



# Prairie Band Potawatomi News

+++ A Report to the People of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation +++

- SPRING 2019 EDITION -

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## PBPN Signs Historic Wetlands Contract



The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation commemorated the approval of a new tribal wetlands reserve contract. Several individuals and agencies are responsible for bringing this project to fruition. Shown above are PBPN Tribal Council members, staff of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, along with Antoinette Houle, BIA Superintendent and Karen Woodrich, State Conservationist and a few staff from their offices.

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) commemorated the approval of an Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Wetland Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE) contract on Monday, December 17, 2018, in an event held at the Prairie Band Casino & Resort.

The contract approval marks a momentous event in Kansas; this is the first Tribal Wetland long-term contract established in Kansas, and one of only a handful throughout the United States. Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation has entered into a 30-year contract with NRCS to restore the functions and values of an existing wetland located on the Prairie Band Potawatomi Reservation.

“The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation is thankful for the opportunity to return this portion of land back to its natural wetland condition and for the area’s high potential to provide environmental education. We look forward to having our

youth and the community visit the site and experience direct learning about the unique attributes a wetland provides for water resources and the environment,” said Joseph Rupnick, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Chairman.

The wetland restoration area consists of 31.7 acres located just west of I road and south of 134 Rd on the E1/2 NW1/4 Se. 7-9-14. The project was initiated in 1996 under the direction of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Planning and Environmental Protection department according to PBPN PEP director, Virginia LeClere. Over the course of many years, and many staff contributing to the project, it is now a reality.

The primary objectives of this project are to restore and enhance wetland wildlife habitat and improve the overall water quality for the contract area. The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation aspire to restore the values and functions of the degraded wetland by restoring hydrology and enhancing the wetland and adjacent upland

buffer area for pollinators. The first phase of the project will begin in early spring of 2019. The PBPN Land Maintenance and Road & Bridge departments will start excavation and groundwork to create dikes, berms, and pools as designed by engineer plans.

This area will also be used for educational outreach and

provide opportunities for hunting, trapping, and recreational bird watching. A walking path will be established for visitors to reach the center area of the wetlands in order to observe the natural wildlife in their restored habitat.



This conservation map outlines the primary components of the wetland restoration area located at 134 and I Roads on the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Reservation.

**- 2019 Gathering - July 30th to August 4th - Wasauksing First Nation, Canada -**  
More details inside!



# Chairman Joseph “Zeke” Rupnick: Report to the Nation



Dear Tribal Members,

With a New Year, and a new Congress, I'm hoping we can finally see support on matters that effect the Tribe.

Council met with some of the newly elected members of Congress to share our concerns and with the hopes of creating new relationships and to garner support for bills we as a Council intend to push through.

I attended the swearing in event in Washington, DC. While the event was historic, it was not our main agenda. Council met with many legislators and staff members to propose items we would like them to support. Senator Moran was not in but we met with his Chief of Staff and asked for support in repealing the Kansas Act.

If we can repeal this act, it will have a long-lasting effect on our reservation and will strengthen our sovereignty as a Nation. As many know, the Kansas Act gives concurrent jurisdiction to the State of Kansas on the Reservation. While the fight won't be easy, there is a path and that path was laid out by the Meskwaki in Iowa. They successfully passed a bill through Congress and the President signed the bill in November 2018. We are hoping to do the same.

In January I attended a meeting in Chicago to discuss strategy about the Shab-eh-nay land. While the land into trust is still moving forward, slowly at best, we feel with the new Congress, we should take a parallel approach and submit a bill for congressional recognition of Shab-eh-nay as a Prairie Band Reservation. We have right by treaty and we have an opinion from the Solicitor General. Yet, Congress has never fully recognized the land as a reservation. From the opinion, in the first paragraph of the "Leshy Opinion" it states; "The Bands leaders believe that such a claim should be resolved through legislation enacted by Congress". At the time, those in Congress did not want to take up any legislation that may have benefited Indians. With the new members of Congress, we feel now is the time to move and Council will be working on support in both chambers.

In January we received the initial cost for live streaming Tribal Council meetings. The best option that we found was provided by Cisco WebEx. The initial cost for the system will start at \$15,164 with an annual fee of \$387. I say initial because I had asked for a cost to archive the files locally and upon request, members could get a copy of the meeting. The Cisco WebEx option will allow for viewing for up to 90 days and can support 1,000 attendees. It will be some time before we can go live with the streaming and we have been told that it could take about 6 months before everything is in place. Security and testing will be completed before the actual go live date. We will keep general council informed as we get closer.

In November, the President signed a bill repealing the 1834 "Indian Liquor Laws". Repealing the liquor laws allows Tribes to distil alcohol on the reservation and to promote tribal self-determination and economic diversification. We have not made any decision on how or when we can benefit from this legislation but are looking into possibilities which could enhance the resort experience at our gaming property.

In December, the President signed into law the 2018 Farm Bill. This bill has many provisions that will help the Tribe and we are looking into

ways we can take advantage of the alternative funding we can use in our conservation programs and leverage the two-year carryover in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). Both of these are important but the question I have had most often is in regard to hemp. Under the 2018 Farm Bill, it legalizes hemp production regulated by the USDA with approved Tribal plans. We feel it is our interest to draft proposed rules that we will follow and submit to the USDA.

In February, I attended the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Executive Council Winter Session where I was asked to attend the Honoring Women Leaders luncheon and present a blanket to Representative Sharice Davids. During this trip, we met with our Representatives Senators Moran and Roberts along with Representative Watkins.

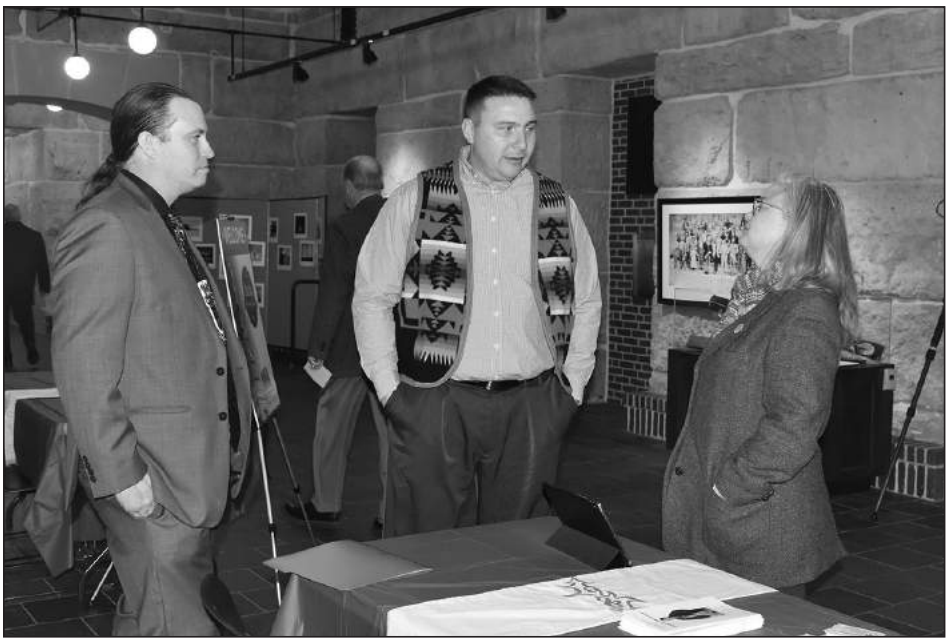
In closing, I am excited about the possibilities we could see in this coming session with the U.S. Congress and know, I will continue to look for ways to strengthen our sovereignty and protect our jurisdiction.

Migwetch,

Joseph “Zeke” Rupnick



Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Tribal Council Chairman Joseph Rupnick and Vice Chairman Zach Pahmahmie bestowed a Pendleton blanket with the Nation's seal upon the newly sworn in Kansas Governor Laura Kelly on her Inauguration Day.



Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Tribal Council Treasurer Wade Pahmahmie and Member Raphael Wahwassuck meet members of the Kansas Legislature during Native American Legislation Day at the Kansas Capitol in Topeka.



Tribal youth Mikal Kitchkommie and Mae Joslin were invited to attend the Inaugural Ball with members of the Tribal Council. Above are Mikal and Mae, alongside Governor Laura Kelly and BPN Chairman Joseph Rupnick.



Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Tribal Council Treasurer Wade Pahmahmie, Chairman Joseph Rupnick, Kansas House Representative Ponka-We Victors, Member Thomas Wabnum, Secretary Camilla Chouteau, Member Raphael Wahwassuck and Member Bill Evans attend Native American Legislation Day on February 6, 2019.



# The Prairie Band Potawatomi News

The *Prairie Band Potawatomi News* or *PBP News* is a quarterly publication of the Nation. Editorials and articles appearing in the PBP News are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or attitude of the PBP Media staff, Tribal Council, Gaming Commission or the Nation. The PBP News reserves the right to reject any materials or letters submitted for publication, including those submitted past the deadline.

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**Deadlines for 2019:**

**May 3, 2019**  
**August 2, 2019**  
**November 1, 2019**

## Charitable Contributions 4th Quarter Recipient List

*Total Donated \$80,810*

- Altrusa International Foundation
- Boys & Girls Club of Manhattan
- Boys & Girls Club of Topeka
- Friends of Morrill Public Library
- Glacial Hills Resource
- Conservation & Development
- Junior League of Topeka
- Let's Help
- March of Dimes
- Ms. Wheelchair of Kansas
- Noto Arts &
- Entertainment District
- Ronald McDonald House
- South Brown County USD 430
- Sunshine Connection of Topeka
- Topeka Salvation Army
- Topeka Eagle
- Composite Squadron
- Topeka Symphony Society
- Washburn University
- Music Department

# Casino Update

Submitted By: The Casino Board of Directors



Hattie Mitchell

### New Board Members

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Entertainment Corporation (PBPEC) took on additional changes in early 2019. Three new Board members were added to the organization and will be serving staggered terms as part of a re-alignment of positions by the Tribal Council. Hattie Mitchell was selected for a 4 year term and has taken on the role of Treasurer. Joseph “Chago” Hale, Jr. and Jona Rupnicki were appointed to 2 year terms. Jona Rupnicki has taken on the role of Vice President and Chago Hale will be a Member of the Board. Frank Tecumseh was also re-appointed for an additional 4 year term and will continue as Board President/Chairman. Corey Mzhickteno’s term continues into 2019 and he will be taking on the role of Secretary. The Board has been diligently working at coming together as a team, bringing new members up to speed on the expansion project, and continuing to develop long-term business plans for the Casino and Resort.

