MIEA conference in Hannahville, Mich. on April 26-27, and returning April 28. Andahwod ES will provide transportation and hotel room. Double occupancy per room. Deposit to attend is required. Limited spots available.

Elders can begin signing up between March 2-13, 2026.

Please call Andahwod if you have any questions 989-775-4300.

Community Elder Bingo

Friday, March 6, 2026

1-3 p.m. | Andahwod CGA

Andahwod will be hosting Community Elder Bingo beginning Friday, March 6.



This activity will be recurrent on the first Friday of the month, subject to change due to holidays or other events.

This is open to all tribal elders.

For more information: 989-775-4339



Event date: Saturday, May 2, 2026

Craft show: 1-4 p.m. | Purse Auction: 4-5 p.m.
Andahwod CCC & ES (2910 S. Leaton Rd., Mt. Pleasant)

Vendors needed for:

Chair massages, home party sales and crafts geared towards women and their health or pampering.

► **No cost for a table:** Vendors must donate a basket to be used for a door prize.

► **Open to the public**

► **Mother's Day themed fundraiser event**

* Half of proceeds will benefit Andahwod Elder Services, the other half will benefit the local women's shelter.

For more information, please contact:
depelcher@sagchip.org or 989.775.4339

Elders Minor Assistance Program (EMAP)

This grant assistance is available for minor home and vehicle repairs under program guidelines. SCIT elder over 60 years of age may be eligible.

To expedite the process, obtain three quotes for the repair prior to submitting application!

Elders may stop in, call, or email for more information. Applications and guidelines are available in the Andahwod front lobby.

Applications with quotes need to be submitted by March 20, 2026.



MARCH 2026 | Tribal Community Event Planner

SCTC Wellness Wednesdays

March 4, 11, 18, 25

- SCTC (5805 E. Pickard Rd.)
- EGrossman@sagchip.edu
- With Maggie Magoon, health specialist and certified trainer
- Tai Chi: March 4 from 12-1 p.m.
- Mindfulness for Better Living: March 11 from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- Sleep Education for Everyone (SLEEP): March 18 from 12-1 p.m.
- RELAX: Alternatives to Anger: March 25 from 12-1 p.m.

SCTC STEAM^{AG} Pi Day Celebration

March 11 | 12-1 p.m.

- SCTC Community Room (5805 E. Pickard Rd.)
- KHart@sagchip.org or 989-775-4827
- Come Celebrate Pi Day with us - for some irrational fun and fascinating facts!

Saginaw Chippewa Round Dance

March 14 | 6 p.m. - 1 a.m., doors open at 5:30 p.m.

- Wii Maajikwad Gym (2875 Gikendasso Way)
- 989-775-4453
- Free admission
- All singers will be acknowledged.
- Children 17 and under must be accompanied by an adult.
- Bring a photo of your loved one that passed on for memorial dance.

TCG (Trading Card Game) Night

March 17 | 5:30-8 p.m.

- 7th Generation (7785 E. Remus Rd.)
- DAJackson@sagchip.org or 989-775-4782
- Pokémon, Lorcana, Magic the Gathering and more!

Wii Maajikwad Kindergarten Registration

March 18 | 5-7 p.m.

- Wii Maajikwad (2875 Gikendaaso Way)
- ESchlegel@sagchip.org or 989-775-4453
- Parents/guardians can register their incoming kindergartener for the 2026/2027 school year

People's Powwow Taco Lunch Fundraiser

March 20 | 11 a.m.-2 p.m. (or until gone)

- 7th Generation (7785 E. Remus Rd.)
- **Place orders: 989-775-4796**
- Taco dinner cost: \$15
- Choice of beef, chicken or vegetarian tacos
- Includes beans and rice

Ziigwan (Spring) Celebration

March 20 | 1-5 p.m.

