



Bois Forte NEWS

VOL. 47 NUMBER 5

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM DEADLINE IS MAY 5TH!

The Bois Forte Summer Youth applications for Nett Lake and Vermilion must be filled out by the end of the day on May 5th.

The program is available to band members ages 14 to 21 who live on the reservation and meet the criteria.

If you are interested in applying or would like more information about the program, stop by the Adult Education Office or the Vermilion Community Center.

Please call the Bois Forte 477 Program Office at 218-757-3261 for more information!

Comment period extended on leasing policy

TOWER— Even though a healthy discussion took place regarding Bois Forte's Land Leasing Policy, tribal leaders agreed to extend the comment period until June.

"It will give us time to do our due diligence," said Bois Forte Tribal Chair Cathy Chavers after getting support from her fellow council members. "We heard a lot of good questions, and it is up to us as tribal leaders to make sure our band members get their questions answered."

The community meeting, which took place in the Birch room at Fortune Bay in mid-April, was sparsely attended as only 25 or so showed up. However, that didn't mean the meeting was not informative as several band members had inquiries that were met with "That's a good question," by either DNR Manager Chris Holm, who ran the meeting, or Jeff Holth, who is one of Bois Forte's tribal attorneys.

"I think the meeting was informational, thought-provoking, and I felt heard," said Deanna Drift after the meeting. "I have some recommendations in some of the language that I hope is incorporated into the policy. My recommendations protect band member interests."

The gist of the meeting was for band members to let their leaders know what they think of a land leasing policy draft, mainly regarding residential and recreational leases.

The original comment period was to lapse on April 17, but band members will have nearly two more months to weigh-in. The official day in June has not been set yet.

"This is not final—this is just a start," said Holth to those gathered. "The whole point of this was to get community feedback, and these comments tonight have been super helpful."

Both Holm and Holth agreed that the first draft of the leasing policy was put together with the help of previous wording on policies pertaining to leases.

"We were pulling together old policies, looking at what had been in place and seeing where gaps can be filled," said Holth, who added that the comments heard at the meeting will be incorporated into comments already received. "... The council will look at all of those and decide how to proceed from there."

While there will be a fair amount of wording left in the leasing policy draft, there were some gray areas brought up by band members during the meeting. Among those that generated some discussion was the "Successor of Interest Clause," which relates to what happens to a lease should a band member pass away and their spouse is not Native.

"The clause previously approved by the Tribal Council allows a surviving spouse or domestic partner of a Band



QUESTIONS ABOUT LEASING— Bois Forte's Chris Holm, center, patiently answers questions after a Community Meeting was held at Fortune Bay Resort Casino regarding the current Bois Forte Land Leasing Policy. Pictured with Holm to the left is John Gudahl and Rocky King, far right, who was looking over his list of questions he wanted answered.

member lessee to reside on the leased premises for the remainder of his or her life, or the remainder of the lease term, whichever is shorter, as long as the person was residing with the Band member lessee at the time of his or her death," said Holth. "One thing to note is that Band members with older leases must request that this clause be added to their lease through a lease modification."

Holth said the amendment to the lease must be approved at the leasing office, and then the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) must approve it as well.

Some attendees also wanted to make sure a certain threshold of leased land does not go to non-Natives as they might not know how Natives

honor and respect the land as it pertains to not disturbing artifacts that may be on the land.

There were some questions about why the BIA is involved with the Bois Forte Land Leasing Policy, and Holth explained that BIA leasing regulations apply to on-Reservation trust lands. Even so, Holth explained that Bois Forte has a lot of discretion about the policies it puts into place. That includes setting lease rates, priority lists, and zoning of residential, recreational, business, and agriculture leases.

"BIA defers to the tribe of how it wants to come up with rules of who gets approved and who doesn't get approved," said Holth.

See policy page 3

Chairwoman Cathy Chavers



Boozhoo:

Spring is here; however, old man winter is still trying to stay with the snowstorms that keep happening, but we all know that at some point, it will stop.

I had the opportunity to attend Governor Walz's State of the State address along with President Johnny Johnson from Prairie Island. The tribes in Minnesota are adamantly and consistently making our voices heard at the state level and as well at the feder-

al level. An example of that is the passage of the new law strengthening the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA) in the event the Supreme Court does not rule in Indian Child Welfare Act's (ICWA) favor when they make their determination. The vote at the state legislature had a unanimous decision in the House and the Senate with only one disapproval. This will ensure in Minnesota that the intent of ICWA will be reinforced in state statutes no matter what.

Before the Sah Gii Bah Gah powwow, we have a tentative date set for the dedication of our Community Room at the Tribal Government Building in Nett Lake for the late Gene Goodsky, our former spiritual advisor. The tentative date is Friday, June 2. We are in the planning stages and will get the details to everyone once they are finalized.

The Tribal Council has decided not to garnish per capita checks this year. The economy and high costs are still there, causing hardship for everyone.

The Council will be working with

our programs and accounting department to begin revising and revisiting payback agreements for those band members who owe the government for rent, water and sewer, tribal court fines, etc.

Band members are estimated to owe the government over one million dollars in revenue that has not been collected for many years. Band members need to realize that by not paying, our programs must be supplemented by the Tribal Council to ensure that our programs still provide the necessary services. This has been going on for many, many years. We need to look

at follow-through and enforcement moving forward to resolve this issue. We really cannot continue this way if we want to get new housing and other projects that will be there for our next seven generations.

Have a safe month ahead and don't forget that May is Mental Health Month. If you know of someone who is struggling, reach out to them and let them know you are there for them and that help is available!

Miigwech

Important updates from TERO Officer Warren C. Villebrun



ed application.

We have a few projects coming up in the next three months if the funding is approved and all the contracts are awarded, so keep in touch with me and make sure I have the best contact information for you.

Volunteers needed!

TERO is looking for four new volunteers to sign up for the TERO Commission. This is a four-person commission and includes two alternates, and the Tribal Council must approve all members.

I will put on a training for all the new members that volunteer and are accepted by the Council.

We plan on meeting quarterly at Fortune Bay to update on projects started and future ones to ensure contractors are abiding by the TERO laws and regulations.

Once this process is complete, I will set a date for the training at Fortune Bay Resort Casino.

Thank you for your consideration.

Warren C. Villebrun

TERO Officer,

Bois Forte Tribal Council

5344 Lakeshore Dr,

Nett Lake, MN 55772

(218)757-3261 Ext. 1196

Cell: (218)404-8481

I want to remind everyone that Tribal Employment Rights Organization (TERO) is still open for Bois Forte Band members, their children, and spouses so they can apply and possibly go to work on one of the upcoming construction projects.