### Expansion Update 2019

The interior redesign of the casino was completed in October 2018, providing a much needed change of atmosphere to the customer experience. Gaming areas are no longer dark and outdated, but have a new vibrant look with lighting, colorful carpet, and a more clear path leading customers to key areas such as the re-designed cashier cage, buffet, and gaming space. The hotel front desk also received a much needed facelift that flows seamlessly with the new Hotel lobby bar area. This portion of the project did finish over budget. The overages were mainly due to change orders completed during the project which were discovered as construction took place. A complete replacement of suspended ceiling tiles over the gaming areas, floor tile work where the VIP lounge meets the hotel lobby, and additional signage changes are a few examples of change orders that were required to ensure seamless transitions between old and new design work. To ensure the total project remains within budget, casino Capital Expenses were adjusted to cover the additional costs. When these funds are used it ensures Tribal Cash Distribution remains unaffected, maximizing the transfer of



Joseph “Chago” Hale, Jr.

profits to the PBPN and keeps funds available for Per Capita Payments as high as possible. This will ensure the project will remain within the limits of the approved expansion project amount from the January 20, 2018 General Council Meeting. I-5 Designs worked well with the Casino Executive Team to minimize disruption. They offered expeditious follow up and favorable pricing on changes to keep costs down as much as possible. I-5 Designs went out of their way to update several aspects of signage of the High Limit area in the casino free of charge as a gesture of appreciation for our business on the project.

After completion of the casino interior the Executive Team and the Board of Directors shifted attention to the next phase of the project. A short planning period has been taking place in-between phases from November 2018 – January 2019. During this planning period General Contractor bids were evaluated, design work continued to develop, our construction representation quality checked architectural designs/estimates, and the Cultural Heritage Committee information has been discussed to incorporate Prairie Band influence into the visual experience of the new amenities.

The next phase will begin early February 2019 and include an upgrade to the existing Buffalo Grill (soon to be Sweetgrass Bar & Grill), a re-configuration of parking areas including the addition of a parking garage, an expansion of gaming floor space, and the much anticipated new hotel tower which will contain several amenities to complete the “Resort” concept within the casino name. Construction on the Sweetgrass Bar & Grill is scheduled between February and May 2019. The parking structure is estimated to be completed between February and November 2019. The Hotel and amenity additions are estimated to start in June 2019 and complete sometime during the summer of 2020. Weather and seasons can impact construction timelines. The Board of Directors will continue to provide updates in the Newspaper, at General Council Meetings, and by posting information on the Tribal Member Website Portal.



Jona Rupnicki

### Selection of General Contractor

The Board of Directors worked closely with PBP Construction, a subsidiary company of the PBP LLC to evaluate General Contractor bids. Woodstone Inc. was selected to be the General Contractor for the main portion of the Prairie Band Casino and Resort expansion project. Woodstone Inc. is a Native American Owned Company with experience in gaming projects ranging from \$5-\$100 Million. They bring 32 years of building experience from across the United States and specialize in projects for tribal clients.

Woodstone advertises experience in creating employment, internships, and other integration of tribal resources during the construction process. Employment of local tribal members will be a priority throughout the project, especially where qualified workers can be identified as already containing skill sets or trained to perform construction work. Woodstone will be partnering with Prairie Band Construction to maximize local involvement and build additional construction portfolios for Prairie Band organizations. Woodstone has a track record for value-engineering and in their short time as the selected General Contractor have offered several solutions to lower the cost of the construction for the Prairie Band Casino and Resort project. This skill set will be particularly useful as it may allow for reduction in costs, which gives the potential for better funding on additional elements of the project such as the neglected 150th Road corridor in need of drastic improvements to the entryway and arrival experience for casino customers.

Woodstone Inc. is currently finishing a \$35 million project in Cass Lake, MN for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Indians. Their recent experience includes an \$85 Million project in Bowler, WI at Mohican North Star Casino, a \$35 Million project in Omak, WA for the 12 Tribes Resort and Casino, a \$22 Million project at the Shoshone Rose Casino and Hotel in Lander, WY as well as projects in Warroad MN, Belcourt ND, Battle Creek MI and Bayfield WI, Petoskey MI, Niobrara NE, Granite Fall MN, and Polson MT ranging in value from \$1.2 Million to \$135 Million.



# Treasurer Wade Pahmahmie: Message to the Nation



Good day to everyone, hope all is well as we move into the new year. As usual this time of the year is very busy in the finance area with year-end processing for W-2's and 1099's and audit season is already upon us. W-2's and 1099's should all be received by this time, if you have not received your tax forms in the mail you may contact the administrative office at 785-966-4000 and you will be directed to the appropriate staff or you may contact me via the contact information below and I can assist in getting your tax forms as well. We have completed our three Low Income Housing Tax Credit Audits as well as our Tobacco Tax Compact Audit and are preparing for our Primary Government and Boys and Girls Club audits which will occur later this spring. Below are a few additional highlights and updates on items of interest in the Tribe's financial area.

## Will and Estate Planning

Over the past couple of years, we have held a handful of will and estate planning workshops. The process was to hold an informational meeting to provide details on will and estate planning, about a month afterward Kansas Legal Services (KLS) staff would follow up with tribal members by appointment at the Old Bingo Hall to have documents such as wills and power of attorney documents drafted by KLS. Recently the Tribal Council and KLS agreed to update the Memorandum of Understanding between the Tribe and KLS to also allow tribal members and their spouses to make appointments at the tribal member's convenience with KLS to have their documents drafted versus waiting for a workshop, which have generally been held twice a year. To make an appointment with KLS, tribal members will need to contact the Treasurer's Office to coordinate the application process to obtain legal services through KLS. Once KLS receives the necessary information from the Treasurer's Office they will work with coordinating the appointment with the Tribal Member. As in the past, the will and estate services are available to any Tribal Member,

the property included in the legal documents must be in the state of Kansas, and new documents may be drafted, or existing documents may be amended or updated. This is a very useful service and the ability to set up an appointment at your convenience should make the program much more accessible.

## 150 & 75 Economic Development Project Update

In a previous article I had written about the economic development project on the east side of Highway 75 along 150 Road that you may hear or see referred to as 150/75 or 150 & 75. The project was approved by General Council in 2008 with funding of \$19.3 Million and included components of a Travel Plaza, Motel, Fast Food Restaurant, Class II Gaming, Strip Retail and a Museum/Cultural Center. The project has not proceeded forward much since 2008, but hopefully that is about to change as we are working on updating studies in hopes of providing economic development that will help us diversify beyond gaming while bringing in businesses that will help complement our casino, provide jobs and provide additional positive economic growth to the surrounding area, the development will also generate additional tax dollars that will be used to maintain infrastructure and fund necessary programs. While not much progress has been made on the project a few positive things have occurred since 2008 including the purchase of additional acreage in the location, the Tribe's financial position has improved significantly as well as our HEARTH Act was approved in late 2018. In 2008, when the project was initially approved by General Council the focus was on roughly 80 acres of trust land. As of today we own roughly 564 acres of land in the area of which nearly all of it is in trust status so this in itself lends to the need for updated studies for the project. As far as the HEARTH Act goes, this gives the Tribe more control over both the business site leases as well as the collection of our Tribal Taxes. I will plan to provide periodic updates on the project but for now I believe the key is to keep the project moving forward and to assess the original components of the project and how they fit in with the Tribe's position in 2019.

## Government Shutdown

Despite the longest government shutdown in history from December 22, 2018, to January 25, 2019, totaling 35 days, the Tribe was able to keep our programs up and running with little to no disruption. We are fortunate to have a successful gaming operation to provide cash reserves to help us weather storms such as the recent government shutdown. Many tribes though are not so fortunate with

impact of the shutdown resulting in layoffs and disruption in services for their tribal members. Fortunately for the remainder of the Federal Fiscal Year a bill was signed on February 15, 2019, to fund the government through the remainder of the year (September 30, 2019). As a result of the government shutdown a push for advanced appropriations has become more necessary. As a result of the historic shutdown senate bill S.229, known as the Indian Programs Advance Appropriations Act (IPAAA) has been introduced and if passed would provide 2 years of funding at a time for Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Education and Indian Health Service programs. This would directly benefit our programs such as Road Maintenance, Johnson O'Malley, Education, Fire Protection, Law Enforcement, Tribal Court, Social Services, Land Management and our Health Center. In addition to securing dollars for our programs this would be an improvement to the trust relationship in which the Tribe's federal funding would no longer be treated as just another grant or contract. However, tribes would still continue to be severely underfunded resulting in tribes relying on other income sources such as gaming or in less fortunate circumstances going without services. The IPAAA is a step in the right direction and hopefully will be signed into law sooner rather than later.

## Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act

Prior to the passage of the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act (TGWEA) in 2014 the Tribe was required to issue 1099's for most payments issued with a cumulative total of \$600 or more per year. Prior to the TGWEA only our burial and education programs were excluded from the issuance of 1099's. In 2014, the Tribe was able to issue corrected 1099's to our Tribal Members who received 1099's for Housing Renovation & Repair and Down Payment Assistance awards for the open tax years 2011-2013 so they could seek to apply for income tax refunds if they so choose. In the years since 2014, we have been able to apply the TGWEA to certain cultural projects including our Tribal Historical and Cultural Program as well as the Gathering in which 1099's were not required, most recently the Tribal Council approved the Elder Assistance Program (EAP) in February 2019 which will help pay for medical, dental, vision and other health care expenses not covered by insurance, the Tribe's Purchased Referred Care (PRC) program or any other benefit programs. The EAP program will be administered by the Clinic's PRC staff and is open to Tribal Members age 65 and older. If you wish to apply you may contact the Clinic's PRC program staff for further details. Additionally

Per Capita distributions are in the process of being reviewed to see what possibilities exist for converting the quarterly distributions to a tax exempt payment vs their current taxable status. Several questions must be addressed and answered before the conversion can be implemented but based upon the annual distribution amount and the TGWEA guidelines a tax status change may be a real possibility for future distributions. Before implementing such a change we must ensure that all changes made are appropriate as to not create any tax burdens for both the Tribe and the Tribal Members.

## Procurement Policy Summary

For this quarter's article I would like to write a little about our Procurement Policy which is at times a little misunderstood or you may hear rumors and such on how bills are paid or how items are acquired. First off, the Tribe does have a written Procurement Policy, the current policy was adopted in December 2016, and was last amended in July 2018. The Tribe did have procurement policies prior to December 2016 similar to the current policy, the significance of the current policy's adoption was to bring our overall Financial Management Policies and Procedures of which the Procurement Policy is a part of into compliance with federal regulations found in the, then new, 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

Procurement Authority is a key component of the policy which basically deals with who has authority to ultimately approve a purchase. The current policy has three authority levels. The first level of authority authorizes approval for Department Directors to approve proceeding with a purchase up to \$10,000. The second level of authority authorizes the Tribal Council to approve purchases of \$10,000 - \$500,000 (adjusted for inflation per the PBPB Constitution). The third level of authority is held by the General Council in which all purchases above the Tribal Council's limit of \$500,000 must be approved by the General Council.