- SCTC Main Lobby (5805 E. Pickard Rd.)
- KHager@sagchip.org or 989-775-4585
- Spring activities, community water song illustration challenge, and educational booths

CMU 37th annual Celebrating Life Powwow

March 21 | Grand entries at 1 p.m. & 7 p.m.

March 22 | Grand entry at 12 p.m.

- McGuirk Arena, Central Michigan University
- Indigenous@cmich.edu
- General entry (ages 11 and older): \$10
- Children (ages 10 and under): Free
- SCIT members (with I.D.): Free
- CMU students (with I.D.): Free

Two-Spirit Talking Circle

March 23, April 27 | 6-8 p.m.

- 7th Generation (7785 E. Remus Rd.)
- LeRuffino@sagchip.org or kt@greatlakesbaypride.org

Spring Feast

March 25 | 6-8 p.m.

- 7th Generation (7785 E. Remus Rd.)
- TJackson@sagchip.org or 989-775-4780
- Meal provided
- Feast bundles encouraged

Indigenous Food Sovereignty Summit

April 6, 7, 8

- Kellogg Hotel (East Lansing, Mich.)
- **Registration: canr.msu.edu/IFSS2026**
- **Contact: Events@anr.msu.edu**
- Join us for a powerful gathering that celebrates Indigenous food systems, cultural resilience, and community-driven solutions for food sovereignty.
- Keynote speakers from Indigenous communities leading food sovereignty efforts
- Workshops on traditional food, harvesting practices, seed saving, land stewardship, and policy advocacy
- Conversations and intergenerational storytelling
- Local Indigenous vendors
- Cultural performances and ceremonies honoring the land and its people

ACFS Family Bingo Night

May 1 | 6-8 p.m.

- Eagles Nest Tribal Gym (7070 E. Broadway)
- WFlowersMurch@sagchip.org or 989-775-4914

Tee'd Up Tuesdays Golf Scramble League

May 5-Aug. 18 | Tee time: 5:20 p.m.

- PohlCat Golf Course (6595 E. Airport Rd.)
- Recreation@sagchip.org
- Two player scramble format, \$600 per team
- Fees due by: March 31, 2026
- Must pay at: Wii Maajikwad/Recreation Center

