



Bois Forte NEWS

VOL. 50 NUMBER 4

Bois Forte Tribal Enrollment reminder!

Bois Forte Tribal Enrollment will be available at the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) office on Tuesday, April 14 from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then at Bemidji State University (BSU) April 15 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The address for the MCT is 15542 MN-371, Cass Lake, MN 56633, while the BSU address is 1600 Birchmont Dr. NE, Bemidji, MN 56601.

No appointments are necessary. For more information, call Kathie Holman at 218-757-3261, Ext. 1162 or email her at kathie.holman@boisforte-nsn.gov

Morrison, Sr., Geshick, Moyer, Jr., Sherman advance to general election

NETT LAKE— Anticipation built late Tuesday evening, March 31, as the live count for the primary of the 2026 Bois Forte Tribal Council unfolded.

By the time things wrapped up at 10:10 p.m., it

was determined that incumbent Tara Geshick and Dave Morrison, Sr., will face off in the general election on Tuesday, June 9, to see who the next secretary-treasurer will be, while incumbent Robert Moyer, Jr. and Alanna Sher-

man will do the same to earn a spot as the District II Representative.

Morrison, Sr., who served for 32 years as Bois Forte's Secretary-Treasurer, tallied 147 votes, while Geshick tallied 113.

Finishing a distant third was C Store Manager Jeffrey Mattson with 72 votes, followed by Planning and Housing Director Carol Burr, who tallied 62 votes. Former District II Representative Peter "Chief" Boney received 31 of the 432 ballots cast.

"I feel my past experience with serving the Bois Forte band for 32 years helped, as did working with all the different administrations," said Morrison, Sr., as to what he feels helped propel him to the general election. "I've always had the ability to adapt, to collaborate and to lead effectively in a changing environment."

Going forward, Morrison, Sr., said he plans to speak to as many band members as possible to ensure their voices are heard and that they are informed about the issues Bois Forte's Tribal Government is currently facing—especially as they relate to businesses that generate revenue.

"Some of those dollars should go back to the band membership," said Morrison, Sr., who thanked band members who exercised their right to vote, while also thanking all of the candidates for tak-

ing the time and commitment needed to run for office and to make needed change. "I will work for the best interest of our people— and get band member ideas and address concerns on what they would like to see and where they'd like to see our band go."

Morrison, Sr. thanked all the band members who supported him, but also those who just took the time to vote for the candidate of their choice.

"It shows that our band members are concerned about our tribal government and the future of the Bois Forte Band," said Morrison, Sr.

Meanwhile, Geshick, who is in her first term after unseating Morrison, Sr., in the 2022 election, said she believes her campaign strategy resonated with voters.

"Voters responded to my professionalism, deep understanding of tribal government and business, and my strong knowledge of the MCT Constitution and Bylaws," said Geshick. "Just as importantly, they saw my ability to handle challenging situations with composure, integrity, and grace under pressure."

In regard to what she will work on to ensure she is victorious in the General Election, Geshick said she will continue building on the progress we've made in modernizing our

See Election on page 12



DOING HER CIVIC DUTY— Christina Woods signs in to vote late Tuesday afternoon as Duluth Urban Office Coordinator Wendy Drift checks her computer.



VOTING DAY— Sharon Day registers to vote Tuesday, March 31 at the Minneapolis American Indian Center (MAIC) in south Minneapolis, while Suzanne Nash looks on. The election judges were Deborah Villebrun, seated and Michelle Smith, hidden. The voting location was moved from the regular Minneapolis Urban office as the MAIC is more spacious and has more parking.

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Community mourns the loss of Wick-o Villebrun

NETT LAKE—The Bois Forte Band of Chippewa community bid a sad farewell to Victoria “Wick-o” Holmes Villebrun Wednesday, March 18th in a traditional ceremony in the Eagle room of the Tribal Government Building.

Villebrun passed away at the age of 67 on Friday, March 13th after a short, but courageous battle with cancer.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Marjorie Alice Wakemup Holmes and Axel James Holmes, Sr. and her husband, Raymond Elmer Villebrun, Sr., who served on the Bois Forte Tribal Council for 12 years.

Wick-o is survived by her sons: Raymond E. Villebrun Jr., Aaron “Supe” Villebrun, Ryne Villebrun and daughters: Marjorie Jane Villebrun and Nicole Fairbanks; her sisters: Mildred “Millie” Holmes, Marian Holmes, Vera

Holmes Branstrom and brothers, Axel Holmes Jr. and Charles Holmes Sr.; and two grandchildren, Branson and Christopher.

Villebrun was a longtime employee for Bois Forte, including a lengthy stint as the executive secretary of the Bois Forte Tribal Council.

She was a beloved member of the staff and always answered her phone with a gentle, “This is Wick-o,” which was such a simple gesture on the surface. However, it was a kind gesture that warmly greeted the person on the other end of the phone to let them know, she was there to answer any question they may have.

Villebrun, a die-hard Green Bay Packers fan, was known for her dedication, infectious smile, an all-around great personality, who was a joy to be

around.

