

Board has full plate with budgets and community events



**CATHERINE HOLLOWELL,
DIRECTOR, UNIT II**

The leaves are changing colors, cranberries are harvested and our cousin tribes are harvesting rice on the big waters. Here is how this time of year is explained by Mike Wiigins Jr., chairman of the Bad River Tribe of Lake Superior Indians in Wisconsin:

Mashkiziibii Shoreline Report — Anishinaabe has a net under water and it has many birds caught in it, above in the sky. Eagles and more eagles and seagulls and ravens are all watching for his arrival and success and sharing. A shallow glance revealed the birds are hungry. Deeper into the water I saw that the birds were there because Anishinaabe was doing what this place has always known for thousands of years. Sharing. It's an agreement on life and living that pre-dates treaties and it's signed in fins,

talons, bear paw, and hands. All under a Bad River watershed sky in a good place that has life springing up from air, land, water and fire. These are some of the things I saw. Humbly submitted September 8, 2014.

Please keep Mike and the people of the Bad River Tribe in your prayers as they battle to protect their homeland in the face of the proposed Gogebic Taconite Copper Mining Project. As chairman, Mike is asking the EPA to stop all mine permitting activity by invoking provisions under the Clean Water Act. In February, EPA officials invoked section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act, which has — at least for now — stopped what would have been one of the largest copper, silver and gold mines in the world near Bristol Bay in Alaska. We are asking the EPA to invoke the same 404(c) provisions in order to protect the Bad River Tribe on the Lake Superior watershed.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Congratulations to all our students who were awarded scholarships this year. The scholarship awards would not be possible without the hard work of organizations such as the Sault Tribe Golf Scholarship Fundraiser Committee, our generous vendors, and other contributors who give so generously. The Sault Tribe Education Department was able to offer 43 scholarships. Director Causley and I are proud to announce the Nokomis Scholarship-Mary

Sabina Osagwin and Christine Muscoe Anderson was awarded to Derek P. Griffin, a sophomore at Northern Michigan University, majoring in environmental science. Congratulations, Derek!

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Noah Leask, owner of ISHPI Information Technology Inc. This is the second year that Noah has come forward with a special donation making it possible to award 11 additional scholarship awards. O chi miigwech, Noah, for your generosity and leadership.

Our scholarship program will be offered again next year. The application packet, scholarship essay topic, and a list of scholarships will be available on April 1. For more information, please feel free to contact Brandi MacArthur, administrative assistant, Sault Tribe Higher Education, at bmacArthur@saulttribe.net or via telephone at (906) 635-6050, ext. 26312.

ANNUAL BUDGETS

This is a difficult process as “need” always outstrips resources and hard choices have to be made. We find ourselves having to trim multi-million dollar budgets due to shrinking federal funds as well as declining tribal support dollars that are derived from our gaming and enterprise operations. Every government entity faces this problem — from local school boards, townships, counties, states and federal government. We are no differ-

ent. Unlike other governments, however, we do not raise taxes, nor can we run deficits. At the end of the day, we set a balanced budget that reflects actual available revenues. At least this year there is more certainty because the prospect of sequestration, or federal government ‘shut down,’ has not materialized. And, so far at least, we have approached the task without politicizing the effort. I said it last year and I will say it again this year: we need a standing budget committee backed by tribal ordinance, so that we can begin to tackle the 2016 budgets now. That is the best way to prioritize ‘needs to resources’ and shape the direction of our tribe’s long term direction. I urge the Chairman and Board to support that initiative. Declining revenue from Northern Kewadin really hurts the equation. I mentioned last month that fundamental change needs to occur at Kewadin Casinos. That change is now underway.

WAYQUAYOC CEMETERY

Over the last few months, community meetings were held to gather input and insight on how best to care for and be good stewards of the 40-acre property on St. Martin’s Bay that includes the Indian Cemetery known as Wequayoc. Sessions were held with all five elders subcommittees as well as evening sessions for the general membership. In total, around 600 members

participated. This is very encouraging, as we want the vision and future use of the property to be community driven. The property and burial ground represents a portion of the historical settlement of the Pine River Band as noted on the last Indian census of 1870. Many will know this as Agnes Moses’ land and some may recall how she and her daughter, Ann, cared for the property with much love for our ancestral families who resided there. The committee will be reporting with recommendations soon. If you have any information you would like to share or if you would like to be involved in the next phase of property utilization, please contact Alan Barr at (734) 904-3210.

The powwow season is winding down. The Hessel and Newberry powwows were beautiful events in our community. It’s so good to see our people come together for drumming, dancing, healing and honor songs. Our powwows would not be possible without the volunteer support of the community. Miigwech to everyone who gives so freely of their time and labor.

Please contact me anytime with your questions and concerns.

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