MARCH 2026 | Tribal Community Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat./Sun.
2 Sewing in Saganing 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saganing Recovery Group 1-2 p.m. B. Health	3 Recovery on the Rez 2-3 p.m. Zoom Drums Out 7:30-9 p.m. 7th Gen	4 Elders Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Andahwod Recovery Talking Circle 9 a.m. B. Health Eagle Feather Teachings 1:30-2:30 p.m. B. Health	5 Sacred Fire Lunch 12-1 p.m. 7th Gen Community Sewing Nights 5-8 p.m. 7th Gen Peer 360 at BH Lodge 6-7 p.m. B. Health	6 Fireside on the Rez 11:30 a.m. B. Health Spirit Bear Talking Circle 7 p.m. Andahwod	1/7 Fireside on the Rez 6 p.m. B. Health 8
9 STEAM ^{AG} Meeting 12-1 p.m. SCTC Recovery Group 1-2 p.m. B. Health	10 Recovery on the Rez 2-3 p.m. Zoom Drums Out 7:30-9 p.m. 7th Gen	11 Elders Breakfast 9-10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Andahwod Recovery Talking Circle 9 a.m. B. Health Eagle Feather Teachings 1:30-2:30 p.m. B. Health	12 Soup Day 12-1 p.m. Saganing Community Sewing Nights 5-8 p.m. 7th Gen Peer 360 at BH Lodge 6-7 p.m. B. Health	13 Fireside on the Rez 11:30 a.m. B. Health Spirit Bear Talking Circle 7 p.m. Andahwod	14 Fireside on the Rez 6 p.m. B. Health 15
16 Tribal Observer DEADLINE Dice/Euchre 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Saganing Recovery Group 1-2 p.m. B. Health	17 Recovery on the Rez 2-3 p.m. Zoom	18 Elders Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Andahwod Recovery Talking Circle 9 a.m. B. Health Eagle Feather Teachings 1:30-2:30 p.m. B. Health	19 Saganing Breakfast 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Saganing Sacred Fire Lunch 12-1 p.m. 7th Gen Community Sewing Nights 5-8 p.m. 7th Gen Peer 360 at BH Lodge 6-7 p.m. B. Health	20 Fireside on the Rez 11:30 a.m. B. Health Elders Valentines Dinner 4:30-6:30 p.m. Saganing Spirit Bear Talking Circle 7 p.m. Andahwod	21 Fireside on the Rez 6 p.m. B. Health AOVWS Meeting 2 p.m. Ziibiwing 22
23 Recovery Group 1-2 p.m. B. Health STEAM ^{AG} Meeting 12-1 p.m. SCTC	24 Recovery on the Rez 2-3 p.m. Zoom Drums Out 7:30-9 p.m. 7th Gen	25 Elders Breakfast 9-10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Andahwod Recovery Talking Circle 9 a.m. B. Health Eagle Feather Teachings 1:30-2:30 p.m. B. Health	26 Sacred Fire Lunch 12-1 p.m. 7th Gen Saganing Spring Feast 1-3 p.m. Saganing Peer 360 at BH Lodge 6-7 p.m. B. Health	27 Fireside on the Rez 11:30 a.m. B. Health Spirit Bear Talking Circle 7 p.m. Andahwod	28 Fireside on the Rez 6 p.m. B. Health 29
30 Dice/Euchre 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Saganing Recovery Group 1-2 p.m. B. Health	31 Recovery on the Rez 2-3 p.m. Zoom Drums Out 7:30-9 p.m. 7th Gen	Women Owning and Appreciating Woodlands Join us for a day of learning! Get empowered to connect with nature and gain knowledge on ways to become a steward of your property. This is a fun and free event for everyone. May 2, 2026 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. & 1-4 p.m. Gladwin Conservation District (750 N. M-18, Gladwin MI 48624) Register by scanning QR code to right →			● SECR Payroll ● SCIT Per Capita ● SCIT Payroll ● Curbside Recycling



Observer Classifieds: To place your ad, call the Tribal Observer at 989-775-4096, email observer@sagchip.org, call to make an appointment in the Observer offices in the Black Elk Building or mail to Tribal Observer, Attn.: Classified, 7500 Soaring Eagle Blvd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858. Please have all submissions and payment in by deadline. Classified rates are \$10 for 15 words or less and 75 cents per additional word. Any thumbnail image costs an additional \$15.

Apply to job postings online at www.sagchip.org. * Job postings are subject to change daily.

- 100 Employment
- 105 Lost and Found
- 110 For Rent
- 115 For Sale
- 120 Announcements
- 125 Miigwetch
- 130 Services
- 135 Events
- 140 Giveaways
- 145 Miscellaneous

100 Employment

Tribal Operations

Waste Water Operator I

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Must be at least 18 years of age. Must have one year verifiable experience in wastewater/water field or directly related experience in plumbing or mechanical plant operations.

Waste Water Operator II

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Must have three years' experience in wastewater/water field or directly related experience in plumbing or mechanical plant operations.

Waste Water Operator III

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Must have five years experience in wastewater/water field or directly related experience in plumbing or mechanical plant operations.

Waste Water Operator Intern

Open to SCIT members only. High school diploma or GED. Must be at least 18 years of age. Must be willing to take classes in microbiology, advanced math and beginning algebra courses.

Fresh Water Operator I

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Must be at least 18 years of age. Must be able to pass a math test with 70 percent or higher.

Fresh Water Operator II

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Must be at least 18 years of age. Must have three years of water operator or related experience.

Fresh Water Operator III

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Must be at least 18 years of age. Must have five years of water operator or related experience.