Former Tribal Chair Cathy Chavers fondly recalled the friendship she had with Villebrun, dating back to their time together in high school in Orr.

“She was a fun, happy co-worker who did an exceptional job as RTC Executive Secretary,” said Chavers. “Doing that job is not an easy one and she always knew where documents were located when you asked for it.”

Chavers, who left office in January of 2025, fondly recalled the last time she was able to speak with her long-time friend.

“She was happy and that made me happy as well,” said Chavers, who added that they hugged as they went their separate ways.

District I Representative Shane Drift said he was saddened to hear about Victoria “Wick-o” Villebrun’s passing and thanked her for helping him get his start on the tribal council back in October of 2018.

“I’ll never forget the kindness Wick-o showed me, like filling out pa-

perwork, explaining how RTC meetings work, and sharing her knowledge of various documents that were important to our day-to-day operations,” said Drift, who shared his condolences on social media as a tribute to her. “Wick-o was always kind, friendly, and willing to help in any way that she could.”

Villebrun began her career at Bois Forte in 1989 and spent the next 32 years as a faithful employee everyone could count on.

Her early years were spent being the secretary at the health office before making the transition to being the executive secretary for the RTC and eventually retiring in 2022.

“I enjoyed my time here,” said Villebrun at the time of her retirement. “The staff were always so awesome—I had the best co-workers a person could have asked for. All of my bosses were great too.”

To see Villebrun’s obituary, please see page 10.

THE BENNER SHOW RETURNS TO KBFT 89.9 RADIO

APRIL 6TH, 2026

TUNE IN uplifting music and fun stories

MONDAY-FRIDAY 7-9A.M 1-3P.M

WWW.KBFT.ORG

89.9 KBFT BoisForte Community Radio

“I WAS NOT EXPECTED TO WALK, TALK, OR BREATHE ON MY OWN BUT I HAVE THE STRONG WILL TO SURVIVE AND MY RECOVERY PROGRESS IS REMARKABLE”



THE GOOD OL’ DAYS— This file photo shows co-workers Victoria “Wick-o” Villebrun and Brian Porter enjoying a lighter moment shortly before their shift ended at the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Government Center in April of 2022, just a couple weeks before she retired. At the time Porter joked with Wick-o by saying, “We hate the Packers, but we love Wick-o.” Rest in Peace Wick-o— you will be missed.

Council encourages teamwork and unity as Bois Forte moves forward

VERMILION SECTOR— Unity, appreciation, and working together as a team were the common themes spoken by members of the tribal council at the 2026 Bois Forte State of the Band, which took place at Fortune Bay Resort Casino on Saturday, March 7.

However, promises were also made to get things back on track with issues brought forth at previous State of the Bands, including forging ahead on a grow facility, seeking out ways to create additional housing for band members, emphasizing the need to keep our language and culture alive, building a round house and getting caught up on annual audits. To see the tribal council speeches in their entirety, please go to the Bois Forte Tribal Government's YouTube page.

Bois Forte's Executive Director Miranda Lilya, served as the emcee and introduced the senior management team throughout the program so that band members know who to reach out to when they have questions about specific programs Bois Forte offers.

Bois Forte Heritage Center Executive Director Jaylen Strong served as the spiritual advisor for the event and did a standout job in his role. He also paid respect to the Bois Forte Singers for the job they did. He spoke Anishinaabe but then translated into English for the roughly 200 attendees.

"I asked our spirits to come and listen to our people that are here today," said Strong. "I wanted to make sure they come in and kind of watch over us."

Strong said he also asked the spirits to give the tribal leaders who were going to be speaking at the event some guidance to ensure they would be able to follow through on the goals they set forth.

"The last thing I said was talking about the food that is going to be served," said Strong. "...when we eat, they are also going to be eating."

And Strong joked that since the meal served is ceremonial food, these calories don't count, "so eat up," which drew much laughter from those gath-

ered in The Woodlands Ballroom.

Meanwhile, Lilya also mentioned a new Community Resource Guide that was distributed during the informational booth portion of the annual event.

"It was developed by our 477 program," said Lilya. "And within the resource guide is a ton of information about the tribal government, its programs and the contact information for the staff—it's very useful."

Lilya reminded those in attendance that she and others working for Bois Forte are working extremely hard to determine which communication method band members use to gather information. In fact, a communication survey was given to each band member who registered to help with that cause.

"Taking that data will help us to determine how best to get the information out to you," said Lilya. "We know our elders and older friends and family love the newspaper, but my daughter who is 20-something, wants social media..."

Lilya said that data will be gathered from surveys to determine which direction Bois Forte will take as they work to ensure band members know what's going on with the tribe. She added that they will try to print a smaller version of the resource guide so that band members can carry it with them.

With that, Lilya introduced District II Representative Robert Moyer, Jr. who kept his speech short and sweet, while recognizing the efforts of the Bois Forte staff, Fortune Bay staff and those who work for the Bois Forte Development Corporation businesses.