I will be out of my office for surgery for the next four to possibly six weeks, but I will leave applications for anyone that would like to sign up for TERO at the front desk of the Reservation Tribal Council building or by contacting Vonda Carr, the 477 Program Director.

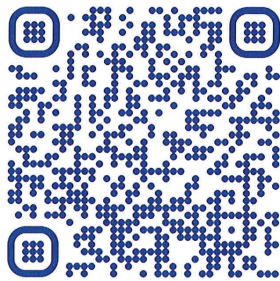
She will have copies of the application as well. Of course, if you already have an application with TERO and it has been more than four years since you filled it out, you should fill out an updat-

Bois Forte Behavioral Health has a provider in the following schools once a week: Nett Lake, North Woods, Rock Ridge High School!

And Can accommodate zoom appointments at all RRPS and MIB!

New and current clients are welcome.

The intake form on the QR code needs to be submitted and after it is submitted, Erin will call you to set it up and answer any questions.



Don't have a smart phone to access the QR code? Type in this link into your web browser:

<https://portal.laserfiche.com/u7744/forms/bfbhomepage>

Not tech savvy? Stop on by our office to fill out a paper copy: Nett Lake Human Services Building, upper entrance behind the gas station, 13071 Nett Lake Road, Suite B, Nett Lake, MN 55772 or ask for an intake form at the Vermilion Clinic, 1613 Farm Road, South, Tower, MN, 55790.

Call Erin Danielson at 218-757-3295 with any questions

Policy from page 1

As it stands now, residential leases run for 25 years and can be renewed for another 25 years, while recreational leases run for 10 years and can be renewed to a maximum of 50 years. However, one lady said she has a document from 1976 indicating her lease is for 100 years.

"And people are calling me a downright liar," said the woman.

During his review of the proposed policy, Holm highlighted some critical language, including the fact that once the BIA signs off a lease, the leaseholder has two years to build or put up a structure on the land.

Conversely, those who get a recreational lease do not have to have a permanent structure, but it was noted that the lease could not have more than one structure (i.e., trailer) or RV on the site and that the RV must have current licensing in place.

One attendee, Larry "T-John" Connor, was relieved that his "two-year build" clause has not officially started because he has not received his paperwork back from the BIA, which essentially allowed him a one-year reprieve.

"Woo— woo," said Connor after Holm explained the process. "Man, that's a lot of stress relief for me."

Connor was also pleased to learn that as long as he is making progress on his lot, Holm said he probably wouldn't be penalized.

"Now, if the lot sat vacant for two years and nothing was done, then there might be something done," said Holm.

If Connor had his way, he would prefer to move into an elder apartment complex on

Lake Vermilion. However, that is currently not an option.

"At my age, to spend \$250,000 to build a house doesn't make sense, but I want to have my coffee and look at the lake," he said. "So, I might as well spend my \$250,000 instead of giving it to my kids, and then they can have the house and have their coffee when I'm gone."

Others, like Millie Holmes, had questions about how her family could ensure their father's wishes for what happens to the family home were honored. In this case, Holmes stated that her father, who has since passed, and the family agreed to give the house to his son and their brother, Charlie Holmes.

Holth encouraged Millie Holmes to bring the will to the tribal court to request a judgment regarding the ownership of the home. Once the tribal court clarifies ownership through a judgment, the Tribal Council can issue a certificate of title for the home.

"This is just an example," said Holth. "I'm happy to point you in the right direction because I know things can get complicated and never resolved."

Holth said he understands that drafting and subsequently adopting a new Bois Forte Lease Policy won't be easy.

"There are a lot of questions, but answers can get complicated and will be thoroughly thought out before incorporating this into the new leasing policy," said Holth.

One matter that surfaced during the meeting had to be the lack of communication from Bois Forte's Leasing Department, as band member

Rocky King stated his questions have gone unanswered since 2019. He approached Holm after the meeting with his list of questions, and he is hopeful they will finally get answered. Those questions included getting a copy of his renewed lease, what happens to the lease when he dies, will his wife have to pay taxes on it, getting water permanently hooked up, right of way, tree removal, and others.

Former Bois Forte Tribal Chairman Gary Donald also had questions about what happens to the lease when the band member dies and if their spouse can stay there.

"What happens if a band member, says, 'Hey, I want that lease' and then kicks that lady and kid right off the reservation? Is something in there to protect them?" said Donald.

He also rattled off questions concerning the basis of the rough draft and asked if there was any input gathered

from older, traditional Indian people to get feedback from them.

"Did you ask them what they think of the leasing program? How it started, when it started, and why it started?" he asked. "Was anybody like them sitting at the table putting this draft together? Because there are a lot of things in there we are discussing that we don't agree with," said Donald.

Donald, who is 90, said he can remember living at Pelican Lake as a four or five-year-old and his family just lived in the woods.

"And then if we wanted to live in another part of the woods, we moved there—no one kicked us off—hell, we didn't have a lease," said Donald. "And today, we're talking, 'Where's your lease?' 'What's happening with the leasing program—who gets a lease, when they get the lease, and what happens if you break the lease?'"

Holm told Donald he was glad those questions were brought up as it gave him a better understanding of what his office should be doing moving forward.

"Keep in mind this policy is just basically a first draft," said Holm, who did a fine job juggling his duties of running a PowerPoint presentation and circulating in the room to respond to questions. "It's bits and pieces of old policies and ordinances that we found and put together. It's not the final, end result. It will need to be developed, and, going forward, we will have Elder input from you and others in the community. I think it is a great idea to have you and others involved."

If you would like to review the draft, please visit the Bois Forte website, click on news, and then send any comments to the Executive Assistant via email at executiveassistant@boisforte-nsn.gov



Bois Forte Tribal Government
5344 Lakeshore Drive
Nett Lake, MN 55772
(218)-757-3261, Ext. 1162



Sah Gi Bah Gah Pow Wow

JUNE 2, 3, & 4, 2023

Nett Lake, MN

Bois Forte Tribal Enrollment will be available at the Sah-Gi-Bah-Gah Pow-Wow to issue Bois Forte Tribal Identification Cards on Saturday, June 3, 2023, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED

PLEASE BRING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TO RECEIVE A TRIBAL ID:

- **Original Certified Birth Certificate (no photocopies)**
 - **State Issued Driver's License**
 - **State Issued Identification Card**
 - **Valid Passport**

For replacement Tribal ID Cards or for any changes made before the expiration date, there will be a \$12.00 fee (cash or check).