Fresh Water Operator Intern

Open to SCIT members only. High school diploma or GED. Must be at least 18 years of age. Math test will be required and administered prior to interview. Under the supervision of OIC/Utilities manager, learn the essentials of water operations and water system maintenance.

Paraprofessional

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Must pass a state or local exam.

Health and Human Services Administrator

Open to the public. Master's degree in healthcare administration, public health administration, healthcare

finance, or related field. Ten years' experience in healthcare administration or public health administration. Five years' experience in a managerial/supervisory capacity.

Maintenance Worker

Open to the public. Must be 18 years of age. One year of demonstrated experience in basic maintenance, grounds keeping, and verifiable experience in wastewater or water system operations, or comparable experience in plumbing or mechanical plant operations.

Project AWARE Data Analyst PT

Open to the public. Master's degree in public health, epidemiology, community health, biostatistics, measurement and evaluation or related field. Experience in data compilation, data analysis, and working knowledge of evaluation methods.

SAMHSA Project AWARE Co-Coordinator

Open to the public. Master's degree in counseling, social work, human services, or related field. One year of experience in mental health services working with children and families of children with severe emotional disturbances.

Certified Nursing Assistant

Open to the public. Must be able to effectively communicate with residents and all members of the health care team and have good computer skills.

Data & Evaluation Analyst

Open to the public. Grant-funded position. Associate degree in social sciences or related field. Six months of experience in data analysis. Experience with database design and best practice helpful. One year experience in administration of federal grants and contracts, and grant writing.

Special Education Teacher

Open to the public. Bachelor's degree in special education, education or related field. Teaching certificate with special education endorsement. Experience with current assessment requirements and state standards.

Student Support Tutor

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. College level math. Must be able to pass math test with a score of 70 percent or better. Desired qualifications: Experience working with youth. Experience with local school programming, requirements and policies.

Victims of Crime Advocate

Open to the public. Bachelor's degree in counseling, social work, sociology, psychology, law enforcement criminal justice, law or related field. Counseling experience within

Native American communities, including victims of crime counseling programs, or social work.

Registered Medical Assistant

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Registered or Certified Medical Assistant license. Minimum of one year experience working as a medical assistant in an outpatient medical clinic (family medicine preferred.)

Tribal Code Compliance Officer

Open to the public. Five years' relevant experience including building construction, inspection and ordinance enforcement. Communication and interpersonal skills to deal effectively with property owners, State, local, and tribal governmental representatives, builders, contractors, other office staff and community-at-large.

Interim Clinical Therapist

Open to the public. Licensed master's degree in counseling, social work, human services or related field. Limited licensed individuals who can obtain full licensure within two years from date of hire.

Family Advocate Specialist

Open to the public. Associate degree in social services, human services or related field. Desired qualifications: Two years social services or human services experience. Experience with Native American communities. Obtain HIPAA certification within five business days of hire.

Police Officer

Open to the public. Must be a U.S. citizen and at least 21 years of age. Must be able to pass departmental fitness evaluation.

Clerical Pool

Open to SCIT Members only. Must be at least 18 years of age and possess a high school diploma or equivalent.

General Labor Pool

Open to Tribal Members and community members. Must be at least 18 years of age.

Soaring Eagle

Sous Chef

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Three years kitchen experience in a quality operation specializing in food production. One year in a supervisory capacity.

Culinary Supervisor

Open to the public. Three years of restaurant or banquet cooking experience with increasing levels of responsibility. Must be able comprehend house training and pass standardized written culinary competency test by at least 60 percent.

Kitchen Equipment Technician

Open to the public. Three years of experience in commercial food equipment repair. Must have a current and must be able to maintain a current Universal Refrigerant Certification.

Guest Room Attendant PT

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age.

F&B Cashier

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age.

Crowd Control Associate PT

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age.

Steward Banquets PT

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age.

Line Cook

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age. Six months of restaurant cooking experience with increasing levels of responsibility, or six months of SECR internal culinary training.

Saganing

Beverage Waitstaff FT

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age.