He said that seeing all the people gathered in The Woodlands Ballroom reminded him of what his work as a member of the Bois Forte Tribal Council is all about.

"When we show up for one another like this— we strengthen our community and our future," said Moyer, Jr., who paid tribute to his family for supporting him in his role as the District II Representative. "I want to take a

moment to express deep appreciation for our employees who keep the band moving forward every single day... your dedication, your professionalism and the pride you bring to your work."

District I Representative Jeneal Goggleye, who didn't take office until this past November, said she has been working to become more familiar with the current programs and enterprises that Bois Forte has.

This has meant attending many meetings to get up to speed on the aforementioned and working hard to ensure the band gets caught up on its financial audits.

Goggleye also stressed the importance of planning and developing the band's next strategic plan for the years 2028 to 2033, as the current plan ends next year.

"This will give us time to share the approved plan with the different departments and our Bois Forte band members so that everyone is aware of what the goals are going to be for the next five years," said Goggleye... "This is crucial for tribal governments."

She then gave several examples of why it is important, including aligning tribal leaders, band members, and departments around common long-term

goals, acting as a guide for budgeting, ensuring that financial and human resources are used efficiently to meet goals and enabling informed decision-making rather than reactive.

"It helps integrate traditional knowledge, values, and community needs into future planning," added Goggleye. "A strategic plan also demonstrates stability to federal agencies and investors—and it helps identify competitive advantages and economic opportunities for the tribe."

District I Representative Shane Drift gave a lengthy speech that touched on a wide variety of subject matters, including the one-year anniversary of the Ishkode Dispensary, the continued need to get our own grow facility and/or to buy cannabis from our own band members to create income for them, while also increasing the profit margin for Ishkode Dispensary.

He also picked up momentum from previous speeches he made at State of the Bands for the need to get the Y Store land in trust, a round house built, keeping our language, culture and traditions alive, increasing 1854

See SOTB on page 11

The crew was busy with the live count in Nett Lake



CRUNCH TIME—Linda Shykes, far right, reads off a ballot during the live count in Nett Lake March 31 for the Bois Forte Tribal Council Primary Election. Pictured left to right are: Angeline Lilya, Justina Drift and Cheryl Jensen, who were keeping track of the votes. Great job to everyone who worked the election, including Executive Director Miranda Lilya and IT Director Randy Long, both of whom coordinated the live count. Not pictured are Linda Manick and Craig Goodsky.

Kober gives excellent presentation on how to keep heart healthy

VIRGINIA—Kudos to Bois Forte's Health and Human Services team for putting on another amazing Healthy Heart Conference that served as a reminder for band members to make smart choices to ensure a healthy future.

The day included several sessions on how to accomplish just that, while also providing on the spot health checkups to give folks a gentle nudge to lead a healthier lifestyle by keeping their weight down, blood pressure in check and to watch what you eat.

"Heart disease doesn't just happen overnight," said Essentia Health's Jen Kober to the roughly 100 attendees gathered in the ballroom at the Iron Trail Event Center in Virginia. "It's like a snowball. First, you might have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or high blood sugar. If those things aren't managed, they can lead to bigger problems, like heart attacks or strokes. But the good news is—there's a lot you can do to stop that snowball before it rolls out of control."

Kober said it's easy to go down the wrong road when it comes to your diet. After all, who doesn't love to throw caution to the wind and just cook something out of a box or run to a fast-food place as opposed to carefully planning out your meals?

Yes, it can be difficult, but when the long-term alternative might include one becoming obese, having a heart attack or stroke or developing diabetes, making healthy choices is something you should strive for.

"The biggest thing is fresh versus processed foods," said Kober during her presentation on Cardiometabolic Syndrome. "When you go grocery shopping stick to the outside aisles—the middle is all the processed and canned foods. The outside lanes are the healthier choices."

Kober talked about how important is to watch your salt intake, sugar intake and being too sedentary as a combination of those three can cause many problems. She said a person



MAKING A POINT—Essentia Health's Jennifer Kober, APRN, FNP-BC, engaged attendees with her "Cardiometabolic Clinic," which was one of several presentations that place as part of Bois Forte's Healthy Heart Conference in Virginia.

should try to limit their salt intake to 1,500 to 2,000 milligrams a day.

"It sounds like a lot, but when you start looking at packages and nutrition facts, there's a lot of sodium in just about everything," said Kober. "I think there's like 300 milligrams in a slice of bread."

She also used the old adage of, if it tastes good, it's probably contains too much salt. That can definitely ring true after stopping by McDonald's for a sausage and egg biscuit with a side of hash browns—try it out someday and you'll be surprised at the lingering film of salt that's left in your mouth.

But it's not just fast food—Kober said there is a lot of salt in cold cut meats, hot dogs, and sausages. She added that many people living in northern Minnesota love a can of chicken noodle soup but added there is a whole day's worth of salt in that little can of soup.