Any questions, please contact Kathie Holman, Tribal Enrollment Coordinator at (218) 757-3261, ext. 1162 or kathie.holman@boisforte-nsn.gov

Visit Bois Forte Band of Chippewa on these social media outlets.



www.boisforte.com

Doing her best to fill positions!



GREAT WORK!— HR Director Miranda Lilya was doing her best to help fill positions at the Bois Forte Tribal Government by working a booth at the Fortune Bay Resort Casino Job Fair Saturday, April 22nd. If you are looking for a job at either Bois Forte or Fortune Bay, check out their respective websites to start your new career!

PAID INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY

June 2023

The Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL) in partnership with the (Bois Forte 477 Program) is offering **5 paid internship positions this June.**

Selected individuals will have a strong interest in electronics and renewable energy. We hope to help guide you upon a rewarding career path. This internship could lead to employment, or further education at White Earth Tribal College's fully accredited Solar Technician program.

There are many details, but here are the important ones!

- You will receive a Registered Unlicensed Individual (RUI) certification required by the Department of Industry to be on a solar job site.
- You will be paid \$15 per hours for 45 hours total (15 hours of in-class electronics and solar education + 30 hours of on-site training).
- Each intern will receive a **free** basic electronics kit (a \$400 value).

Contact Vonda Carr, 218-757-3261 ext. 1400 if interested.



Boyer-Knaak graduates with honors from Augsburg College

MINNEAPOLIS—Joanna "Jojo" Boyer-Knaak of Eagan, Minnesota, formerly of Lake Vermilion near Tower, is a 2022-2023 graduate from Augsburg University.

She maintained a stellar GPA during her studies and graduated with highest honors, Summa Cum Laude in Business Administration and American Indian Studies.

Jojo is currently working at the only national Native American Help-line and is contemplating the pursuit of her Masters next fall.

She is the daughter of Leigh Donald of Lake Vermilion and Bart Boyer of Bemidji. Her proud grandparents are (late) Joanne Donald and Gary W. Donald of Lake Vermilion.

Her family is so proud of her and will be hosting a celebration of her achievements this Summer at her grandparents home on Lake Vermilion.



CONGRATULATIONS!— Joanna "Jojo" Boyer-Knaak is all smiles after receiving her degree from Augsburg University in Minneapolis.

LAKE VERMILION TRADITIONAL POW WOW

JUNE 23, 24 & 25

Lake Vermilion Pow Wow Grounds
Lake Vermilion Reservation - Tower MN

Co-Hosts: Lake Vermilion Singers & Night Sky Singers

Spiritual Advisor: Darrel Kingbird

MC: Terry Goodsky

Arena Director: Corey Goodbird

FRIDAY: Warm ups

SATURDAY: Grand Entries 1pm & 7pm

SUNDAY: Grand Entry 1pm

TWO STEP CONTEST - SATURDAY EVENING

Win \$500 + a big trophy & belt

MUSICAL CHAIRS CONTEST - ADULT & YOUTH DIVISIONS

HEADS OR TAILS CONTEST - ALL WEEKEND LONG

CAMPING AVAILABLE

Contact: Muriel 218-750-7772 or murieldeegan@yahoo.com

Tracey 218-780-1478

We are looking for security personnel. Call Tracey for more details: 218-780-1478

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Submitted by Taylor Harling of the Jason Foundation

Since 1949, Mental Health America and its affiliates across the country have led the observance of May as Mental Health Awareness Month by reaching millions of people through the media, local events, and screenings. It raises awareness of trauma and the impact it can have on the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of children, families, and communities. Cities and businesses across the country hold various events to support mental health and

open the lines of communication. Many websites provide ideas for businesses to support their employees during the month of May and beyond.

According to the CDC, suicide rates in our country increased by 36% between 2000-2021. Suicide was responsible for 48,183 deaths in 2021 alone, which is about one death every 11 minutes. We know that many mental health disorders-including depression, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, and PTSD-come with a heightened risk of suicidal

thoughts or attempts. While seeking help for suicidal thoughts or behaviors is critical regardless of the cause, securing a specific diagnosis may help the individual receive treatment-especially ongoing treatment -that is best suited to their mental health needs.

Mental Health America says that up to 60% of people who die by suicide have major depression, and research suggests that the majority of suicides are related to a psychiatric condition. If you or someone you know is de-

pressed, there are effective treatments available. Talking to your doctor is a good first step, and you can also visit the National Alliance on Mental Health Illness to learn more about support groups that you might find helpful.

The Jason Foundation is another valuable resource. JFI is dedicated to the prevention

of the “Silent Epidemic” of suicide through educational and awareness programs. On the website, you will learn about warning signs and risk factors associated with people who may be struggling with mental health issues and suicidal ideation.

Scholarships available for Hands-n Filmmaking Experience!

CHISHOLM— Scholarships are available to those who want to participate in the Upper Midwest Film Organization’s Hands-On Filmmaking Experience May 19-21.

No experience is necessary, but space is limited, so email exec@uppermidwestfilmtv.org for complete details!

BOIS FORTE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PRESENTS:



May is here and as you know is **Mental Health Awareness Month**. We look forward to raising awareness around Mental Health. This past year was challenging for us all. It is our hope that we continue to work together to break the stigma associated with Mental Health and learn ways to communicate and talk about Mental Health without shame or embarrassment.

We have some fun activities planned for us to help raise awareness around Mental Health:

1. Wear Green on Wednesdays. Post on social media to help raise awareness and use hashtag **#BFRTGStopsTheStigma**
2. Monday, May 8th, 2023 from 1:00-4:00 we will have a presentation on Wisdom of Trauma at the Nett Lake Government Center!
3. Anyone who makes an appointment with us in May and attends their appointment without canceling or no-showing will be placed into a drawing for a traditional wellness basket.

May 8th – 1:00-4:00
Wisdom of Trauma
Presentation

Wednesdays
Mental Health
Wear Green

Mental Health First
Aid Training for
BFRTG staff and
upcoming
community
trainings

AREA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS RESOURCES

Bois Forte Behavioral Health
M-F 8:00am-4:30pm 218-757-3295

RMHC 24-hour crisis number:
1-800-450-2273

RMHC Wellstone Center-Virginia
218-471-4327

RMHC Mobile Crisis Program:
218-288-2100

Birch Tree Center-Duluth
218-723-0099 or 218-263-1800

Crisis Lines—
Text-based help with relationship issues, general mental health and suicidal thoughts.