Technical Services Technician I

Open to the public. High school diploma or GED. Two years help desk experience or bachelor's degree in information technology, computer science, or related field. Experience with Windows Server and Desktop OS and Microsoft Office Suite.

Line Cook

Open to the public. Six months of restaurant cooking experience with increasing levels of responsibility, or six months of internal culinary training.

Maintenance Worker

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age. One year custodial and maintenance experience.

F&B Attendant FT

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age.

F&B Attendant PT

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age.

Laundry Attendant

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age.

Guest Room Attendant FT

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age.

Cage Cashier PT

Open to the public. Must be at least 18 years of age. Six months cash handling or cashiering experience.



HUMAN RESOURCES: Training/Certification Opportunities

Associate Degree Dental Hygiene Program

The Dental Hygiene degree program at Ferris State is the largest in the State of Michigan and one of the largest Dental Hygiene AAS degree programs in the nation.



Criminal Justice Law Enforcement

The Delta College Criminal Justice program is designed to give you specialized knowledge of the criminal justice field combined with a broad general educational.



Water and Wastewater Treatment Technology

Earn an associate degree in water and wastewater treatment technology. When you're done, you'll be able to take licensing exams.



Hotel Management

You will gain a solid understanding of the growing hospitality business — from historical context to the current trends.



Clinical Dental Assistant

This course will provide you with the essential skills and knowledge needed to become a dental assistant, including every aspect of professional dental assistance.



Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA)

You will learn the professional traits and responsibilities to become a vital part of the healthcare team in a medical office, clinic, hospital, and other healthcare settings.



Medical Billing & Coding Certification

Train for an in-demand healthcare career in medical billing and coding and prepare for industry certification.



Pharmacy Technician

This online certification course will prepare aspiring pharmacy technicians to effectively assist the pharmacist in the packing and distribution of medication.



For more information, please contact:

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SUMMONS AND COMPLAINT NOTICES

NOTICE TO CREDITORS IN THE MATTER OF MICHAEL LAYNE PASHENEE, DECEASED:

The Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Court, 6954 E. Broadway Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858, Phone: (989) 775-4800. In the Matter of the Estate of Michael Layne Pashenee. Date of Birth: Feb. 11, 1957. Notice to creditors: The decedent, Michael Layne Pashenee, who resided at 1768 Weatherstone Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48108, died Nov. 22, 2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Ellen O. Guise, personal representative, or to both the Probate Court at 6954 E. Broadway Rd., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858, and the personal representative within four months after the date of publication of this notice. Personal Representative: Ellen O. Guise of 1768 Weatherstone Dr., Ann Arbor, MI 48108. Phone: 702-204-9746.



Editorial: Indigenous youth shine at annual fashion show

FELICIA OTTO

Native Connections
Program Coordinator

On Feb. 22, the Entertainment Hall at Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort was filled with pride, culture, and community as the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe hosted its fourth annual Indigenous Youth Fashion Show. The event brought together families, artists, mentors, and supporters to uplift and celebrate tribal youth in a powerful way.

This year's theme, "Real Love Respects," centered on healthy relationships, self-worth, cultural identity, and community connection.

The event was organized through the Tribe's Native Connections Department (Felicia Otto and Mikayla Steele) in collaboration with Project Venture (Tahsheenah Foley), 7th Generation (Tonya Antoine), Wii Maajikwaad (Mattea

Gonzalez), Cece Jackson, and Niibin Sprague. Together, this dedicated team worked tirelessly to create a meaningful and memorable experience for the Tribe's teenagers.

The show opened beautifully, with Youth Council offering an Anishinaabemowin prayer to bless the event and all in attendance.

The keynote speaker, Summer Yahbay-Peters, a trailblazing artist with experience across many artistic realms—including fashion—followed with powerful and heartfelt words. She spoke about common misconceptions surrounding cultural identity, mentorship, breaking stigmas, and the strength found in both the families we are born into and the families we choose. Her message encouraged youth to surround themselves with those who inspire and uplift them.