She said a misconception that she hears from people is that they hard-

ly use their saltshakers, so they think they aren't exceeding the recommended amount of sodium if they are not salting their food. However, Kober said that a saltshaker only accounts for 7 to 10% of a person's daily intake, so she stressed the importance of watching your salt intake.

If you don't, Kober said your blood pressure will increase and get into the danger zone of what is acceptable for normal blood pressure range, which she said ideally would be 120/80, but for sure less than 130/80.

"Once you are getting above 130/80 you're having more resistance and more pressure on your vessels, so those are the general goals (you should strive for)," said Kober. "Once you get into 140—that's when you start talking about either lifestyle changes like reducing your salt intake, being more active or eventually taking medications."

The goal, of course is to make lifestyle changes and not rely on medications to control your blood pressure,

but Kober knows it's not always that easy.

The long-term effects of not controlling your blood pressure and cholesterol can prematurely age your coronary arteries—Kober gave the example that you might be 60 years old, but your coronary arteries could be 70. If that's the case, introducing medications to lower your blood pressure of cholesterol would be necessary.

However, Kober stressed that lifestyle changes can still be effective in turning your life around so that you are not relying on medication to solve your health problems. Leading a more active life is definitely helpful, but so too are choosing the right foods to help lower your cholesterol. She said to be careful of things made with white flour as there are a lot of carbohydrates that can push up your blood sugar levels.

"If you want to do your heart a favor, check food labels and try to eat less processed food," said Kober, who added that trying the Mediterranean diet is a good idea in part because you can eat chicken and fish as part of that diet. "The trick is more veggies, beans, nuts, and using olive oil instead of butter. And don't forget fiber—eating whole grains and fruit with the skin helps lower cholesterol, too."

Kober touched on exercise and stressed that you don't need a gym. She said taking a 30-minute walk every day is great—even getting up from your chair every hour to stretch helps.

"Try for about 150 minutes a week of exercise—that's just five 30-minute walks," said Kober, who added that getting 7-9 hours of sleep is beneficial to heart health. "And if you can, add in some strength moves, like using small weights or doing chair exercises... you don't have to be perfect. Just start with one small change. Swap out a salty snack for fruit, take a short walk after dinner, or go to bed a little earlier. Every step you take is good for your heart."

Smith impresses attendees with her knowledge of tea and plant medicines

VIRGINIA— April “Auntea” Smith captivated attendees at a breakout session during Bois Forte’s Healthy Heart Conference with her vast knowledge of how herbal teas can work wonders when it comes to leading a heart healthy life.

Smith, who is an herbalist from Cornell University, owns Bear Clan Designs LLC in Minneapolis and has 17 years of experience running restaurants. Her engaging presentation led to numerous questions from attendees as she worked through a slideshow discussing the benefits of herbal teas and plant medicines and how they can help alleviate stressors in one’s life.

At the center of Smith’s teaching is a simple daily act—drinking tea. Smith, who is a member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, said that tea is not just a beverage—it’s a bridge to better health and deeper self-care, especially when it comes to heart health.

“Our heart’s job is to pump blood throughout our body, delivering nutrients and carrying away waste like carbon dioxide,” said Smith. “When our heart and blood vessels work well together, blood flows easily, and our heart is healthy. But stress, inflammation, and the toxins in our environment can make that job harder.”

April’s own encounter with stress was a painful one as she recalled waking up one day at the age of 35 with a cluster of bumps on her forehead, which turned out to be a case of shingles.

“The doctor said I was too young for that,” said Smith. “It turned out to be stress-related, and it took me nine weeks to heal. That experience changed how I think about caring for my heart—and my whole self.”

She said from that day on she worked hard to reduce stress in her life, which eventually led her to coaching herself how to wind down at the end of the day. That typically meant going to a quiet part of her house, armed with a cup of tea and no cell phone to take away from that peaceful routine.

“A bedtime routine is not just about sleep—it’s about caring for yourself at the end of a stressful day,” said Smith. “I take a shower, use my favorite lotions, and sip calming tea like chamomile, mint, or lavender. This helps calm the nervous system, lower stress hormones, and improve sleep quality.”

Smith then went through a bevy of slides that talked about the benefits of many tea and plant medicines like cinnamon, which can lower blood pressure among other amazing benefits.

She talked about two buzzwords (antioxidants and anti-inflammatories) that she sees everywhere these days, especially on social media.

“But what do they really mean?” asked Smith.



ATTENTIVE PRESENTER— April “Auntea” Smith circulated the Iron Trail Motors Event Center ballroom to let attendees ask questions about how herbal tea and plant medicines can make a positive difference for those who want to be more heart healthy.

“Antioxidants are natural substances found in plants that protect your cells from free radical damage. Free radicals are unstable molecules that cause oxidative stress, damaging your heart, lungs, and other organs. Over time, that damage can snowball, leading to chronic illnesses like heart disease and diabetes. That’s why plant foods and teas rich in antioxidants are so important.”

She added that anti-inflammatories are similar.