TEXT “MN” to 741741

- Suicide Prevention Hotline – 1-800-273-8255
- The Trevor Project (LGBTQ Crisis and Suicide Hotline) – 866-488-7386
- Veterans Crisis Line – 1-800-273-8255
- Teen Crisis Line – 310-855-4673

Arrowhead Regional Crisis Line- Duluth Area
1.844.772.4724

Miller Dwan Duluth Crisis Line - 218-723-0099

Fairview Range- Hibbing Behavioral Health
218-362-6984



MN Mental Health Warmline
Toll free 855-WARMLINE (651-288-0400)
or TEXT “support” to 85511
Open 7 days a week 9am to 9pm

Wellness in the Woods WARMLINE
Peer Support - Connect with Peers Support Specialists
Call or Text 844-739-0369 from 5pm-9am

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)
Resources, support groups and advocacy
Namidulutharea.com

Let’s Talk, Arrowhead Behavioral Health Initiative
24 hours mental health resources
Letstalkmn.com

Fast-Tracker
Link to Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Resources Online
www.Fast-TrackerMN.org

Northland Children’s Mental Health Collaborative
Youth mental health resources for children and families
Northlandchildrensmentalhealth.org

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline-- Dial 9-8-8

Bois Forte Behavioral Health: 218-757-3295 • M-F: 8:00-4:30 PM
“You don't have to be crazy to give us a call”

Or call 9-1-1

Catching up with Trevor Rintala at The Wilderness at Fortune Bay

Let's start by telling our readers a little bit about your background. Where were you born, where did you grow up, schooling, family, etc?

I was born and raised right in Cook, MN. I lived there until I was 17 and moved when I graduated. I spent the next few years moving around; I've lived in New Jersey, California, Texas, Missouri, Florida, Hawaii, and, obviously, Minnesota.

What do you like to do in your free time when you aren't working?

In my younger life, I enjoyed snowboarding and kiteboarding, then when I moved back, I tried kite snowboarding on the ice, and it didn't end well... Now I'm into gaming and spending time

with my friends and family.

You used to work at The Wilderness under the guidance of Vince Dodge. What was that experience like, and how much influence did Vince have on your career?

Vince was an endless fountain of knowledge and experience. I spent 15 years learning and working with Vince, and I owe my success to him. In college, they give you the knowledge you need to get into this industry, but Vince's years of experience and guidance were where I learned "why" we do what we do. He taught me that most people can solve problems, but the best superintendents predict and prevent them.

You then decided to leave The Wil-



GOOD TO BE BACK!— Trevor Rintala is the new superintendent at The Wilderness at Fortune Bay. He previously worked at the award-winning course and is super excited to be back. Best of luck, Trevor!

derness to pursue a new career; how did that career move, and what eventually drew you back to The Wilderness at Fortune Bay?

I worked as a carpenter for around three or four years during my leave of absence; I made a lot of new friends and had a blast building all over Minnesota. But it wasn't until I was lead landscaper on a few projects that those jobs made me realize just how much I missed working with turf. I was in between projects at the time when I was asked if there was ever a chance I'd return to the Wilderness to finish what I had started. I decided that it was the best thing to do not only for myself, the staff, and the course but for the tribe as well. I know our customers deserve the best playing conditions, and I'm going to give it to them.

2022 was not a good year for course conditions at The Wilderness. What have you and your team been doing to ensure those conditions improve for the 2023 season?

I don't know how far into detail you want me to get, but we have an invasive weed on our greens called Poa Annua which isn't the hardiest breed of grass when it comes to cold weather.

Poa will check out after 30-45 days under ice, whereas bentgrass can survive nearly triple that time and is a more predictable plant to maintain. Our plan is to over-seed with a newer variety of bentgrass whose dense growing habit will crowd out the poa, all while treating chemically to give it a growth advantage. The greens will be better suited to overwinter once the population of poa subsides; while this may take a few years, the long-term benefits will be worth it. Most of the ice damage we've fallen victim to over the past few seasons can be attributed to poa decline and ice damage. While there's little we can do about winter, having strong turf going into the end of the season will help. We have plans to adjust the heights of the cut, which will help speed up play and grow back the 20,000 square feet of sod nurseries that have been depleted over the last three years, just to name a few things. We have a lot to catch up on, but our goal is to get back to focusing on the details which have slipped through the cracks.

The restaurant also remained closed throughout the year, but it sounds like with the return of

See Rintala page 8



Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP)
Present this card every time you go for medical care.

Member Number **12345678**
Member Name **JANE A DOE**
Birth Date **11/15/2005**
Gender **FEMALE**
Rx BIN **610459**

More information on back of card.

Medical Assistance, MinnesotaCare and Minnesota Family Planning Program Notice

During the COVID-19 emergency, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) put special rules in place to help you keep your health care coverage. Due to a new federal law, we must now resume renewals. As of May 11, 2023, the Covid-19 Pandemic Health Emergency will end.

Regular Medical Assistance, MinnesotaCare and Minnesota Family Planning Program rules will now apply.

Here is what you need to do:

- Report changes to your contact information
 - Has your address, phone number or email address changed recently? If so, please report these to your county or tribal agency to make sure we can reach you.
- Watch for your renewal
 - We must review your eligibility to see if you still qualify for coverage.
- Save paper proofs
 - We will need proof of income for you and your family members. Please save current paystubs, income tax returns and other documents that show your income to send in with your renewal form.

The MN Dept of Human Services or St. Louis County PHHS will mail a renewal form to you. If you do not get this within the next 6-8 weeks, contact your county or tribal agency. Without your completed renewal form, your Medical Assistance, MNCare or MFP coverage will not continue.

Questions? For more information, go online to <https://mn.gov/dhs/renewmycoverage>.

If you have questions about this notice or your case, please contact Bois Forte's Patient Benefits Case Managers:

Kristal Strong at the Vermilion Clinic @ 218-753-2182 or
Corey Strong at the Nett Lake Clinic @218-757-3650.

The 477 Program has been busy!



*Guest column by Vonda Carr,
477 Director*

Since October of 2022, Bois Forte's new 477 Program has been helping band members with construction fairs, serve safe classes, working toward completion of General Educa-

tion classes, license reinstatement, workforce needs such as boots, clothing and tools, vehicle repairs, resumes, post-secondary scholarships, and career fair and more. We've built individualized, personal goals and are excited to help band members work toward meeting them!

Besides the continued work of the things listed above, we are looking forward to more exciting things coming to our communities in the next few months from the 477 Program.

I encourage you to watch for advertisement of an up-coming college fair that will be here at Bois Forte. The 477 Program is collaborating with MN North Colleges.