Excitement filled the Hall as 47 youth participants took the



Courtesy of Lee Ann Ruffino

Tribal youth pose for a photo after walking the runway during the Mnadendan Zaagidwin (Real Love Respects) Indigenous Youth Fashion Show on Feb. 22 in the Soaring Eagle Entertainment Hall.

stage wearing traditional ribbon skirts, shirts, and sweaters handmade with love by local community artists who generously donated their time, materials, and talent.

As the youth walked, quotes were read aloud, sharing what "Real Love Respects" means to them—allowing their voices to be heard while they confidently showed up and showed out in their designs.

Kyla Henry served as the event's emcee, guiding the show's enthusiasm. Lee Ruffino

generously dedicated her time/skills as a photographer, capturing stunning images that will serve as lasting memories for the youth and their families. Alicia Raphael supported with the youth practices and organizing quotes.

The Blue House Singers, who have supported this event since year one, once again provided powerful songs that carried the drum and dance social forward. Jace Whitehouse kept the energy flowing as emcee during the songs as youth, families, and community members danced.

When reflecting on this event, one thing stands out to me: How many people come together for our youth. The whole truly is

greater than the sum of its parts. It was an incredible honor for us to once again be part of the Indigenous Youth Fashion Show team and to witness firsthand the confidence, strength, and brilliance of our young people.

"The Indigenous Youth Fashion Show is a highlighted event, especially because it focuses on our youth and their connection to Anishinaabeg culture, while advocating for self-love, identity, and healthy relationships," Jackson states. "Having SCIT Youth Council offer prayer in Anishinaabemowin, Summer's inspiring words, and our youth rocking the runway is an incredible event for our community."

The teen models included: Emma Maxon, Jasmine Jewell, Gabe Jewell, Jaylah Kequom, Myleyah Hunter, Ellery Lawson, Abigail Farrell, Sariah Farrell, Emi Martinez, Kayla Campbell, Brittnee Campbell, Tahlia Alonzo Villanova, Billie Jo Jackson, Aiyana Sheahan, Jasmine Jackson, Xavier Freeman, Kingsley Davis, Miah Perez, Mayna Kahgegab, Aubriana Keshick, Natalee Tackett, Eli Harris, Charmaine Costillo-Pelcher, Michael Otto, Serenti Cole, Zalacia Sprague, Corleone Costillo-Sprague, Trynity Jackson, Natalie Detzler, Ashanique Traver, Genesis Kopke, Isiah Powers, Bryson Otto-Roth, Juliana (Jewels) Wemigwans, Asiianah Barnes, Adrian Kahgegab, Dakota Willis, Dexter Henry, Ariana Grice, Zhaawin Martell, Zaagidiwin Traver, Allana VanOrden, Noelle Collins-Ziviski, Leylahni Sadonval Ritter, Ziigwan Callaway, Jaidyn Barnes, Aanilaya Pelcher-Smith, Paislee Nelson, Adrienne Pelcher, Reese Collins-Ziviski and Keyana Hernandez.

The artists/designers included: Anita Hall, Bonnie Ek Dahl, Bonnie Sprague, Carol Tally, Carrie Heron, Cece Jackson, Christina Otto, Faith Carmona-Pego, Felicia Otto, Gayle Ruhl, Glenna Halliwill, Janis Kratz, Jeannie Snyder, Jillian Waterman, Kenna Standing Rock, Lilliann Jackson, Maia Montoya-Pego, Marcella Hadden, Mikayla Steele, Niibin Sprague, Raegan Sizemore, Raynah Perez, Sheleigha Jackson, Sue Hinmon-Johnson, Tahsheenah Foley, Tonya Antoine and Treasure Jones.



Courtesy of Lee Ann Ruffino

The talented designers for the fashion show pose for a group photo that afternoon.

Photos courtesy of Lee Ann Ruffino