“Some inflammation in the body is good—like when you’re healing from an injury. But chronic, long-term inflammation is a root cause of so many illnesses,” explained Smith. “Eating and drinking anti-inflammatory foods and herbs helps keep your body in balance.”

Smith pointed out that our modern environment is filled with hidden stressors and toxins—from pesticides and cleaning products to personal care items.

“At any given time, an average person has 700 chemicals in their body,” said Smith. “But the good news is, lifestyle choices can be reversed. By choosing plant-based foods, herbal teas, and mindful routines, you can support your heart and overall health.”

As part of her presentation, Smith invited attendees to visit her booth where she had numerous samples of teas that can make a difference in one’s health, including ginger lemon, peppermint, turmeric ginger, and hibiscus cinnamon.

“Ginger is a powerhouse—it can lower cholesterol and triglycerides, start up your metabolism, and fight pain and inflammation,” said Smith, who added that each blend offers unique benefits. “Turmeric is another superstar, packed with curcumin for anti-inflammatory and antioxidant action. Hibiscus and cinnamon together help lower blood pressure and A1C, relax blood vessels, and support a healthy heart.”

Regardless of when one decides to make a concerted effort to make healthy choices a part of their life, Smith told attendees to be gentle with themselves as they make changes.

“Start small. Whether it’s adding a cup of tea, eating more colorful foods, or taking 10 mindful minutes at night, it all adds up,” explained Smith. “Heart health isn’t just about the organ—it’s about how we care for ourselves and each other.”

If you would like more information about Smith’s teachings or plant medicines/teas, her website address is www.BearClanDesignsLLC.com or you can call her at 612-413-9762.

Bois Forte **ZOONDIDE’EWIN POWWOW**

GRAND ENTRY **Saturday, April 25, 2026**

1 PM & 6 PM **Iron Trail Motors Event Center 919 6th St So Virginia, MN**

DINNER BREAK

4 PM

VENDOR CONTACT
TONI WAKEMUP
218-404-8377

REGISTRATION
11:30 AM TO 1 PM
4:30 PM TO 6 PM

Spiritual Advisor Jeremy Wilson
 Emcee Terry Goodsky
 Arena Director Lance Kingbird
 Host Drum Lake Vermilion
 Co-Host Drum Hillside
 Invited Drums Circle of Nations & Burntside Lake
 Head Female Abbi Zapata
 Head Male Curt Moon

Fortune Bay Room Block
Call to book: 218-753-6400
 Ask for hotel reservations and reference
BKG575 SOBRIETY POWWOW ROOM BLOCK 2026
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 Bois Forte Band Member Discount
 with a Valid Tribal ID
 (Be sure to mention it when you call)

DRUM SPLIT 1st 10 Drums
Drums & Singers
MUST
Be Registered
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Sponsored by
 **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**
 AMERICAN INDIAN HEALTH
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CANNABIS PREVENTION GRANT

Staff gives updates on Bois Forte Heritage Center & Cultural Museum



Boozhoo Indinawemaaganag,

It's been a busy year overall with another busy year coming up in 2026. I wanted to focus a little more on the infrastructure improvements that have been completed and are going to be taken on over the next year. As I'm sure more people are aware, we were able to replace our roof, exterior wall waterproofing subsurface, and entire HVAC system. This was in thanks to the Tribal Government, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, and the State of MN's Explore Minnesota Department. Now that everything is state-of-the-art, we are integrated with the Vermilion Tribal Government buildings so that maintenance is able to see if anything goes wrong and can help troubleshoot issues quicker.

We received a grant to hire a museum consultant professional to come in and review our museum and make recommendations for where improvements can be made. This included, lighting in the museum spaces, a more efficient layout for our archival space with improved storage, and helping to review our museum disaster response plan. With the final report being completed in January 2026, we will be following those recommendations. The first additions that we are going to be purchasing are new storage units.

These storage units will replace the wooden units that are currently in use, some of which have broken drawers, or are not able to house the correct items due to differing heights. Overall, the new metal storage units will help preserve items in the event of a fire.

Next, we are planning on purchasing a new Collections Management System for people to view our items online (no sacred items will be displayed) and equipment for digitizing photos and building a new space to photograph items. Morgan Olson will talk more about this for her section.

We will be looking into updating the lighting in the museum as well. Moving to more energy efficient lighting, better lighting fixtures to help with illuminating areas that tend to remain darker in the museum are our top priority.

I also wanted to share some information about an oral history project that we were funded to pursue. Funding for this come from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and it is in partnership with KBFT to cover some of the history and cultural teachings that are still around in our communities, we will be recording these interviews for both audio/visual and text. We will also be working with a publishing company in Ely to turn these transcriptions into a book!

This will be similar to the 1996 Lake Vermilion Oral History Project, which can be viewed on the Heritage Center's website under the "Exhibits" page.

Toni, George Strong of KBFT and I will be the main contacts for this project. We met with the elder's community table in February and are planning to have additional community meetings to bring up the topic. No date is assigned yet for these community meetings. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page, the BF News, and tribal council meetings for more information.