Several positions will be offered by the Tribal Government and the departments within. These positions are available through a recent grant acquired by Doris Isham. The idea is to hire individuals and pay for their train-

ing and or certificates for programs including but not limited to Maintenance, Housing, Medical, Accounting, IT, Early Childhood, Public Works, Courts, and Human Resources. Look for the postings and apply!!

Summer Youth applications are out for youth ages 14-18 years, meeting the eligibility criteria and living on the reservation that are interested in learning from our different Tribal Government Programs. Please call Leanne Hoffman at 218-757-3261 ext. 1401 if you're youth is interested.

The 477 Program is working with Rural Renewable Energy Alliance

(RREAL) to bring a solar energy internship to Bois Forte in June. The program is looking for five participants that will receive pay to attend 45 hours of classroom and on-site training with the potential of employment after completion. Please contact Vonda Carr or Warren Villebrun at 218-757-3261 if you're interested.

If you have workforce, training, or education needs, call the 477 Program at 218-757-3261 - we're here to help. We're always looking for new opportunities to share with our band members, so keep an eye out for information from 477!

BOIS FORTE 477 PROGRAM

Helping you with Education, Workforce, and Training Needs

Contact Vonda Carr 218-757-3261 Ext. 1400

vrcarr@boisforte-nsn.gov

or

Leanne Hoffman 218-757-3261 Ext. 1401

lhoffman@boisforte-nsn.gov



**GIVE US A CALL
218-757-3261**



- Tuition Assistance/Scholarships
- Resumes
- Utility Assistance
- School Supplies
- GED Classes
- Vocational Educational Classes
- Work Clothes/Boots
- Skill Enhancement
- Tools
- Child Care
- Rental Assistance
- General Work Skills
- Auto Repairs
- Financial Education
- Youth Mentoring

BOIS FORTE BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH INTAKE PACKETS

Access online
today

Open up
smartphone
camera and scan
the QR code!



Or click link
below!

[HTTPS://PORTAL.LASERFICHE.COM
/U7744/FORMS/BFBHHOMPAGE](https://portal.laserfiche.com/u7744/forms/bfbhhompage)

QUESTIONS?

CALL 218-404-3059

ERIN.DANIELSON@BOISFORTE-NSN.GOV

Obituary



DEVIN MITCHELL VILLEBRUN SR., age 30, of the Bear Clan and of Cass Lake, MN, unexpectedly journeyed to the spirit world on April 9, 2023, at IHS in Cass Lake. Devin was born on June 7, 1992, in Bemidji, MN the son of Donald Villebrun Sr., and Patricia Wilson.

Devin graduated from Orr High School in 2011 and attended Leech Lake Tribal College for a while. He worked for Cedar Lakes, Teals, and Fortune Bay before the job he was most proud of, being a stay-at-home dad. He loved spending time with his children and was always smiling. Devin enjoyed playing basketball and teaching Anna how to play, playing video games, VR games, and watching sports on TV. He was like his mom, talked to everyone, visited with his buddies and family. Devin loved music, snacking, fishing, and jumping off Mission Bridge. He was always ready to listen and offer his guidance. He had the utmost respect for his elders and his family. Although he didn't have wheels, he always got where he was going. Devin always said, "I love you" and will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Devin is survived by his mom, Patricia Wilson; dad, Donald (Tina) Villebrun Sr.; sons, Aiden Bobblink, Devin Villebrun, Jr.; daughters, Annaleigh Villebrun, Alani Villebrun; grandmother, Linda Wilson, grandparents, Elaine and Frank Villebrun, Sr.; brothers, Donovan (Jen) Villebrun, Matthew (Leann) Villebrun, Nathan Villebrun, Freeman Rock II, Gabriel Rock, Donald Villebrun

Jr., Marshall (Matiya) Villebrun, Alex Kingbird, Devin Kingbird, Aiden Kingbird; sisters, Linzie Villebrun, Donelle Villebrun, Alexis Villebrun, Tiandra (Jimmy) Geyschick, Tehya (Saul) Geyschick, Kylie (Chad) Lindgren, Jamie (Jordan) Baird; uncles, Timmy Jordan, James (Ashley) Brown Sr., Joel Ortley, Frank Villebrun Jr., Joe (Connie) Wilson Sr.; aunts, Eva (Bryan) Wilson, Sharon (Terry) Johnson, Melissa (Tim) Wilson, Lynette (Zac) Villebrun, Leighann Villebrun, Rhonda Burcher, Michelle Gutierrez, Lori Littlewolf; Goddaughter, Casidee Pacheco; nieces, Lilith, Ella, Kyloni, Kal'leigh; nephew, Landon; special friend, Jerrica Hardy-Morris; numerous other relatives, and many friends.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Gary and Shirley Wilson, Frank and Viola Villebrun; uncles, Brian Wilson, Sonny, Booty, Maynard, Sheldon, Bob, Skimmer, Kippy; aunts, Joanne Ortley, Mona Villebrun; stepdad, Kevin Kingbird; niece, Vina Rose Brown; nephew, Mason Budreau; cousin, Jolene Wilson; and special brother, Jordan Smith.

A two-night wake for Devin began Thursday, April 13th, 2023, at Mission Community Center in Mission, MN and continued until his service Saturday, April 15, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

Father Bill Butcher and Lenny Fine-day officiated. Devin's pallbearers were Donovan Villebrun, Matthew Villebrun, Marshall Villebrun, Nick Villebrun, Little Don Villebrun Jr., Javan Villebrun, Derrick "Tiny" Morrison, Isaiah Smith, Antonio Ducheneaux, and Jared Allen. Honorary Pallbearers were Jim Brown Sr., James Brown Jr., Jordan Thompson, Tristan Villebrun, Gage Headbird, Joel Ortley, Joe Wilson Sr., Jaycen Goggleye, Cody White, Kent Villebrun, Quinton Howard, Cedric Howard, and Randy Pacheco. Interment was in the Prince of Peace Cemetery, Cass Lake, MN.

Devin's care has been entrusted to Northern Peace Funeral Home of Walker, MN. Online condolences for the family may be left at www.northern-peace.com

Rintala from page 6

Joe Wisocki, it will be open for 2023. How important was that to make sure it was open, and how can it help The Wilderness be a "bucket list" course once again?

Joe is amazing! He knows exactly what it takes to run the course, and I couldn't be happier to have him back. As I said before, customer happiness is key, and having the complete package to offer our guests is what ensures loyal customers in the future. From the first phone call they make to set up a tee time to the moment they leave the course, we want them happy, and nobody knows that better than Joe.

What are some of the things you most enjoy about your job?