Purchase Limits are also a key component of the policy and determine how items must be bid upon. Purchases below \$10,000 are referred to as Micro-purchases and do not require competitive quotes, although not required it is best practice to receive quotes when practical. Purchases from \$10,000 - \$150,000 are referred to as Small Purchases and they do require three bids which can be informal and can be provided via e-mail and fax. All other purchases beyond \$150,000 require sealed bids (*Continued on page 5*)



# Prairie Band, LLC Announces New Chief Financial Officer

Submitted by: Prairie Band, LLC



Prairie Band, LLC (PB) is proud to announce Stan Van Ostran as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Stan was previously Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration for the South Carolina Ports Authority and Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority where he directed programs for finance, property management, procurement and business development. Both organizations experienced significant growth and improved financial standing under his leadership. Stan was named the Nashville Business Journal's "CFO of

the Year" in 2012 and Airports Council International-North America's "Finance Professional of the Year" in 2016.

Stan is an Attorney, Certified Public Accountant and holds several other professional certifications in accounting, audit and risk management. Stan earned a Juris Doctorate from the University of Tulsa and his undergraduate degree from Missouri Southern State University.

As PB's Chief Financial Officer, Stan will report to PB's President and Chief Executive Officer, Jacob Wamego. "I'm extremely pleased to welcome Stan" said Wamego. "His extensive experience and expertise will help support our company's continued growth and strategic direction."

"I'm honored to join the PB team and an organization that has made such extraordinary progress in a short amount of time," said Stan, "I look forward to assisting PB as it continues to achieve success and focus on new initiatives to support continued growth."

PB welcomes Stan on board and we look forward to having his leadership, professional success and experience on our senior management team.

# Prairie Band, LLC Expands Executive Team, Appoints Levier to COO

Submitted by: Prairie Band, LLC



Prairie Band, LLC, the economic development company wholly owned by the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation appointed Tyler Levier to the role of Chief Operating Officer in January 2019.

Levier joined Prairie Band, LLC in 2013, assuming numerous roles of responsibility which culminated to his appointment to COO. During his

6 years with the company, Levier has held several key positions starting as Retail Manager and most recently served as Operating Manager. Levier is credited with the startup of two subsidiary companies and the acquisition of another. He has guided Prairie Band's retail and distribution market to double digit growth and profitability. Most recently as President of Mill Creek, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Prairie Band, LLC, Levier helped procure the company's first contract under the SBA's 8(a) program.

Levier graduated from Haskell Indian Nations University with a bachelor's degree in business. He has a master's of business administration degree from Friends University. He serves with several civic organizations and is a Topeka South Rotarian.

Under Levier's leadership, Prairie Band has made significant advancements bringing jobs and economic development to the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

# Prairie Band Construction wins first award utilizing SBA 8(a) Certification

Submitted by: Prairie Band, LLC

2.6.19 – Prairie Band Construction, Inc. (PBC) has been awarded a \$4 Million contract for the Directorate of Public Works on Fort Leavenworth, KS utilizing the SBA's 8(a) Program. The contract will consist of individual Task Orders for Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization Construction projects on Fort Leavenworth. Work facilities may include: admin-

istrative, industrial, warehouses, and other support type facilities.

Greg Sharp, PB Construction Manager, said: "Our significant investment of time and effort is paying off. We have a fantastic team that are eager to provide quality support to the U.S. Army's mission. This is the first award of many to come."

The President and CEO of Prairie Band, LLC, Jacob Wamego, said: "Our team has worked tirelessly to gain entrance into the federal market. The process to obtain SBA 8(a) certification is onerous. This important tool is and will continue to be a driver of Prairie Band's revenue and job growth."

PBC is a leader in the construction industry and provides several services including general contracting, construction management, environmental consulting, and remediation. Prairie Band Construction is owned by Prairie Band, LLC, the economic development company wholly owned by the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

## Treasurer's Message Continued

and competitive proposals as appropriate for the nature of the purchase.

Procurement Authority and Purchase Limits are primarily monitored during the Purchase Order (PO) routing process. The general Routing Process for all PO's are for the PO to be initiated by Department Staff which are then sent to the Department Director for approval, from there the PO is reviewed and approved by Budgeting Staff, Grant Management Staff, Purchasing Staff, Finance Staff and then once all approvals have been completed is routed on to Accounts Payable for payment once an invoice has been submitted. If during the PO Routing Process it is noticed that the purchase

request did not have proper Procurement Authority or that proper bidding according to Purchase Limits were not followed then the routing process halts until in compliance with policy. For certain transactions, such as our Burial Benefit Payments where bidding is not necessary, workflows are tailored to expedite payment to prevent unnecessary delays.

Additionally, the Procurement Policy does address and provide for Indian Preference when it comes to acquiring goods and services. Sole Sourcing is also addressed and an appendix within the policy provides for direction for procurement staff on when it is appropriate to do so. Our PBPN owned enterprises such as the Casino and the Prairie Band LLC and its subsidiaries qualify for sole source transactions under the policy and

only makes sense to utilize our own resources as much as possible. While the Procurement Policy is extensive the topics above cover purchases that are more routine in nature. Currently the Tribe has two staff assigned to the purchasing area and they are tasked with both the routine purchases but also proposals and contract administration. Procurement is a key area of focus for our annual financial audits and must be monitored constantly to avoid both audit findings as well as to ensure that the Tribe is acquiring goods and services as efficiently as possible.

If you have any questions on any of the topics mentioned in this article or financial questions in general about the Tribe's operations my contact information is: Office (785) 966-3905, E-mail wadepahmahmie@pbpna-

tion.org., or you can always stop by my office or set up a meeting to discuss.

Also if you have any specific financial topics that you would like me to write about in future articles let me know and I can incorporate those in.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Tribal Council Treasurer and I look forward to continuing to serve our Tribal Members.

Respectfully,

Wade Pahmahmie | Wap-tti-ge



# Royal Valley & PBPN Partner for Cultural Extravaganza

By: Michelle Simon

On Friday, January 25, 2019, Royal Valley Unified School District #337 in collaboration with the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation hosted a tribal culture extravaganza at the Royal Valley High School Gymnasium in Hoyt, Kansas.

The Royal Valley School District is one of few in Kansas that serve the membership of a tribal nation, allowing the formation of a unique and special relationship with the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation. Approximately 221 students within the Royal Valley school district are Native Americans or descendants, and of those, 60% are Prairie Band Potawatomi tribal members.

Due to a large portion of Royal Valley's basketball players being Prairie Band Potawatomi tribal members, both the tribe and school agreed basketball season is an opportune time to feature aspects of the Prairie Band Potawatomi culture in a positive celebration for the entire community.

Throughout the course of regularly scheduled basketball games, the evening activities included an Indian Taco Fundraiser by the Boys & Girls Club of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, posting of colors by the PBP Nation's color guard, We-Ta-Se Post 410 and vocal rendering of the Nation's flag song by the Little Soldier Singers prior to the start of the Royal

Valley Lady Panthers varsity game. Special guest Manny King, from Haskell Indian Nations University, announced each school's lineups and scoring during both varsity basketball games.



Prairie Band Potawatomi tribal members Jacob “Tug” Wamego, Adrian “Gubba” Hale, Joseph “Chago” Hale, Jr. and Jason “Naseka” Hale render the flag song, while We-Ta-Se Post 410 members BJ Darnall, Zeke Rupnick, Benny Potts and Robert Jackson, Sr. display the flags under the command of Jim Potts at the Cultural Extravaganza.

A highlight of the night was the unveiling of the Royal Valley boys and girls Varsity Basketball teams warm-ups provided by the PBP Nation. Orange and yellow features on the side of the warm-ups signify the Prairie Band as Keepers of the Fire, along with the term, “Shīpshiyēk,” from the Prairie Band Potawatomi language, which translates to “Big Cat,” a term signifying the Royal Valley panther mascot. The back of the warm-ups feature

the PBP Nation seal.

The Royal Valley Singers and Dancers, the school's Native American dance troupe, performed during half time of the Boys Varsity game

to close out the evening. The Royal Valley Singers and Dancers regularly perform throughout northeast Kansas at other schools and special events as requested.

Royal Valley Lady Panthers Head Basketball Coach, Kyle Porter was instrumental in bringing this idea to life after being inspired by Nike N7 and their celebration of Native American Heritage Month. Nike N7 provides turquoise uniforms

to colleges and universities with significant Native American student populations promoting fellowship, friendship and harmony. The Kansas State High School Activities Association holds rules specific to uniforms but providing unique warm ups that incorporate Native American culture is allowable.

Porter said, “As a coach and teacher at Royal Valley I am excited to see our school find ways to celebrate positive components of our school and support the special partnership we have with the Potawatomi tribe.” The evening's activities promoted the unique and diverse school district of Royal Valley.

PBPN Chairman Joseph Rupnick said, “I'd like to thank Coach Porter and the entire Royal Valley School staff for their acknowledgment of the Prairie Band Potawatomi culture and providing an avenue for inclusion in the community. The Nation looks forward to Royal Valley's continued support in recognizing and celebrating Native students and their culture.”

Both of the Royal Valley varsity teams won their games against the Burlington Warriors. For more photos from the evening visit Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation on Facebook.

## PBPN Administration: Leading the Way

By: Michelle Simon

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation government operates 22 departments providing a wide array of services to the general membership.

While Tribal Council establishes the overarching goals of the Nation, it is the responsibility of the Administration department to oversee all departments and ensure they are following that direction.

Headed up by General Manager Kristen Wamego, the administration team also consists of two assistant general managers, the administrative assistants for tribal council and the lawyer, along with the front desk, mail and travel staff.

Along with handling the day-to-day operations of the Nation and managing the operating budget, Administration leadership work very hard to ensure all programs are complying with department policies and procedures as well as adhering to all federal guidelines and regulations.

They often serve as liaisons for boards and committees, such as on the Early

Childhood Education Center Policy Council and the Social Services Advisory Board assisting as needed.

Additionally, Administrative leader-

needed. They also provide research and prepare materials to assist Tribal Council when expanded or new services are needed.

The Administration leadership also



Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation General Manager, Kristen Wamego, discusses her plans with a leadership team.

ship reviews community needs and if there are any gaps in services, they look for ways to fill them. One way Administration does this is by helping departments look for grant funding and serving as grant managers when

monitor the infrastructure of the Nation and serve as project managers on construction projects. Many of the Nation's facilities were built about 20 years ago and now the buildings and major equipment components like

heating and air systems are on plans to extend their use or upgrade as needed.

In 2018, three major construction projects were completed which include the Language and Culture Center, the Behavioral Health Facility and the Southwood Estates housing subdivision. Administration also helped oversee the Fire Keeper Elder Center Refresh.

In 2019, Administration leadership plan to submit an application to fund a rehabilitation project for the Elder Duplexes located on K Road and they will finalize the conveyance process in order to begin conveying the homes on N1 Lane. The houses on N1 Lane were the first Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) housing available on the reservation.

