

We are seeing the fruits of tribal staff's labor



**CATHY ABRAMSON,
DIRECTOR, UNIT I**

I'm obviously behind in my unit reporting. In August, Unit I board members had our annual steak dinner/luncheon for our elders. This year, Theron King donated lake trout, which was a real treat. I would like to thank Cheri Goetz and her staff for all the extra work they do for this special luncheon! Some of us board members used to help a lot with the cooking. I do think this is a polite way of our elders letting us know they would rather have us use our "other skills" and leave the cooking to the experts.

By the way, congratulations Tony and Cheri Goetz on their very recent brand new beautiful baby girl! After all is said and done, you have both been truly blessed!

I am very proud our tribe was host to the Centers for

Disease Control (CDC) and had representation during this weeklong event. We were able to showcase our areas of Munising (farmers market), Manistique (ceremony: traditional feast and youth drum), St. Ignace (Cherokee stickball) and tours of our health facilities with a trip to Mackinac Island. Thank you to Connie Hill Watson and Colleen Commons for all the hard work they did with our program. Unfortunately, this was a grant that is no longer going to be funded to any tribe through CDC. Even though many feel it was highly successful, CDC included Traditional Foods in another grant and tribes applied for those dollars.

Another honor we received is our Bemidji Area was chosen to host the CDC/ATSDR Tribal Advisory Committee Meeting and 11th biannual tribal consultation session. I am our Bemidji Area representative for the Tribal Advisory Committee. Our meeting was held at the Grand Traverse Hotel in Acme, Mich., in August. Principal Deputy Director Ileana Arias, Ph.D. (second in command to Dr. Thomas Frieden) and Dr. Judith Monroe, deputy director of the Office for State, Tribal Local and Territorial Support, spent the whole entire time with us. While we were there, the National Indian Health Board put on a free tribal public health law training. We also coordinated our

Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes along with this meeting. Dr. Roubideaux, director of Indian Health Services, also conducted a tribal consultation session on our last day there. Valuable input was shared with CDC and IHS.

GREAT NEWS, THOUGH! Just recently, our tribe received word that we were awarded a grant of \$325,000 a year for five years to implement interventions and policies, systems and environmental changes, increasing the availability and use of traditional and other health foods, opportunities for physical activity and eliminate exposure to second hand smoke to prevent heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes in all seven-counties of our service area. Again, great work Connie and Colleen! Congratulations on a job well done!

MORE GREAT NEWS! Our tribe was also awarded \$810,000 a year for three years to create and promote environments that provide commercial tobacco free living, active living, healthy eating, and health and safe physical environments for all tribal and community members who live in Chippewa, Mackinac, Luce, Alger, Schoolcraft, Marquette and Escanaba counties.

Our staff works hard and we are seeing the fruits of their labor. I'm proud of our health program. It is because of the dedication and commitment to our people

that we can all take pride in these accomplishments.

In September, I attended the Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee and met our new Health and Human Services Secretary, Sylvia Mathews Burwell. Some of the issues we discussed with her were: government-to-government

relationship, implementation of Affordable Care Act, Indian Child Welfare Act Implementation, P.L. 102-477 Implementation and IHS advance appropriations.

I have to get this in by noon so I will sign off for now! Take care! To contact me, please call my cell at (906) 322-3823 or e-mail me at cabramson@saulttribe.net.