Teaching! Hands down, it's teaching what we do to coworkers, employees, customers, and guests. Seeing a crew member start from scratch and develop into a seasoned veteran by the year's end is one of the most rewarding feelings. You always hope they return the following season, but if not, you hope they learned something that helps in their future.

Conversely, are there any aspects of your job that might frustrate you?

Yeah, anxiously watching storms when they get close to the golf course. Nothing ruins a weekend like a down-

pour when the tee sheet is packed, and all you can do is watch the weather radar on your phone the evening before; this year, it's snow!

And finally, what's the best piece of advice you ever received, and how do you incorporate that advice to help you continue the successful career you've built for yourself?

My friend's father once told me that our children are the best of us and the worst of us; he said to give your kids enough to do something with but don't give them enough to do nothing. I think what I took from that conversation was that those we teach will learn through what you say but also through what they see you do. Leading by example is hard to do from the rear; you need to be out front, shoulder to shoulder, so they know that the work is important and nobody is above it. And at the same time, I feel he meant that you need to know when to let them go solo and learn on their own, and find their way. I try to apply that to training by not showing my bad habits and knowing when to tell them, "I think you got it from here." They're going to make mistakes, we all do, but we also learn from them. When we succeed, we celebrate, but when we fail, we ponder; learning from mistakes is life.

LEGAL NOTICE

In the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Tribal Children's Court

In the Matter of the Welfare of S.M., DOB: 10/13/2009, Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Department of Family Health Services, Petitioner, v. Naomi Marie Hanks and David Kevin Medicine, Parents. Court File No. JV-2023-0062

To: Naomi Marie Hanks and David Kevin Medicine

It is Ordered and Notice is Hereby Given that a Child in Need of Protection or Services petition was filed in the Bois Forte Tribal Court on March 21, 2023. A hearing on the above petition will be held on **May 9, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.** Central Standard Time, or as soon thereafter as counsel may be heard, at the Bois Forte Children's Court, Bois Forte Reservation, 12907 Palmquist Road, Nett Lake, MN 55772. All appearances will be by telephone or Zoom.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED BY THIS SUMMONS AND NOTICE THAT YOU ARE REQUIRED TO APPEAR AT THIS HEARING AT THE ABOVE DATE, TIME AND PLACE. YOUR FAILURE TO ATTEND THIS HEARING MAY RESULT IN A DEFAULT JUDGMENT BEING GRANTED FOR THE PETITIONER.

By the Court Megan Treuer, Chief Judge
Ellen R. Little, Court Clerk
Tessa V. Jacobson, Attorney for Petitioner, ID 0402701
12907 Palmquist Road | P.O. Box 25, Nett Lake, MN 55772
218-757-3462

Friendly reminder to adhere to Blight Ordinance

With any luck, by the time the May 2023 *Bois Forte News* lands in your mailbox, spring will finally stick around so that we can start tackling those home improvement projects, gardening, and just a general cleanup as we prepare for the summer of 2023.

With that in mind, Bois Forte band members are once again reminded to make sure they are aware of the Blight Ordinance passed by the Tribal Council last year. The ordinance was necessary to make sure homeowners or renters took pride in their property.

“The intent wasn’t to punish homeowners; rather, it was to have residents be mindful that we want our communities to be clean and ones we can be proud of,” said Tribal Chair Cathy Chavers at the time. “That means keeping a clean yard, mowing the grass, and not letting junk accumulate.”

Here are some examples of what would be considered a violation of the Blight Ordinance:

- Storing abandoned/junk automobiles; junked/inoperable motorized farm, lawn and garden or recreational equipment and machinery; accumulated trash, rubbish, or refuse; stoves or appliances; furniture; wood or wood remnants; scrap metal or metal remnants; structurally-failed fences; constructed buildings that are structurally compromised, pose a safety hazard

situation, and/or no longer habitable as dwellings or use for any other purpose; toxic or poisonous vegetation such as poison ivy, ragweed; other weed and grasses over six feet in height that pose potential visibility and fire hazard issues.

Bois Forte DNR Director Chris Holm touched on the Blight Ordinance during mid-April’s community meeting regarding the Bois Forte Land Leasing Policy.

“The blight code is a brand-new ordinance that deals with blight on properties, such as junk cars, homes that are in disrepair, garbage, or anything that is going to create unsafe conditions for residents around you,” said Holm.

He told those gathered at the community meeting that Bois Forte’s Environmental Services employee carries out the Blight Ordinance.

“If there are any issues, he will visit the home, talk to the owner and ask them to pick up garbage, get junk cars out of the yard, or broken glass, whatever it is, and then give them time to do it,” said Holm.

Holm said if the blight is taken care of in a reasonable amount of time, i. e., in two weeks, the Environmental Services employee will issue a violation to have it cleaned up.

“If we have to go in—or the council says we have to go in to pick it up, then a court citation is issued for the cost of

what the clean up was to the person to cover our costs,” explained Holm.

In addition, to cleanup costs, the penalties for violating the Blight Ordinance can result in a \$500 fine and could include lease termination; disqualification from obtaining real or rental lease property with the Band for up to 10 years. The time period is subject to the extent of blight, costs to remediate the blight incurred by the Band, and safety hazards deemed to be incurred as a result of the blight condition(s).

Holm said that notices for the yet to be scheduled annual Spring Community Cleanup will be posted on the Bois Forte website and in the June issue of the *Bois Forte News*.

If you have any questions about the Blight Ordinance, please call 218-757-3261, Ext. 307.

BOIS FORTE SOLID WASTE

*****IMPORTANT CHANGES TO NOTE*****

DO'S:

- Have your Solid Waste container out to the curb the night before or, no later than 8:00 AM on the day of your solid waste collection day.
- Remove container from the curb or front yard no later than 8:00AM on the day AFTER your collection day.
- Place container at least 5 feet away from any object (mailboxes, cars, trees etc.)
- Place container at curb with handles facing away from the road.

DON'TS:

- Do not overload or overfill the container. Make sure lid shuts, all trash must be bagged and tied shut. Operator will not be picking up loose trash. Yard waste does not go in container.
- NO PERSONAL TRASH CANS!! ONLY the Bois Forte Solid Waste containers will be picked up and disposed.
- DO NOT put RECYCLING in Solid Waste Container!