Administration offices are located at the Government Center, Upper Level and staff can be reached at 785-966-4000.



# PBPN HR: A Path to Progress

By: Michelle Simon

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Human Resources Department has been on a progressive path the past three years. Each year the department has looked for opportunities to improve and strengthen the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation organization by utilizing their unique role.

“Human Resources is a resource for the Nation’s employees while also representing the best interests of the Nation. It can be a difficult balancing act at times, but well worth the effort,” said Adele Wahwassuck, PBPN Human Resources Director.

Charged with a diverse range of duties for the PBP Nation’s staff of 300, the Human Resources Department includes recruitment efforts, conducting the employment process, administering the employee benefits programs, classification and compensation, maintaining employee records, coordinating employee training, providing employee counseling on rights and personnel matters, along with overseeing human resources strategic planning.

In 2016, the department upgraded the Nation’s application process from an outmoded paper version to a web-based online version. The majority of applicants are predominantly in the local Northeast Kansas area, but adding an online component helps the PBP Nation attract talent spanning throughout the United States. Going digital has streamlined the entire onboarding process for the Nation, by increasing productivity along with reducing the amount of paper involved in the process.

In 2017, governing policies were a major focus. PBPN Human Resources staff assisted in the revision of Title 22, the Employment Code of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, with a specific focus on the Employment Disputes Tribunal. Prior to the change in the law, Nation employees had no true legal recourse in the termination process. By further developing the Employee Disputes Tribunal, the Human Resources Department has assisted in ensuring that PBP Nation employees have a voice throughout the course of the entire employment

process. Other changes in the wording of Title 22 provide a solid avenue for the Nation to employ individuals that contribute desirable skills and services to the Nation’s members. The revision to Title 22 also broadened Tribal Preference by including PBPN Descendants, a factor that has never been considered prior to the revision. Throughout 2017, the department also completed a comprehensive review of the employee handbook, instituting an updated version effective October 2017. All previous revisions to the employee handbook were outsourced.

“Our government is so unique in terms of the programs and services that the Nation provides. Developing our policies internally is critically important because we are shaping the framework for years to come,” stated Wahwassuck. The ability to revise the document internally speaks to the experience and education of the workforce. It also allows the Nation a means to capitalize on its distinctive nature and emphasize the various benefits of working for a tribal nation.

Most recently, the Nation implemented a new policy in 2018 in direct support of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation’s culture. With over half of the Nation’s 300 staff being enrolled PBPN tribal members, the administration instituted a different approach and determined it would benefit the Nation as a whole to allow employees to utilize administrative leave to carry on cultural practices. Employees are allowed up to five days of administrative leave for things such as hunting, planting and gathering.

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Human Resources Department also includes an assistant director, benefits coordinator, human resources specialist and an administrative assistant. The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Human Resource department is located in the lower level of the Government Center, located at 16281 Q road. Web resources are available at [www.pbpindiantribe.com](http://www.pbpindiantribe.com) and Human Resources staff can be reached toll-free at 866-694-3937.

## A Look At Our Land: Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribal Land Office

Written by: Michelle Simon

The Prairie Band Potawatomi, along with the Citizen Potawatomi, were initially established in Kansas on 576,000 acres of land, due to actions of the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Within 40 years, that area was reduced to the present day 77,357 acres, 13% of its former size. With the Dawes Act of 1887, a portion of the land was “allotted” to each tribal member, leaving no lands held in common.

It took over 80 years before the PBP Nation was able to re-establish common land holdings. In 1969, the Nation purchased four tracts of land, totaling 250 acres. Since then the Nation has slowly accumulated more tracts as they work toward the overarching goal of re-acquiring reservation lands.

In 2018, the Tribal Land Office purchased five new properties of crop, pasture and timber, increasing the tribe’s land mass by 437.50 acres. In addition, 71 acre-equivalents of undivided interests in US Trust land were also purchased. Along with purchasing land, a total of 680.55 acres have made application for the fee-to-trust process.

Today the Nation’s land mass currently consists of 35,447 acres. The Nation combined with individual tribal members hold 43.6% of the land within the 11 by 11 mile boundary of the reservation, along with an

additional 1,744 acres outside of the reservation as illustrated in the chart below.



Steve Duryea, Tribal Land Planner manages the Nation’s land assets.

Steve Duryea, Tribal Land Planner is tasked with managing the Nation’s land assets under the direction of the Tribal Council. Duryea is responsible for fee and trust land purchases, coordinating the purchase of undivided interests in trust lands along

with developing and executing the Nation’s fee-to-trust applications and maintaining all records and necessary

documentation of the Nation’s land holdings.

Duryea transitioned into the Tribal Land Office in 2011. He began his employment with the Nation in 2003, and has also worked for the Fire and

Planning and Environmental Protection departments. In 2015, Duryea wrote a land consolidation plan to expedite the land acquisition process. The plan has since been adopted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and allows for the buying and selling of trust lands by the Nation directly, although the Nation has never sold land nor does it intend to. Most importantly, the plan opens an avenue for the Nation to trade land with allotment owners. In such a trade arrangement, the land must be appraised and the process requires oversight by the BIA and final approval by the PBPN Tribal Council.

A couple of other relatively new tasks of the Tribal Land Office are to administer commercial business site leases and to act as the recording office for mortgages on tribal trust lands. Most lending institutions will not lend money to homeowners on trust land because the land cannot be used as collateral unlike regular fee land. However, the BIA will do a lease loan. More information regarding these functions can be referenced in the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Tribal Law and Order Code, under Title 20: Mortgage Lending Act and Title 31: Business Site Leasing Ordinance, available on [www.pbpindian-tribe.com](http://www.pbpindian-tribe.com).

The Tribal Land Office is located at the Government Center, on the upper level. The office can be reached by phone at 785-966-3928.

Land Status	On Reservation		Off Reservation		Total	
	TRACTS	ACRES	TRACTS	ACRES	TRACTS	ACRES
Allotment Trust (Individual Members)	399	16,832	0	0	399	16,832
Tribal Trust (Nation)	199	13,636	23	1,413	222	15,049
Tribal Fee (Nation)	63	3,235	11	331	74	3,566
Nation Sub-Total	262	16,871	34	1,744	296	18,615
Total	661	33,703	34	1,744	695	35,447



# Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribal Police Protect and Serve

By: Michelle Simon



The Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribal Police Department is committed to upholding law and order on the Prairie Band Potawatomi Reservation. Above from left, Wildlife Conservation Officer Talon Shipshee, Community Resource Officer Josh Peters, SORNA Coordinator John Hurla, Detective Michael Holte and Police Chief Terry Clark.

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribal Police Department is committed to protecting and serving the people of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation. Commonly referred to as Tribal PD, this department has a strong connection to the community.

First off, the department has a duty to provide law and order enforcement on the Prairie Band reservation. However, jurisdiction on the reservation may seem confusing to the uninitiated. The Tribal PD enforces three sets of laws: tribal, state and federal. Each officer is required to learn the law at all three levels and is equipped with a matrix on how to apply laws.

The State of Kansas recognizes the Nation's law enforcement agency and therefore the Tribal PD has the authority to uphold state law on the reservation regardless of citizen status (tribal or non-tribal.) Tribal members are prosecuted through tribal court and non-tribal members are prosecuted through state courts, however if an infraction is a misdemeanor or above, action will be processed through a state court. Federal statutes also allow Tribal PD to send cases to the federal level for prosecution as needed.

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation retains complete civil jurisdiction, but due to the 1940's Kansas Act, the Jackson County Sheriff's department also has concurrent criminal jurisdiction on the reservation. Due to the Kansas Act, tribal members are subject to the "Separate-Sovereigns Rule," and can be tried in tribal, state and federal court for the same infraction. The Separate-Sovereigns Rule is a principle of criminal law that allows consec-

utive prosecutions by the state and federal authorities for criminal violations arising out of the same conduct. A person may be tried twice for the same offense if the prosecutions are conducted by separate sovereigns.

Covering the 11 by 11 mile reservation are 12 sworn police officers including Tribal Police Chief Terry Clark, along with four dispatchers, and five support staff, which includes Motor Vehicle personnel Micki Martinez, and Wild Life Conservation officer Talon Shipshee, both PBPNT tribal members.

Chief Clark assumed his role in October 2018, and has brought a vision of increased accountability and transparency to the department. Chief Clark has focused on revising department policies to keep them up to par with best practices, along with submitting a 3-year strategic plan to the Tribal Council for approval. Once approved, Tribal PD intends to share the plan with the community increasing transparency.

Chief Clark has also applied for \$2.7 million in grant funding to update infrastructure in the way of a building addition and additional staffing needs. Historically, law enforcement departments grow with the demographics of their communities. With the recent expansion of the Prairie Band Casino and Resort and added housing units on the reservation, there is a need for more staff. Ideally, the department would like to add a special victims assistant, juvenile intake officer, court security officer, an investigator and two more officers.

The department was recently awarded an Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) which will cover the cost of replacing the 14-year old radios currently in use to new 30 amp units with 10 times more functionality. The department is also working on securing funding in order to obtain new bullet-proof vests.

The next major goal of the department is to bring 911 services to the reservation. Right now when residents of the reservation dial 911 they are directed to county services and the sheriff's department will respond. By instituting a tribal 911, residents within the boundary of the reservation would have tribal responders. The addition of 911 services on the reservation could lead to the hiring of at least 4 more dispatchers.

The PBP Tribal PD also offers initiatives aimed at the youth, prevention, and community education. Each year the department hosts an annual open house allowing the community to meet officers and check out the police facility. The department has also sponsored National Night Out events, which are geared toward promoting strong police-community partnerships, ultimately leading to a safer reservation.

For the past two summers, local youth have had the opportunity to participate in the grant funded Tribal PD Youth day camp. The camp is one-week long and provides participants with many hands on experiences such as learning how to be a detective, using simulation goggles, visiting the police and fire stations and for fun the children go fishing and attend a Kansas City Royal's baseball game.

Three times a year the department offers a Hunter Safety Course, with classes at a 100% participation rate. The department is also able to provide free car seats to tribal members through grant funding, and will be distributing another 150 seats this year.

In December 2018, the department sponsored a sealed bid vehicle auction consisting of 14 different vehicles. Tribal elders and veterans were given the first chance to place bids, then after one week the general public were allowed to bid on remaining inventory. Over \$22,000 was raised through the event.

In January 2019, the department became the lead agency for a local SAFE Kids Coalition. Tribal PD has partnered with the local school districts in the county, the Prairie Band Health Center along with the Holton hospital, the Holton Police Department and many other agencies within the Jackson County Area. The focus of Safe Kids is childhood injury prevention. The programming is available for any child, native or otherwise, in Jackson County from birth to 18 years of age. SAFE Kids, is lead by SORNA Coordinator John Hurla, and their first community outreach event will feature a Safe Sleep presentation.