At these meetings, we will be looking for suggestions for people to be in-

terviewed later on this summer. They do not need to live on the reservation but should be knowledgeable of Bois Forte history and culture. We also will be looking to see if there are any questions that people might feel are important to ask.

From the desk of Jess Anderson Ojala, Language and Culture Coordinator

The Bois Forte Heritage Center is looking for more volunteers for our Ojibwe Language Revitalization Committee, if interested please fill out the Microsoft forms QR code. Miigwech! Or email Jess (Jessica.Anderson@boisforte-nsn.gov) to get signed up.



Furthermore, The Bois Forte Heritage Center is looking for community input on recommendations for classes, suggestions of improvements, or recommendations. Please fill out or online suggestions box.

Throughout the month of March, we are hosting a variety of culture classes. For sign up information, email Jess at Jessica.Anderson@boisforte-nsn.gov

We do plan to also host sugar bushing, but dates will be TBD. For most recent up-to-date information follow our Facebook page Bois Forte Heritage Center & Cultural Museum.

From the desk of Morgan Olson, Archivist

In the archival department, we will soon be looking for input from the community on a project that the Heritage Center is collaborating with the DNR on. The Heritage Center is assisting with the construction of a Lake Lodge at the Lake Vermilion-Soudan Underground Mine State Park

that serves the needs of park visitors throughout the year. I will attend an elders meeting to present the progress of the project and ask for feedback and input on how to best move forward in benefiting the Bois Forte community as much as possible. The specific elders meeting being attended will be posted soon.

The Tribal Archivist is also asking for the donation of both current and historical objects and pictures related to Ojibwe culture, people, and healing. These objects and pictures will be displayed at the new Bois Forte Health Services building in Virginia in the front-entrance exhibit spaces. The objects and pictures we are requesting can be anything from moments snapped at community events to old and unused snowshoes. These donations will help represent the beauty and diversity of Bois Forte to both community members and non-community members alike. Please call the Heritage Center or email Morgan at Morgan.Olson@boisforte-nsn.gov for more information.

Digitization and documentation efforts are underway as the Heritage Center team looks for equipment that will make it possible to photograph collection objects and scan documents and pictures. Our hope is to make pictures and scans available to the public and community for research and cultural connection purposes. Volunteers to help us scan our extensive collection of documents and pictures will be an invaluable piece of this project. More information on how to volunteer to help with this project will be coming as equipment becomes readily available for use.

Boozhoo,

My name is Toni Wakemup, and I am the Visitors Center Manager at the Heritage Center. I would like to share some information about what we offer at the Bois Forte Heritage Center &

See Staff Updates on page 7

Bois Forte kids enjoyed Winter Spirit Week!

NETTLAKE—The Bois Forte Head Start and Early Childhood Program staff put on Winter Spirit Week for its students.

Monday was Snowman Day where

the kids dressed up like a snowman or in white and blue clothing; Tuesday was Pajama Day, Wednesday was Sweater Day, Thursday was Silly Socks Day and Friday was Beanie Day where

the kids got to wear their favorite beanie or hat.

Here are some of those images that Ashley Pullar, a teacher with the program, shared — thank you Ashley,

Shannon and great job to you and the staff!

Next month, we'll run some pictures from the Dr. Seuss Dress Up week that the kids took part in.



HAMMING IT UP!— Pictured in the back row, left to right, Aleena Wakemup, Delvin Morrison, Gabriel Gillson, Jeffrey Harman and Ivy Adams. Pictured in the front row, left to right, are: Klaus Harman and Bryan Porter.



NICE HATS!— Pictured in the back row, left to right, are Aleena Wakemup, Sara Black, Gabriel Gillson, Delvin Morrison and Jeffrey Harman. Pictured in the front row, left to right, are: Klaus Harman, Bryan Porter and Teagan Boshey.

Staff Updates from page 6

Cultural Museum.

Free Admission:

Bois Forte Band members receive free admission to the museum.

Hours:

The museum and gift shop are open Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Just some highlights of what the Gift Shop has for sale

Our gift shop sells:

- Toho beads (sizes 15 to 8)
- Plush Native print blankets
- Red Lake Nation's Foods syrups and jellies

- Beadwork handmade by Indigenous artists

Calling All Artists:

We are looking for Band members who work with birch bark and porcupine quills. If you are an artist, or know someone who is, please contact me.

Phone: 218-753-6017

Email: twakemup@boisforte-nsn.gov

Follow us on Facebook, Bois Forte Heritage Center & Cultural Museum, to stay updated on events and activities at the center.



HAPPY CAMPER!— Sara Black holds up the peace sign while posing for a photograph as part of Winter Spirit Week.

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Hernandez's swearing-in ceremony speech was worth the wait

VERMILION SECTOR— Bois Forte Tribal Chairman Carlos Hernandez took the liberty to indulge those gathered at the 2026 State of the Band with a three-minute recap of his swearing-in ceremony speech that he never got to use last summer.