**PLEASE NOTE: ONE CONTAINER PER HOUSEHOLD

Current Solid Waste & Recycling Collection Schedule:

MONDAYS:	RECYCLING -	Nett Lake (All sectors)
TUESDAYS:	SOLID WASTE -	Nett Lake Village, Palmquist, HWY 65, Indian Pt & Sugarbush
THURSDAYS:	SOLID WASTE-	Vermilion
FRIDAYS:	RECYCLING -	Vermilion

Contact Frank Villebrun, Jr at (218) 404-5457 for RECYCLING

Contact Frank Barto, Sr at (218) 757-0193 for SOLID WASTE

Bois Forte Tribal Government

5344 Lakeshore Drive

Nett Lake, MN 55772

(218)-757-3261. Ext. 1162

Lake Vermilion Traditional Pow Wow

June 23, 24 & 25, 2023

Vermilion, MN

Bois Forte Tribal Enrollment will be available at the Lake Vermilion Pow-Wow to issue Bois Forte Tribal Identification Cards on Saturday, June 24, 2023, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED

PLEASE BRING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TO RECEIVE A TRIBAL ID:

- **Original Certified Birth Certificate (no photocopies)**
 - **State Issued Driver's License**
 - **State Issued Identification Card**
 - **Valid Passport**

For replacement Tribal ID cards or for any changes made before the expiration date, there will be a \$12.00 fee (cash or check).

Any questions, please contact Kathie Holman, Tribal Enrollment Coordinator at (218) 757-3261, ext. 1162 or kathie.holman@boisforte-nsn.gov



IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT:

There have been many instances where Bins have been placed close to mailboxes and other objects that make it difficult to reach the Bin, resulting in No Pickup. Please be mindful of obstacles when placing your bin curbside. Thank you.



Minute with Millie

How's the weather been over to your place? The same as mine has been? Topsy turvy, tee shirt and shorts one hour, winter boots and jackets the next minute. Naaw, didn't forget bout the hats and mitts cause I know not one of us willingly wears those things as no one has managed to make what we consider to be stylish hats or mitts.

Now some of you may know, I do a bit of crocheting and my family, my Dad, especially, put in special orders now and again.

Sad (not really) to say that none of my crocheted works ever turns out like the picture on those project instructions. So, I know they quietly "lose" those items in various locations most likely 100 to 350 miles or however far away they can manage to get them. I know they're also quietly muttering to themselves "Now why did I ask for these?"

Bout the only thing that really turned out halfway decent is blankets. My sisters claim that they still have the baby blankets I crocheted for their children when they were small.



Me? I have crocheted a rug or two that I know for a fact my son still has. Perhaps he hasn't get rid of it cause he lives in the same house.

I crocheted myself a pair of slippers as an experiment once. Enough said. I wore them til they fell apart. Hahaheehoho. That wasn't very long.

Til next time, take care, giigawabamin. Minogizhigud or Minodibikad as the case may be. Who knows with the current weather we were all wishing for back bout three months ago during the latest blizzard if it's really one or the other.

I would like to wish all the mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, step-mothers, and aunties a Happy Mother's Day! I would also like to say a special thank you for everything that you do. Thank you for all the sacrifices that you make especially the sacrifices that you don't talk about. Once again, Happy Mother's Day!



Respectfully,

Shane Drift, District I Representative - Bois Forte Tribal Government

LEGAL NOTICE

In the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Indians Tribal Court Civil Division
Minnesota Chippewa Tribe

In the matter of Probate Petition, Leon F. Goodsky, petitioner vs the Estate of Henry Goodsky Jr., decedent.

You are hereby notified, and notice is hereby given a Zoom hearing will be held on the 12th day of May 2023 at 10:00 a.m. CST, or as soon thereafter as counsel may be heard, at the Bois Forte Tribal Court, Bois Forte Indian Reservation, 12907 Palmquist Road, Suite B, Orr, MN 55771, on the Probate Petition filed in this court on March 3, 2023. This hearing is to determine if the temporary personal representative of decedent order should be permanently granted or denied for the appointment of Leon F. Goodsky as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent located at 11060 Sugarbush Trail, Orr, MN 55771. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representative will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate located at 11060 Sugarbush Trail, Orr, MN 55771, including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes, and expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate.

By the Court
Megan Treuer, Chief Judge
Ellen Little, Clerk of Court
12907 Palmquist Road, Suite B, Orr, MN 55771
Tel: 218/757-3462

LEGAL NOTICE

In the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa Indians Tribal Court Civil Division
Minnesota Chippewa Tribe

In the matter of Probate Petition, Rhiannon M. Strong, petitioner vs the Estate of Gaynard Edwin Strong, decedent.

You are hereby notified, and notice is hereby given a Zoom hearing will be held on the 7th day of June 2023 at 10:00 a.m. CST, or as soon thereafter as counsel may be heard, at the Bois Forte Tribal Court, Bois Forte Indian Reservation, 12907 Palmquist Road, Suite B, Orr, MN 55771, on the Probate Petition filed in this court on March 9, 2023. This hearing is to determine if the temporary personal representative of decedent order should be permanently granted or denied for the appointment of Rhiannon M. Strong as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent located at 1312 Duffy Point Road, Tower, MN 55790. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representative will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate located at 1312 Duffy Point Road, Tower, MN 55790, including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes, and expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate.

By the Court
Megan Treuer, Chief Judge
Ellen Little, Clerk of Court
12907 Palmquist Road, Suite B, Orr, MN 55771
Tel: 218/757-3462



News for Bois Forte Elders

By Millie Holmes

Wellness Wednesdays have been happening in the village. Perhaps only some of the village, maybe just in our little corner of it here at the Elder Community Center. What does this mean? We have various programs centering on taking care of ourselves and our loved ones.

Two of the programs are nutrition and fitness related.

Currently, this is taking place at the Center just after lunch is eaten.

We tried to have the programs take place at 10 a.m., but not many showed up. Now we are going to try after lunch—perhaps at noon?

The Nutrition portion is going to

be a problem, though. I would like to know if we forego the lunch scheduled for that day and enjoy the delicious recipe Jenna prepares. We could pack our regular meals in to-go boxes, and you can take them home to enjoy later.

Another suggestion would be to ask Jenna to give us the recipe for the Elder Lunch Menu and cook it ourselves. She could provide us with family sized or even one or two-portion-size recipes to take home. This way, we could have our cake and eat it too...well, perhaps she wouldn't care for that idea—the cake, I mean.

Fitness has been on my mind since the pandemic was declared over, and programs, mainly government-funded

ones, are going back to pre-pandemic rules and regulations. If we get enough participants, we will move to the RTG Migizi Room. Perhaps we can do so now that...ahem...nice weather is finally here. Or...we could even get our "walking shoes" on and use the wally ball court over at the Native Hearts

Fitness Center. I can just see Dave and Kristen's faces now. Perhaps not a good idea right now.