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribal Police Department is located at 16344 Q Road, Mayetta, Kansas. Dispatch can be reached at 785-966-3024 or visit [www.pbpindiantribe.com/law-enforcement/](http://www.pbpindiantribe.com/law-enforcement/).



# Understanding Our Government: PBPB Taxes

By: Michelle Simon

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Tax Commission is the Nation's designated taxing authority. The commission consists of three individuals appointed by Tribal Council along with a fourth role, that of Tax Director. It is the duty of the Tax Director to provide the day-to-day administrative services required to uphold PBPB Law and Order Codes, Title 10 General Revenue and Taxation along with Title 13 Business Licensing. The Tax Director also serves as the Secretary for the Tax Commission.

One of the primary duties of the Tax Director is to manage all aspects of the reporting process on tobacco sales to the state of Kansas. The PBPB entered a Tobacco Tax Compact with the state of Kansas in January 2016, to the benefit of the Nation. The Nation is responsible for tracking each and every pack of cigarettes listed within the MSA sold on the PBPB Reservation. In return, the tribe receives a portion of the state's annual \$60 Million Master Settlement Agreement Payment. For years 2016 and 2017, the tribe received over \$350,000 in combined revenue.

The Tax Director is also responsible for licensing anyone doing business on the reservation. For now, the main

type of licensing on the reservation is for food sales. Any individuals that wish to sell food on the reservation must provide the proper documentation for food handling as well as establishing their food license prior to

Any business generating over 10k in profit per year is taxable. If anyone on the reservation wanted to start a business at home, they would need to talk with the Tax Director and establish vendor licensing. The only sales



Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Tax Director, Georgia Smith reviews the number of cigarette sales on the reservation.

completing any sales. Other vendor licensing include local towing companies and bail bonds, which work with the Tribal Court and Tribal Police. The Nation has also issued one vendor license for use of the Nation's trademarked seal, which generates royalties.

currently exempt from licensing are the Nation's governmental entities and tribal members that create or sell traditional Indian art or handicrafts.

The Nation uses a bulk of its generated tax revenue to fund economic development projects for the wel-

fare of tribal members. A few recent projects the Nation's tax dollars were allocated to are the infrastructure needs of Language and Road & Bridge departments as well as Southwood Estates Phase II housing project. Tax revenues also sustain the Tax Director and associated costs.

The Nation's Tax Director is Georgia Smith. She has been in her role for about 8 months and will have served the Nation for 7 years this April. Smith completed her Masters of Accountancy through Emporia State University in December 2018. She is the second Tax Director in the Nation's history, with the role initially established in 2012.

The Tax Director maintains an independent office, located at the Government Center – Upper level. Smith can be reached at 785-966-3998. More information about Title 10 and 13 can be found at [www.pbpbtribe.com](http://www.pbpbtribe.com) in the Government section.

Current members of the Tax Commission include PBPB Tribal Council Treasurer Wade Pahmahmie, Tribal Council Member Thomas Wabnum, along with the PBPB General Manager Kristen Wamego.

## Building Strength & Resilience Through Prevention

By: Michelle Simon

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Social Service Department consists of several programs that aid in the protection and enhancement of the wellbeing of tribal members. The newest program added for the benefit of community members is the Methamphetamine and Suicide Prevention Initiative, or MSPI. While the topic of methamphetamines and suicide may be overwhelming, both subjects are realities for this community. Nationally, suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth aged 10 to 24 years old, according to a 2016 Centers for Disease Control report, and within its first five months, the PBPB MSPI received seven referrals reflecting a real need in the community.

At the heart of the program, MSPI is focused on strengthening the emotional, social and leadership skills of 10 to 24-year-olds and the families and support systems that care for them, while incorporating their native culture. MSPI provides prevention aimed at reducing risk factors for substance abuse and suicide. The program's service area is Jackson county, and the surrounding six counties, which include Shawnee, Pottawatomie, Nemaha, Brown, Atchison and Jefferson.

The Nation received a grant from Indian Health Service in late 2017 to implement the MSPI program. The first staff member came on board in March 2018, when PBPB tribal member Jaimie Leis was hired as the Leadership & Cultural Development Specialist, followed by Program Manager Angel Hauk who joined the staff in June 2018. Most recently PBPB tribal member, Kassie James, joined the program as the Youth Outreach Specialist in January 2019.

The skill level of the staff is top notch. Both Hauk and James are Licensed Master Social Workers, and all three are working to increase their certifications. By the end of 2019, they will all be certified prevention professionals. Hauk's role is to guide the program while James and Leis are working directly with the community. Leis is stationed at the PBPB Boys and Girls club, and does outreach with the club kids, the early childhood education center, and is a partner with SAFE Kids. Leis is also the coordinator of the P.R.I.D.E. program instituted at the Royal Valley Middle School.

James is working in the community at large. She has set up workshops and classes for the community. James has extensive training and can provide direct services to individuals. She is a

trained QPR instructor. QPR stands for Question, Persuade, Refer, it is a method used in suicide prevention. James is also trained in MAPP – Modeled Approach to Partnered Parenting, Healthy Relationships, HEART certified, and will complete Substance Abuse Prevention Skills Training (SAPST) in March 2019. James is currently working to become a Licensed Master Addiction Counselor (LMAC).

MSPI has spent the past few months building a solid foundation and establishing partnerships. They have partnered with other tribal programs to help sponsor a 5K, the National Night Out, and assisted with Trunk or Treat. They are working to educate parents, schools and communities to show them prevention measures, protective factors and referrals for crisis situations. The team is also promoting early intervention strategies through positive youth programming like cultural sewing classes, an ice cream social, and the P.R.I.D.E. program instituted at Royal Valley Middle School. P.R.I.D.E. stands for Prevention Restores Individually Driven Empowerment, and it is a peer-lead prevention club with three tracks: Leadership, Student Ambassador, or Member, which allows students to be as active as they wish.

Amidst all of the positive momentum, staff have become aware of a slight snag. Some community members are put off by the wording of the program title. People see or hear the words meth and suicide and they back away. The program has determined they will change their name soon to something with a more favorable connotation.

In addition, the program has plans to offer more classes to youth and their family's very soon. Individuals do not need to be in a situation, or crisis, to attend.

Overall, this program aims to help people find strength and resiliency within themselves through their native culture, to help provide answers, and to strengthen families in a time of need. MSPI staff can be reached at 785-966-8330 or at the Social Services Department, 11400 158 Road, Mayetta, Kansas.

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National  
Suicide Prevention  
Lifeline  
1-800-273-8255  
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**\*\*All postings are reprinted from public obituaries or submissions from the family.\*\***



## James Pidgeon

WISCONSIN RAPIDS, WI – James Dale “Waub-mee-mee” Pidgeon, age 67, of Wisconsin Rapids, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, November 7, 2018, at Aspirus Riverview Hospital in Wisconsin Rapids.

Funeral services will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 10, 2018, at Herman-Taylor Funeral Home in Wisconsin Rapids. Beaver and Keith will officiate. Burial will be at the Waub-mee-mee Cemetery. Visitation for family and friends will be held at the funeral home from 4:00-8:00 p.m. on Friday and from 10:00 a.m. until the time of services on Saturday.

Jim was born February 4, 1951, in Wisconsin Rapids to Luther and Lona (Mallory) Pidgeon. He married Carol Stein on March 14, 1981, in Appleton, Wisconsin.

Jim was a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation. He worked as an equipment operator for the City of Wisconsin Rapids for nearly 30 years.

Jim is survived by his beloved wife of 37 years, Carol; two sons: James (Nicole) Pidgeon and Robert (Catherine) Pidgeon; grandchildren: Ryan, Aubrey, Crystal, Kaylee, Jacob and Tim; brother, Fredrick (Germaine) Pidgeon; and two sisters: Annette Pidgeon and Debra Turbin, all of Wisconsin Rapids; his sisters-in-law: Jeanne (Charlie) Anderson, Jackie (Rodney) Kust, Susan Stein, Donna Van Asten, and Mary Jo (Joel) Sweetalla; as well as various nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents; brother, Donald Collins; sisters: Lenora Collins and Wilma Nelson; **continued...**



## Frances Wabaunsee

MAYETTA, KS - Frances Ellen “Ki-we-kwe” Wabaunsee, 60, of Mayetta, KS, passed away Tuesday, November 20, 2018 at her home. She was born December 11, 1957 in Holton, KS, the daughter of Llewellyn “Lou” and Freda J. (Nozhackum) Wabaunsee.

Frances graduated from Marty Indian School in Marty, South Dakota and she graduated from Bemidji State University in Minnesota.

She taught elementary math in Minnesota for the reservation schools. She also taught at the Kickapoo Nation Face Program for several years and later worked in the Education Department for the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

Frances attended Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church, she was a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, she was an active community member and loved being involved at the Elder Center on the reservation.

Survivors include her 4 children, Miyah Danielson (Nolan) of Cloquet, MN, Tarissa Henderson (Stephen) of Cloquet, MN, Darren Danielson of Kansas City, MO and Lan Danielson (Amanda) of Topeka, KS; 2 sisters, Goffy Wabaunsee of Mayetta, KS and Louie Dominguez of Wichita, KS; 7 grandchildren, Donte, Tyjha, Jase, Sophia, Lucy, Dash and Stevie and her beloved dog, Muck.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Lou and Freda Wabaunsee; an infant son, Kena Jones; 3 sisters, Marsha Ferrari, Henry Wabaunsee and Monnie Wabaunsee and 3 brothers, Fred Wabaunsee, Richard Wabaunsee and Ralph Wabnum. **continued...**



## Dan McKinney

SOLDIER, KS – Dan “Ke-so-kwah” McKinney, 80, of Soldier, KS, passed away Sunday, December 2, 2018, at his home, with family by his side. He was born September 12, 1938, on the Potawatomi Reservation, the son of Dan McKinney, Sr. and Ellen (Lewis) McKinney.

Dan was a firefighter for many years on the Prairie Band Potawatomi Reservation. He was a member of Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation and Peyote Religion.

Dan married Ellen Fair in August of 1969 in Carnegie, OK. They celebrated over 49 years of marriage.

Survivors include his wife, Ellen, of the home; 5 sons, Troy McKinney (Amber) of Mayetta, KS, Sam McKinney (Rachel), Phillip McKinney, James McKinney and Dan McKinney, Jr. III (Virginia) all of Soldier, KS; 2 daughters, Mona McKinney (David) of Soldier, KS and Lola Wilson of Topeka, KS; 2 sisters, Betty Jo Hugar (Charles) of Apache, OK and Donna Poore (Tyrone) of Ponca City, OK; a brother, Danny Boy McKinney of Oklahoma; 29 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; a son, Jack McKinney; 4 sisters and 4 brothers.