And unless you happened to be in attendance at the July 2nd tribal council meeting, Hernandez taking over as tribal chair flew under most everyone's radar.

"There were some events in the community, and out of respect to the families, it was postponed, but I really did want to read this to you," said Hernandez as he prepared to give his swearing-in ceremony speech on March 7th, over eight months after it was scheduled.

But the speech was worth the wait as Hernandez's words resonated with those gathered in The Woodlands Ballroom.

"Hello, my relatives, I stand before you today with a full heart and a deep respect for this responsibility," said Hernandez. "I am humbled to be sworn in as chairman of the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa."

Hernandez thanked everyone who came out to vote, prayed, and challenged him to grow.

"You made your voices heard, and I carry that trust with seriousness and gratitude," said Hernandez, who defeated former District I Representative Travis Morrison to earn the chair seat, which was vacated by Cathy Chavers in

January of 2025.

Hernandez said he was not raised on the Bois Forte Reservation his whole life, but added that Bois Forte has now been his home for over 25 years, and he came home to reconnect with our culture, to listen, to learn, and to be of service.

"This chair is not about power, it is about responsibility," said Hernandez, who added that he is honored to serve the community that helped raise him and to be the man he is today. "I do not sit above anyone—I sit among you as your relative, your neighbor, your worker, your servant."

With his responsibility as chairman, Hernandez said he will advocate for fairness, transparency, and unity.

"I will work to open lines of communication with the council," he said. "I will support our youth and elders... protect our sovereignty and build an economy that supports all of us— not just a few. We are a people of strength, of survival, of spirit."

Hernandez said that our Bois Forte language, our land, and our teachings are not relics—they are living and must live on in our policies, budgets, and everyday decisions. He added that there is a lot of work to do and that he would never pretend he can do it alone.

"It will take all of us," said Hernandez. "The council, staff, community, both on and off the reservation, moving together, speaking the truth, listening deeply, and making decisions, not for personal gain, but for the next 7 gen-



TIME FLIES!— Carlos Hernandez smiles as he gets ready to be sworn in as the Bois Forte Tribal Chair last July by Secretary-Treasurer Tara Geshick. A swearing-in ceremony typically takes place with much fanfare, but the one last July was a very short service held before the start of the council meeting. Due to events in the Bois Forte community this past year, the traditional ceremony did not take place, so Hernandez read his speech at the 2026 State of the Band, which took place Saturday, March 7. "OK, alright—now that I have been officially sworn in..." joked Hernandez some eight months after he took office.

erations."

Hernandez paid homage to past council leadership and reminded our youth that this is their nation, too.

"And to our ancestors, I pray my

steps, honor yours," said Hernandez as he wrapped up his speech. "We are all related—let us move forward with clear eyes, good hearts, and strong hands. Thank you for listening."

Iron Mosquitos robotics team advances to world championships

BABBITT— The Iron Mosquitos, which is Northeast Range's robotics team, have earned a trip to its third World Championship in late April! The competition takes place in Houston, Texas.

The team qualified at the Great Northern Regional Final in Grand Forks by winning their second Impact Award for their STEM outreach work combined with quality robot performance.

The team features Bois Forte band members, Makenzie Little and Zely Jenkins, along with descendants, Raeanna Medicine-Strand, Damien Medicine-Strand, Jada Medicine, and other tribal member, Makana Bodas.

In an effort to raise money to help defray the costs associated with the trip, a T-shirt sale and raffle is currently going on. You can also donate money

by sending a check to: Northeast Range School, 30 South Drive, Babbitt, MN 55706 or online at <https://slc2142.revtrak.net/rw-donations/>

Congratulations to the team for their outstanding work! We will do a feature story in the June issue recapping their World Championship experience!

Bois Forte news briefs

ENP updates!

NETT LAKE/VERMILION SECTOR— Please take note of these important updates to the Elder Nutritional Program (ENP), effective Tuesday, April 7.

- Vermilion Cook Location— The Vermilion Cook will be stationed at the Nett Lake ENP.

- Daily Meal Delivery—Meals will continue to be delivered daily to both communities.

- Nett Lake Delivery Times—No changes—delivery times will remain the same.

- Vermilion Home-Delivered Meals—For those currently receiving home-delivered meals, meals will arrive by 11:30 a.m.

- Vermilion Social Center Meals—Meals for the Vermilion Social Center will arrive by 11:45 a.m.

If you have any questions, please call the Nett Lake ENP at 218-757-3790.

Help is available for license plates, tab renewal, title transfer and energy assistance

NETT LAKE/VERMILION SECTOR—If you need help with a title transfer, license plates, tab renewal, please reach out to Tracey Dagen at 218-757-3261, Ext. 1197.

She can also help you apply for Energy Assistance.

Her office schedule in Nett Lake is 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., while her Vermilion hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Monday—Vermilion Office
 Tuesday—Nett Lake Office
 Wednesday—Nett Lake Office
 Thursday—Nett Lake Office
 Friday (non-payday)—Nett Lake Office
 Friday (payday)—Vermilion Office

Candlelight Vigil takes place April 23rd

NETT LAKE/VERMILION SECTOR—A Candlelight Vigil will take place in Nett Lake and the Vermilion

Sector on Thursday, April 23rd.