Well, at t'any rate, a couple of suggestions for you to mull over, and let either me or the program coordinators know which you'd like more.

Here is the Elder Nutrition Program's (ENP) menu for the month of May. Services offered include nutritious meals served daily, Monday through Friday at the Nett Lake and Vermilion Community Centers from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. with home-delivered meals available to Elders who are unable to get to the ENP sites.



For more information, call 218-757-3790.

May 1: Baked Pork Chop, Rosemary Baby Red Potato, Cauliflower, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 2: Beef Lasagna, Green Beans, Garlic Toast

May 3: Stir Fry Chicken, Stir Fry Vegetables, Brown Rice

May 4: Cabbage Beef Soup, Relish Plate, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 5: Bison Stew, Multigrain Bun, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 8: Shepherd's Pie, Biscuit, Broccoli Florets, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 9: White Chicken Chili (Beef), Cornbread, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 10: Roast Pork, Baby Baker's Potatoes, Roasted Butternut Squash, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 11: (Beef) Chicken/Wild Rice Soup, Tossed Garden Salad, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 12: Bison Meatloaf, Baked Sweet Potato, Brussel Sprouts, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 15: Sausage Jambalaya, Garlic Cheese Biscuit, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 16: BBQ Pulled Pork, Baked Beans, Coleslaw, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 17: Beef Barley Vegetable

Soup, Chef Salad, Wheat Roll, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 18: Country Ham, Baked Acorn Squash, Cauliflower, Berry Yogurt Parfait

May 19: Meatballs Spaghetti, Green Beans, Garlic Toast, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 22: Burrito Bowl, Beans, Salsa, Cheese, Sour Cream, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 23: Walleye/Fish Chowder, Mixed Vegetables, Wheat Crackers, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 24: Chef Salad, Garlic Breadstick, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 25: Roasted Chicken, Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy, Capri Vegetables, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

May 26: Holiday Cook Out Menu, Hamburgers, Brats, Beans, Potato Salad, Fruit Veggie Tray

May 30: Chicken Penne Alfredo, Broccoli Florets, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit (Chicken Penne Salad)

May 31: Wild Rice Meatballs/Gravy, Sweet Potato Fries, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

June 1: AuGratin Potatoes, Country Ham, Wheat Roll, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

June 2: Pork Loin, Garden Blend Rice, TWC, Diced Beets, Chef's Choice Assorted Fruit

PREVENTION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Are you behind on your rent or mortgage? Have you received a letter or notice that you are going to be evicted or foreclosed on? If yes, Bois Forte Substance Use Disorder-Housing Resources Department has money to keep you in your housing.

Funding is available until mid-September 2023. Income and other eligibility requirements apply.

This money is from the state and can be used for single adults, youth, and families with children to keep people housed. First come first serve if eligible and or funding available until it runs out or September which ever comes first.

Please Call 218-757-0233 to find out if you are eligible

13071 Nett Lake Rd, Suite B
Nett Lake MN, 55772

Benefit for Benner packs the Cook VFW

COOK—Friends, family, and acquaintances of former Bois Forte Tribal Council District I Representative Brandon Benner showed up in full force Sunday, April 23rd.

Not only was the parking lot at the Cook VFW jam-packed 30 minutes into the benefit, but those coming out had to park two to three blocks away to get to the front entrance, where they waited in line to get served a fantastic

meal of lasagna, garlic bread, green beans, and cookies.

“It was amazing—I could not believe how many people were there,” said Trevor Rintala, who attended the benefit with his girlfriend, Liza Root. “The lines were really long getting in too, but that just shows how much the community supports Brandon.”

The benefit was organized by Tina Villebrun, who enlisted the help of many others to

make sure everything was top-notch as Benner continues to make significant progress on his road to recovery.

In fact, his wife, Nicole, even brought out an iPad to allow Brandon to FaceTime with those gathered so that he could see firsthand just how much he means to everyone.

“I talked to him a little bit, but so many people were trying to say hi that it was hard to hear him,” said Rintala, who used to work with Benner for Mike Bass Construction. “He was waving to everyone, and he looked good. It was very encouraging.”

For Rintala, he would not have missed the chance to show his support for Benner. He recounted his days working with him in construction and talked about the fun experience.

“His sense of humor is amazing,” said Rintala. “It’s hard not to like a guy like that. He loved to joke around, but he also knew his audience, so he knew what to say and when to say it. He made the workday

enjoyable.”

Brandon’s aunt, Dawn Benner, was unable to get to the benefit, but she has been overwhelmed with how much support her nephew continues to receive. Not only through the benefit but also those visiting him in Duluth as he continues to recover.

“I just want to say a big thank you to Tina Villebrun for thinking of this idea and organizing the event,” said Dawn Benner. “The Benner family appreciates all those that attended, donated to the raffle, and helped. The kindness will never be forgotten.”

Bois Forte Tribal Chair Cathy Chavers said she, too, was overwhelmed with the show of support Benner received.

“It was very heartwarming to see everyone come out to let Brandon know that we’re all thinking of him and wishing him well,” said Chavers, who also thanked the organizers and the Cook VFW for hosting the benefit. “I heard the food was delicious, and you could

just feel the positive vibes as people gathered to show Brandon how much he means to all of us.”

And that sentiment played out repeatedly at the benefit, which Rintala perfectly summarized on how Bois Forte and the entire tight-knit community always comes together.

“It’s kind of the way of our people,” said Rintala of the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa. “Being wealthy isn’t about having a lot; it’s about having enough to share with others. If we can help, we’re going to help. My message to Brandon is, just focus on taking it one step at a time because he’s going to get to where he’s going.”

And that means making a full recovery so Benner can get back to doing what he loves the most—engaging with people and making a positive difference in the lives of so many.

“We’re all thinking of Brandon and his family,” said Chavers. “His fighting spirit is an inspiration to all of us.”



AWESOME MEAL!— Volunteers working the Brandon Benner Benefit received tons of compliments for the meal that was served. Here Danelle Porter helps customers, who were anxious to try the lasagna, garlic bread, green beans and cookies. Pictured in the background, left to right, are: Tina Villebrun, Davelle Jones, and Don Villebrun.



OVERWHELMING SUPPORT!— The April 23rd benefit at the Cook VFW for Brandon Benner was well attended by family, friends and acquaintances!



GREAT RAFFLE!— The community really got behind the Brandon Benner benefit as there were many great prizes to bid on. Here Liza Root, left, and Trevor Rintala, right, check out a few of the prizes that were donated to help with expenses for the Benner family.