Family will greet friends from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 5, 2018, at the Mercer Funeral Home in Holton. Cremation will follow. Private family inurnment will be at a later date. Memorials may be given to the Dan McKinney Memorial Fund c/o Mercer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 270, Holton, KS 66436.

– Courtesy of Mercer Funeral Homes



## Jacob Vanderblomen

TOPEKA, KS - Jacob Sylvester “Neshiskēk” Vanderblomen, 50, of Topeka, KS, passed away, Tuesday, December 11, 2018, in Topeka. He was born March 5, 1968, in Topeka, the son of John Matthew and Ada Merle (Wahquahboshkuk) Vanderblomen.

Jacob attended Royal Valley High School and later received his G.E.D. He also attended Washburn Tech for heating and cooling. Jacob proudly served in the United States Navy.

Survivors include his daughter, Mary Jo Vanderblomen of Mayetta, KS; a sister, Theresa Bravo of Topeka, KS; 2 brothers, John Vanderblomen, Jr. and Christopher Vanderblomen both of Topeka and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Dinner and wake will be Sunday evening, December 16, 2018, at Gunzy’s homeplace. Burial with Military Honors will be Monday morning, December 17, 2018, at Danceground Cemetery. Mercer Funeral Home in Holton is in charge of arrangements. To leave a special message for the family, please visit [www.mercerfuneralhomes.com](http://www.mercerfuneralhomes.com).

- Courtesy of Mercer Funeral Homes

**James Pidgeon Continued**  
father and mother-in-law, James and Mary Stein; and brothers-in-law: Timothy Turbin, Richard Bauer, Merlin Van Asten, Richard Stein, and Donald Stein.

- Courtesy of Hermann Taylor Funeral Home, Wisconsin Rapids

## John Vanderblomen, Jr.

TOPEKA, KS - John Matthew “Shopteese” Vanderblomen, Jr., 53, of Topeka, KS, formerly of Mayetta, KS, passed away Friday, January 18, 2019, as the result of an accident. He was born September 20, 1965, in Topeka, KS, the son of John Matthew Vanderblomen, Sr. and Ada Merle (Wahquahboshkuk) Vanderblomen.

John graduated from Royal Valley High School. He worked with asbestos removal and various jobs in the Topeka area.

He was a member of Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

John was preceded in death by his parents, John and Ada Vanderblomen and a brother, Jacob S. Vanderblomen on December 11, 2018.

Survivors include his sister, Theresa Bravo and a brother, Christopher Vanderblomen both of Topeka, KS.

Dinner and wake will be Friday evening, January 25, 2019, at Gunzy’s homeplace on the Prairie Band Potawatomi Reservation. Burial will be Saturday morning, January 26, 2019, at Danceground Cemetery. Mercer Funeral Home in Holton is in charge of arrangements. To leave a special message for the family, please visit [www.mercerfuneralhomes.com](http://www.mercerfuneralhomes.com).

- Courtesy of Mercer Funeral Homes

**F. Wabaunsee Continued**  
Mass of Christian Burial will be 10:00 a.m. Saturday, November 24, 2018 at Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church. Burial will follow in the Shipshee Cemetery. Rosary will be recited at 6:00 p.m. Friday, November 23, 2018 at Sister Therese Klepac Hall with a wake to follow. Thursday evening, November 22, 2018 a dinner will be at Nozhackum Hall. Mercer Funeral Home in Holton is in charge of arrangements. To leave a special message for the family, please visit [www.mercerfuneralhomes.com](http://www.mercerfuneralhomes.com).

- Courtesy of Mercer Funeral Homes



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**\*\*All postings are reprinted from public obituaries or submissions from the family.\*\***



## Jeffery Ogden

RULO, NE – Jeffery “Jeff” Ogden, 50, of Rulo, passed away Dec. 12, 2018. He was born on October 8, 1968. He was a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

He married Linda Petersen on July 4, 2007, at Lincoln, NE. Jeff was raised at Rulo and graduated Falls City High School in 1986.

The family will receive friends 1 hour prior to service time at Dorr and Clark Funeral Home. Visitation at the Dorr & Clark Funeral Home from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM on December 17, 2018. His funeral will be held at 3 p.m. Cremation to follow with private inurnment at a later date at Rulo Cemetery.

– Courtesy of the St. Joseph News-Press.

## Adam Jessepe

TOPEKA, KS – Adam Lee “Mijissepe” Jessepe, age 44, of Topeka, passed away Sunday, January 27, 2019, at Aldersgate Village in Topeka. Adam grew up in Topeka. He was a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Indian Tribe in which he valued highly.

He is survived by his mother, Leslie (Charles) Jessepe; his father, Benny Potts; four half-brothers, Joseph Potts, Nathaniel Potts, Patrick Potts, and David Potts and one half-sister, Annie Potts.

Adam enjoyed shooting pool and fishing. He will be missed by many.

Memorial services will be Thursday, February 7, 2019, at 3:00 p.m. at the Davidson Funeral Home.

- Courtesy of Davidson Funeral Home



## Yolanda Dinsdale

EL PASO, TX – Yolanda Flores Dinsdale, 54, from El Paso, Texas passed away December 22, 2018. She was born in Topeka, Kansas and moved with her family to El Paso as a child.

She married Brian Dinsdale in 1983, they had five sons together and moved between El Paso and the Dallas area during their 35-year marriage. She is survived by her husband, five sons and five grandchildren.

Services will be at San Jose Funeral Home East on December 29, 2018, from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. In lieu of flowers please donate to The El Paso Center Against Sexual and Family Violence.

– Courtesy of El Paso Times

## Heather Moore

TACOMA, WA – Heather Ann Moore, 28, was born September 23, 1990, in Tacoma, WA and passed away June 9, 2018, in Tacoma, WA. She was a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

Arrangements by Edwards Memorial, Funerals Homes, Chapels and Crematories.

## Anthony Jacobson

APPLETON, WI – Anthony P. Jacobson, 45, passed away on November 24, 2018. He was born on July 14, 1973. He was a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

Funeral arrangements by Valley Funeral Home, Appleton, Wisconsin.

- Courtesy Valley Funeral Home



## Yvonne Villegas

LAWRENCE, KS – Yvonne Hope “Tee” (Masquat) Villegas, 76, of Lawrence, KS, passed away Wednesday, December 26, 2018, at Brandon Woods at Alvamar. She was born July 10, 1942, in Horton, KS, the daughter of Robert Eugene and Carrie Cecilia (Puckee) Masquat.

Yvonne received her Cosmetology License and was a beautician for many years. She later worked for Hallmark Cards in Topeka. She was a member of Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

She married Johnny Villegas, he preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by her parents, a sister, Val McKinney and a brother, Eugene R. “Chub” Masquat.

Survivors include a son, Tracey Lee Masquat of Lawrence, KS; 2 sisters, Drusa Wabaunsee of Hoyt, KS and Carole Garrison of East Hartford, CT; 3 grandsons, Tracey, Elijah and Ivan; 2 great-grandsons, Myles and Tymbr and numerous nieces and nephews.

Drum Services will be Sunday evening, December 30, 2018, at the Danceground building west of Mayetta, KS (just east of 150th and K RD) on the Prairie Band Potawatomi Reservation. Burial will be Monday afternoon, December 31, 2018, at Danceground Cemetery. Memorials may be given to the Yvonne “Tee” Villegas Memorial Fund to be designated at a later date c/o Mercer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 270, Holton, KS 66436. Mercer Funeral Home in Holton is in charge of arrangements. To leave a special message for the family, please visit [www.mercerfuneralhomes.com](http://www.mercerfuneralhomes.com).

- Courtesy of Mercer Funeral Homes



## Michael “Joe” Shobney

DELIA, KS – Michael Joe “Cha-na-go” Shobney, 74, of Delia, KS, passed away Monday, January 21, 2019, at his home after a courageous battle with cancer. He was born September 29, 1944, in Holton, KS, the son of Donald P. and Margaret (Matsapto) Shobney.

Joe graduated from Topeka High School in 1965. He joined the United States Army National Guard in 1965, and proudly served for 30 years. Joe worked on the Prairie Band Potawatomi Reservation for Road and Bridge as a mechanic and truck driver for 20 years, retiring in 2016.

He was a member of Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation and We-ta-se Post 410.

He married Shirley Jean Russell on April 30, 1965, in Topeka; she preceded him in death on April 16, 1995. He was also preceded in death by his parents, Donald and Margaret Shobney; his sister, Mary Rogers; his brother, John Shobney; a step-son, Derek Douglas Denzler and a grandson, Joshua Hester.,

Joe married Sharon Sue Dicks on August 3, 1996, in Delia; she survives of the home. Other survivors include a son Michael Joe Shobney II of Delia, KS; a daughter, Angela D. Hester (Ronny) of Mayetta, KS; step-son, Jerry Leon Denzler, Jr. of Hoyt, KS; step-daughter, Heather Suzanne Nicholas (Cris) of Mayetta, KS; a sister, Carol Heimiller (Kevin) of Lecompton, KS; 13 grandchildren, Jacob, Russell, Tyler, Tanner, Austin, Robert, Ronny Jr., Lexi, Jimmy, Jeanie, Teryn, Michael III and Annabella and 14 great-grandchildren. *continued...*

## Joan Ventura

OMAHA, NE – Joan K. (Ramirez) Ventura, 74, passed away on December 9, 2018. She was born on May 26, 1944. She was a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

Preceded in death by husband, Edward F. Ventura, Sr.; parents, George and Mary Rose (Puckkee) Ramirez; daughter-in-law, Ernestine Ortiz-Ventura.

Survived by children: Angelina (Bruce) Gill, Julia Ventura, Edward T. Ventura Jr., Jesus Jose Ventura, Raquel Sannoufi and James A. Ventura; sisters: Rosemarie Desautels, Loretta Ramirez, Georgiana (Francisco) Alcuran, Geraldine (Rosendo) Martinez and Ramona Ramirez-Alvarez; brother: Gregory (Sandra) Ramirez; 10 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

VISITATION: 5-7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 13, with Rosary to follow. FUNERAL: 11 a.m. Friday, Dec. 14. All services at Holy Name Catholic Church, 2901 Fontenelle Blvd. Interment: St. John's Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations to Holy Name Catholic Church. KREMER FUNERAL HOME 6302 Maple St. 402-553-3155 [www.kremerfuneralhome.com](http://www.kremerfuneralhome.com).

- Courtesy of Kremer Funeral Home

**Joe Shobney Continued**  
Graveside Service will be 10:00 a.m. Friday, January 25, 2019 at the Danceground Cemetery (on the Potawatomi Reservation). Family will greet friends from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Thursday evening at the Mercer Funeral Home in Holton. To leave a special message for the family, please visit [www.mercerfuneralhomes.com](http://www.mercerfuneralhomes.com).

- Courtesy of Mercer Funeral Homes



# Kambottek

***\*\*All postings are reprinted from public obituaries or submissions from the family.\*\****

## Lavina Olson

BROKEN ARROW, OKLA. – Lavina “Jan” Olson, 80 of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma passed from this life on Tuesday, January 29, 2019, at home with her husband, daughters, grand-daughters, and sister by her side. She was born October 13, 1938, in Horton, Kansas to her parents, Orville “Smokey” Rice and Louise “Cham” Wamego Rice. She grew up in Topeka, KS the oldest of six children.

Jan was a Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation tribal member who was very proud of her Native American heritage and her Indian name was “Wan-quah”. She came to Tulsa in 1957 to begin her career as a beautician after training at Chilocco Indian school. She loved doing hair and served many

dear friends, clients and family during her 60 plus year career.

She was married at the age of 21 in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma June 24, 1960, to her husband Don at age 25. They enjoyed numerous anniversary celebrations with her lifelong church friends at Sequoia Hills and family.

As a family, she loved to travel to Hawaii, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Florida, and Acapulco. With her husband Don, she was an avid Oklahoma Sooner fan and had season tickets to OU games for fifty years. She traveled abroad with her daughters Cindy and Beth to Germany, France and England. She visited Beth in California, New York and New Jersey. She enjoyed numerous trips to Sea World, Disneyland, and other theme parks

with her daughter Dawn and her granddaughters.

She was a dedicated Sunday school teacher to preschoolers for more than 50 years. She participated in several past times with Bunko and Bingo groups.

She is survived by her loving husband, Donald Gordon Olson of the home; three daughters, Cynthia “Cindy” Kaye Olson of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma Dawn Rene Browne of Bixby, Oklahoma and Elizabeth “Beth” Anne Olson of San Francisco, California; two sisters, Elizabeth “Liz” Bartlett of Topeka, Kansas and Sammye Jean Starkey and husband Tom of Topeka, Kansas one brother, Raymond Rice and wife Jeanie of Topeka, Kansas; two grandchildren, Whitney Collins

and Fiancee Jeron Wold of Tulsa, Oklahoma and Alexandria Browne of Tulsa, Oklahoma; and several nieces, nephews, friends and extended family. She was preceded in death by her parents, Orville and Louise Rice; brother, Jeffery Rice; sister, Sylvia Rice.

Visitation will be held from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, February 1, 2019, at Floral Haven Funeral Home. Funeral services will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 2, 2019 at Southwood Baptist Church with Pastor Darrin McKnight officiating. Burial will follow at Floral Haven Memorial Gardens in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

- Courtesy of Floral Haven Crematory, Funeral Home, Cemetery and Floral Shop

## Frank McDonald

RENO, NV – Frank Roy McDonald, 90, passed away on November 15, 2018. He was born on August 16, 1928. He was a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

## Chester Boho

PHILLIPS, WI – Chester Leon Boho, Jr., 56, passed away on February 1, 2019. He was born on May 9, 1962. He was a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

## Teen Dating Violence

By: Jessica Wheeler, Tribal Victim Services

Did you know that 23% of women and 14% of men are victims of intimate partner violence before they are 18 years old? In an effort to lower this statistic and others like it, February is designated as Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

Teen Dating Violence is any physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and/or psychological aggression between adolescents in a close relationship. Teen dating violence happens in-person or online and can be carried out by current or previous partners. The 2013 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey reports that 1 in 3 adolescents will experience dating abuse. Although there aren't any reporting tools specific to Native Americans, studies suggest that Native Americans are *at least* 2 ½ times more likely than other races to experience sexual assault crimes.

Keeping youth healthy, physically and spiritually, is a top priority for most parents. Teen Dating Violence can cause a number of unhealthy thoughts and behaviors. Teens who experience Teen Dating Violence are at-risk for depression, anxiety and thoughts of suicide. They may become more antisocial than normal and are more likely to engage in drug and

alcohol abuse. Those who experience Teen Dating Violence are also more likely to have troubled relationships as adults.

The best way to stop Teen Dating Violence is by preventing it. We can start doing this by modeling healthy relationship behaviors. As we know, children learn best by example so it is important that parents engage with others respectfully. The other thing we can do is TALK to our youth about dating violence. Discussions should include acceptable ways to manage emotions like anger and jealousy as well as what consent is and what it means. In Kansas, adolescents 15 years old and younger CANNOT give consent.

The Centers for Disease Control lists the following ways to prevent Teen Dating Violence:

- Teach safe and healthy relationship skills
- Engage influential adults and peers
- Disrupt the developmental pathways toward partner violence (i.e. early childhood home visitation, preschool enrichment with family engagement and parenting skill and family relationship programs)
- Create protective environments

- Strengthen economic supports for families
- Support survivors to increase safety and lessen harms



Red Flags in Teenage Relationships:

- Excessive jealousy or insecurity
- Invasions of your privacy
- Unexpected bouts of anger or rage
- Unusual moodiness
- Pressuring a partner into unwanted sexual activity
- Blaming you for problems in the relationship and not taking any responsibility for the same
- Controlling tendencies
- Explosive temper
- Preventing you from going out with or talking to other people
- Constantly monitoring your whereabouts and checking in to see what you are doing and who you are with
- Falsely accusing you of things

- Vandalizing or ruining your personal property
  - Taunting or bullying
  - Threatening or causing physical violence
- (<https://www.teendvmmonth.org/resources/signs-teen-dating-violence/>)

Finally, making it acceptable to speak out against Teen Dating Violence will help victims step forward and seek help. Use Teen Dating Violence and Awareness Month as a conversation starter with your kids. Teach them the signs of Teen Dating Violence and encourage them to talk to somebody they trust or to reach out to domestic violence services if they are ever in a situation where they do not feel safe.

For more information or to access victim services, please call: PBPB Tribal Victim Services 24-hour hotline: 1-866-966-0173

Are you in a healthy relationship? Take the quiz and find out! <https://www.loveisrespect.org/for-someone-else/is-my-relationship-healthy-quiz/>



# McDonald Recounts Memories with Merle Haggard

By: Ali Holcomb - Republished from the Holton Recorder, with permission

Kansas native Ray McDonald experienced firsthand the rise of legendary country musician Merle Haggard, developing a deep and lasting friendship with the man that so many admired.

“I just want people to know what a great guy he was,” McDonald said of Haggard. “He was like my second father.”

Throughout his career, McDonald served in a variety of roles for Haggard, including office manager, assistant and bus driver.

Born in Parsons, McDonald grew up in Topeka before his family moved to California in 1959.

McDonald first saw Merle Haggard on “Cousin Herb’s Trading Post” TV show when his family was living in Oildale, Calif.

“It was on every day from 5 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and it was just country music,” McDonald said. “Everybody watched it, and it featured good musicians like Buck Owens and Glen Campbell. When I heard Merle when I was 14 years old, I had never heard anybody sing like him before. I knew he was going to be a superstar.”

One day he saw Haggard get out of a car at the house across the street from his house.

“I told my mom that was the guy just singing on television,” McDonald said. “She said, ‘No it’s not.’ Then she leaned over my shoulder and said, ‘Well, it is, and I know his mother.’”

During this time, McDonald also became friends with Buddy and Mike Owens, sons of Buck and Bonnie Owens.

After Buck and Bonnie divorced, Haggard and Bonnie cut a duet album together and eventually married, which is how Ray met Haggard when he was 14.

A few years later, McDonald’s family moved to Los Angeles in June 1965. “The Watts riots were going on so I called up Buddy and Mike to see if Merle and Bonnie would let me live with them in Oildale,” McDonald said. “I didn’t want to live in Los Angeles plus I’d left all my friends.”

McDonald spent his sophomore year living with the family.

“We had the house to ourselves a lot because Bonnie and Merle were on the road,” he said. “We played his stereo too loud and got in trouble of few times, but he was the sweetest man. He took me and Buck Owens’

kids in as his own, and he also had four kids living across town. This was literally the start of his career. He took us fishing and cooked for us. He was very kind.”

McDonald recalls seeing Haggard in the driveway before leaving on his first country music tour, with Bonnie and Fuzzy Owens, Haggard’s manager and steel guitar player.

“Fuzzy, Bonnie and Merle got in Fuzzy’s 1953 Chrysler station wagon. They folded down the back seat and put in the amplifiers, guitars and clothes back there,” McDonald said.

“Fuzzy was driving, Bonnie was in the



Prairie Band Potawatomi tribal member Ray McDonald and his longtime friend, country musician Merle Haggard. (Photo courtesy of Frank McDonald).

middle and Merle was on the passenger seat. We went out to say goodbye, and they were so happy.”

Haggard came from humble beginnings. His parents moved to Bakersfield, Calif. from Oklahoma during the Great Depression in 1934, and Haggard was born in 1937.

“They moved in a Model T with the mattress on the top like the ‘Grapes Of Wrath,’” McDonald said.

Haggard’s father died when he was nine years old, and he was arrested several times as a juvenile and as a young adult. He spent time in San Quentin State Prison in the late 1950s for attempted robbery.

After prison, Haggard turned his life around and helped develop, alongside Buck Owens, the Bakersfield sound, a new genre of country music with a hard-driving sound.

Haggard’s first number-one single was “The Fugitive” in 1966 and towards the end of the 1960s, he released several other hits, including “Mama Tried,” “The Legend Of Bonnie And Clyde,” “Hungry Eyes” and “Sing Me Back Home.”

McDonald said his favorite Haggard song is “If We Make It Through December.”

“He sang ‘Mama Tried’ to me after he first wrote it,” McDonald said. “He told me that every song just came to him, and it was a gift.”

Nicknamed the “Working Man’s Poet,” one of Haggard’s biggest hits was “Okie From Muskogee,” a political song released in 1969 during the Vietnam War that reflected the feelings of the middle class toward anti-war protesters.

“That song made his career,” McDonald said. “Most of the people around here are connected to farming, and it doesn’t matter if they’re 20 or 80, they all have been immersed in his music. He sang about the working man,

mama, church and going to the bar and drinking.”

Haggard was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1994 and had 38 number one singles.

McDonald worked as a DJ for Buck Owens at his radio station for four years after high school before moving out of the area. Through the years, he stayed in touch with Merle and his family.

In 1998, while McDonald was working for Haggard putting an album cover together, Haggard’s office manager died. McDonald stepped into that role for eight months.

Three years later, McDonald began working as Haggard’s assistant for a year.

“He was under a lot of pressure at that time,” he said. “He was responsible for a lot of people, and he had a public image to maintain.”

McDonald left Haggard and began working for a company driving limousines.

“He called me in the middle of the night in 2009 and asked if I would fly to Dallas the next day and drive his band bus,” he said.

That request turned into a career for McDonald, as he drove buses for Haggard until Haggard’s death in 2016.

During that first year, McDonald said he considered quitting.

“You have to sleep all day and drive 400 to 500 miles at night. It was hard and a lot of pressure,” he said. “I went to the back of the bus, and Merle said, ‘Ray, I understand that you’re thinking about quitting. You don’t want to die and go to heaven and stand there in front of Jesus and have Him look down at you and say, ‘You didn’t quit Merle Haggard, did you?’”

McDonald stayed and drove Haggard’s personal bus 600,000 miles in five years, visiting every state in the continental United States.

“I saw hundreds of shows, and any time he played his hometown it was special,” McDonald said. “The people there so appreciated what he’d done, and they knew that he came from nothing.”

McDonald said he marveled how giants in the country industry, like George Strait, Brooks & Dunn, Garth Brooks and Carrie Underwood, looked up to Haggard.

“They absolutely adored him,” he said. “He was their idol.”

McDonald wrote three songs that Haggard recorded, including “Losin’ In Las Vegas” in 1989 and “I Wish I Was Santa Claus” in 2004.

“He knew it was a gift,” McDonald said of Haggard recording “Losin’ In Las Vegas.” “Every songwriter in the world wanted Merle Haggard to record their song.”

In 2001, Haggard gave McDonald the song title “It’s Too Lonesome For Me.”

“He said ‘I don’t have time to write it so I’m going to give it to you to write, and we’ll split it,’” McDonald said.

McDonald and he his son did write it, and Haggard recorded it prior to his death, but it hasn’t been released.

Haggard was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2008 and died from complications from double pneumonia on his 79th birthday on April 6, 2016.

“I told him one day that he was the kindest man I’ve ever met, but that he was also the orneriest. And he just smiled at that,” McDonald said.

McDonald is a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, he is now living in California.



Nishnabek Ntewmèn - “Who We Are”

Corey  
“Pak Nah Gah”  
Mzhickteno



Corey was born and raised in Topeka, KS and is the son of Steve Mzhickteno, grandson of Larue Mzhickteno, and great-grandson of Patrick Mzhickteno. Corey worked at Harrah’s Prairie Band for 6 years while simultaneously in college and was quickly recognized and promoted into supervision and management. His studies at Washburn focused on Business and Accounting while his studies at KU earned him a Commission as an Officer in the United States Air Force. At the casino he had direct responsibility for over 150 Slot Operations employees, 7 supervisors, and was trusted as Manager on Duty for the casino property on a weekly basis where he made weekly customer service decisions for internal/external customers from all departments. He cross-trained in five departments in the Tribal Leadership and Development ACE program, was often selected for special projects, and in his last year at the casino was recognized by the Harrah’s leadership team with the “Manager of the Year” Award, identifying him as a top performing team member on property (which at that time employed over 1,000 people). He re-joined the casino team as a Board Member in 2014.

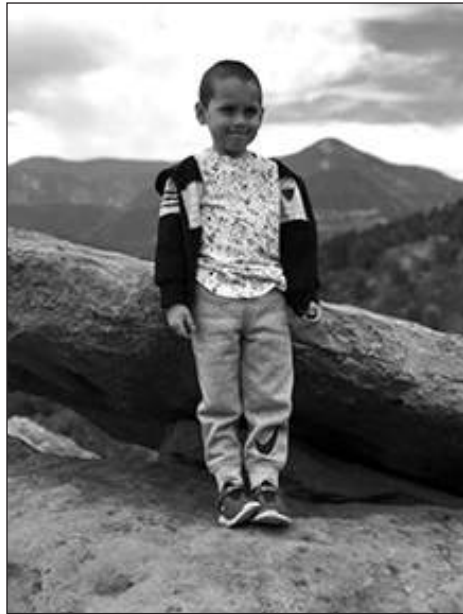
Corey has a history of being a trusted agent providing leadership during periods of change, influencing improvements to organizations, and creating advantages against industry competition. In addition to making these contributions for the PBPB he has made similar contributions to the USAF over the past 12 years. He graduated flight school in the top of his class and was awarded “Distinguished Graduate” during his flying upgrade from Co-Pilot to Aircraft Commander in the operational Air Force. He is currently an Instructor Pilot in Air Education and Training Command where he provides advanced flight training to seasoned aviators in a 4-month course to upgrade from Pilot to Instructor Pilots. Major Corey Mzhickteno has earned his Senior Pilot Wings and has accumulated over 2,500 flight hours during his 11 year flying career in 5 different aircraft. His additional military experience includes operational weapons and tactics, flight safety and risk management, coordinating government contracts, navigating legal issues, monitoring budgets, and he currently is appointed as a special projects Officer by HQ Air Education and Training Command to re-shape how USAF Pilots are trained nation-wide. (Submitted by Corey Mzhickteno)



Trenton Wilbur

Congratulations on Graduating! We’re so proud of your dedication and accomplishments. Keep up the good work.

Love, All of Us



Happy Birthday Ethan! Watching you grow and learn everyday is a true blessing. We love you so much! -Mom and family



Isabella Wheeler is 10 years old and a 5th grader at RVMS. She recently won the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest and will move on to the District Free Throw Contest on February 10th. Congratulations Izzy and Good Luck! Love, Your Family



Happy Birthday My Sweet Boy! You have brought nothing but happiness to myself and all those around you! Happy 1st Birthday Nayotennah! Momma loves you!

Happy Birthday Dawn Masqua, 2/6 We love you mom!

Tosha, Will, & Danielle



Congratulations Daisy Mae Wheeler! Daisy Mae is a Level 2 gymnast at Lamberson Elite Athletics and this is her first year competing. She has done very well in her first competitions of the season bringing home a total of 4 first place medals and medals for 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th places in her events. She also earned First Place All-Around at both meets. Her family is very proud of her hard work and dedication. Way to go Daisy Mae and good luck with the rest of your season!



Happy belated 11th birthday Ki-Bo-We-Kwe! Love you most, Mom



Kaiden Nozhackum is in Kindergarten at RVES. This school year he has been recognized with a Citizenship award in October and a Creativity award in January. He is the grandson of Brenda Nozhackum. Kaiden, in the grayest of gray skies or the bluest of blue skies, you make me happy! I love you sonson! Gramma



Ka-tti Hale, 5th grade at RVMS Honor Band nomination for flute Daughter of Nathan & Jennifer Hale Granddaughter of Aaron & Joyce Hale

Ki-Bo Throssell, 5th grade at RVMS Honor Band nomination for percussion. Daughter of Kristina Throssell Granddaughter of Kevin & Maureen Throssell



## Notices

**HOMEOWNERSHIP FOR VETERANS AVAILABLE**

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**WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

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EMAIL: ERINHUBBARD@PBPENATION.ORG

Wasauksing First Nation hosts  
**Potawatomi Gathering 2019**

Contact:  
E: pottawatomi@wasauksing.ca  
P: 807.464.2929

Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi  
Forest County Potawatomi  
Prairie Band of Potawatomi  
Bkejwanong Walpole Island First Nation

Citizen Potawatomi Nation  
Hannahville Indian Community  
Gun Lake Tribe  
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**July 30- August 4, 2019**

Online Gathering Registration is Open!  
<https://wasauksing.ca/2019-potawatomi-gathering-registration-form/>  
Pre-registration for the language & history conference, youth conference and gathering workshops is encouraged.

Language Conference July 30-July 31	Youth Conference August 1	Traditional PowWow Aug 3- Aug 4	Cultural Programming July 30-Aug 4
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+Miss Potawatomi  
+Ceremonies  
+Golf Tournament  
+Baseball Tournament  
and more!

**Gathering/ Powwow Location: Wasauksing First Nation**

**PRAIRIE BAND BINGO**

**PRIVATE BINGO SESSION**  
FOR PRAIRIE BAND POTAWATOMI NATION MEMBERS  
18 Years & Older

**MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2019**  
**DOORS OPEN 5 PM | SESSION STARTS 6 PM**

- 20 Regular Games - \$100 Prize per Game
- \$20 for Paper and \$30 for Electronic
- One Blackout - \$250 prize
  - Cost is \$2 for 4 Cards
- This session will **NOT** be open to the public
- Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Members must present their Tribal ID for entry & each member may also bring 1 guest.
- Please have your Prairie Band Casino & Resort player's card with you to receive points for your buy-in.

### Upcoming General Council Meetings

Saturday - 4.20.19

Saturday - 7.20.19

Saturday - 10.19.19

General Council Meetings are held at the Old Bingo Hall, 16277 Q Road, Mayetta, Kansas.

- Registration begins at 8 a.m.
- Light breakfast at 9 a.m.
- Meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.

PBPEN Tribal Members 18 years of age and older only.  
No one under the age of 18 is allowed in the meeting.

### Festival of Giving 2019 Year Long Donation Drive is underway!

The Social Services Department is accepting donations each month for the "Festival of Giving" baskets distributed to those in need during the holiday season.

Drop new, unwrapped items into any donation box located at:  
Boys & Girls Club  
Fire Keepers Elder Center  
Government Center - Upper Level  
Health Center  
Police Department  
Social Services

#### MARCH:

Paper products and hygiene items - toilet paper, napkins, sandwich bags, food storage containers, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, toothpaste, brushes, diapers, wipes, etc.

#### APRIL:

Laundry Items - laundry soap (no pods), fabric softener, bleach, etc.

#### MAY:

Toys for ages 0 - 12 or gift cards for older children.

**PRAIRIE BAND POTAWATOMI POWWOW**  
**MAY 31 TO JUNE 2, 2019**  
Host Drum - Northern Cree

Contact  
Behavioral Health  
directly at  
**785.966.8364**



# Royal Valley’s PBPN Cultural Extravaganza



Wakiyan Irving sports her new warm up, on the back is the PBP Nation’s seal.



Royal Valley Seniors Menon Irving, Kiipto Thomas, Pak Hale and Kobe Mills model the new warm ups showcasing the Potawatomi term for “Big Cat.”



Mason Thomas warms up for the game wearing his new gear.



Nahcs Wahwassuck and Komesh Spoonhunter wore ribbon shirts to school during the day, and some female athletes wore ribbon skirts.



Jacob “Tug” Wamego, Adrian “Gubba” Hale, Chago Hale, and Jason “Naseka” Hale render the flag song prior to the Varsity Girls game. Tamo Thomas, Adele “Quahmee” Wahwassuck, Panno Wahwassuck and Gishgo Hale provide back up vocals.



The Royal Valley Singers & Dancers line up on the sidelines, as they are called onto the court to dance.



The Royal Valley Singers & Dancers performed exhibition style dancing during half time of the Varsity Boys basketball game. Above are fancy shawl dancers Ki-We Miller, Panno Wahwassuck, Alyssa Thompson, Shawnot Evans and Katti Hale.



The Royal Valley Singers & Dancers performance had the crowds oohing and aahing at their talent. Above are fancy dancers Dasan Scholfield, Wyatt Boswell and Knowee Potts.