The Nett Lake event will run from 9 a.m. until noon at the Bois Forte Family Health Services in Nett Lake (13071 Nett Lake Suite A), while the Vermilion Sector event take place from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Vermilion Social Center (1610 Farm Road South).

Attendees are encouraged to light a candle in remembrance of our loved ones. You can also light a candle for a family member, community member or yourself. Candles and holders will be provided.

According to Bois Forte's Charity Warrington, there are three key elements of a candlelight vigil:

- Prayer and remembrance: Candlelight vigils are often organized to offer tobacco, pray, remember and honor. It provides a formal and reflective atmosphere for our loved ones.

- Support and solidarity: People come together during candlelight vigils to show support for a cause. Whether its advocating for justice, raising awareness and/or expressing solidarity. The candles represent unity and empathy.

- Nonviolent advocacy: Vigils are seen as a peaceful way to raise awareness and motivate change. Participants use candle to illuminate their commitment to a cause without resorting to violence.

For more information on the vigils, please contact Warrington at 218-940-2954.

Community Connect event slated for May 13th

HIBBING—Bois Forte's 477 program is putting on a Community Connect event on Wednesday, May 13th.

The event, which includes a free meal, takes place at the Hibbing Memorial Building, 400 East 23rd St in Hibbing from noon until 4 p.m.

Attendees can learn more about housing support, older adult resources, child and family resources, health insurance services, mental health resources, substance use disorder re-

sources, warrant resolution, vaccine and disease education and more!

Arrowhead Transit will provide free rides to and from the event on existing bus routes.

The event is sponsored by the 477 program, Essentia Health, AEOA, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Fairview, Medica and St. Louis County Public Health.

Sobriety/Prevention Support meetings

VERMILION SECTOR—The Bois Forte Substance Use Program is pleased

to announce it will host Sobriety/Prevention Support meetings every Friday at the Vermilion Social Community Center.

The address is 1610 Farm Road South.

The meetings will start at 5:30 p.m. every Friday unless there is a holiday on that specific Friday.

Coffee and treats will be served. The meetings are sponsored in part by the Bois Forte's Substance Use Program and a Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Prevention Grant.

Here is the Elder Nutrition Program's menu for the month of April. 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.

NOTE: Menu is subject to change.

April 1: BBQ Pulled Pork, Chef's Choice Potato, Cole Slaw, Fruit

April 2: Jambalaya/Rice, Veggies, WW Bun

April 3: Spaghetti/Meatballs, Veggie, Fruit

April 6: Holiday

April 7: Beef Soft Shell Tacos, Taco Fixings/Sour Cream, Black Beans/Rice, Fruit

April 8: Chicken Fettuccine Alfredo, Steamed Broccoli, Breadstick, Fruit

April 9: Au Gratin Potatoes/Ham, Green Beans, Fruit

April 10: Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, Veggie, Fruit

April 13: Stuffed Hash Brown with Peppers, Mushrooms, Cheese, Biscuit, Fruit

April 14: Chili/Cheese, Cornbread, Fruit

April 15: Chicken Patty/Bun, Chef's Choice Potato, Baked Beans, Broccoli Slaw

April 16: Baked Pork Chops/Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Veggie, WW Bun

April 17: Tator Tot Wild Rice Hotdish, Biscuit, Fruit

April 20: Cook's Choice Chicken, Mac and Cheese, Veggie, Fruit

April 21: Pork Loin/Gravy, Baby Reds, Veggie, Fruit

April 22: Beef Ravioli/Sauce, Steamed Cauliflower, Fruit, Garlic Stick

April 23: Chicken Salad Croissant, Three Bean Salad, Fruit

April 24: Tomato Soup, Grilled Cheese, WW Bread, Apple/Peanut Butter

April 27: Beef Roast, Mashed Potatoes, Parslied Carrots, Fruit

April 28: Denver Omelet, Yogurt, Fruit

April 29: Chicken Breast, Rice Pilaf, Veggie, Fruit

April 30: Sweet & Sour Meatballs, Fried Rice, Eggroll, Fruit

April 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

Bois Forte Obituaries

“Duze” William Chavers

“Duze” William Chavers, age 68 of Nett Lake passed away peacefully on Monday, March 9, 2026, at his home.

Duze was born on April 24, 1957, in Cook, Minnesota, the son of Josephine Porter Chavers and James Chavers Sr. He lived his entire life on the Bois Forte Reservation in Nett Lake.

Duze was a person who

would help anyone out if they needed it. Friends and family would stop by and visit, have coffee and fun conversation. He loved working on cars, trucks, motors or whatever the problem was—he would fix it.

Earlier in his life he was an entrepreneur starting up a small business with Roberta Drift as a video/pizza store,

they made beautiful clocks to sell and more. Duze was also a carpenter and built many things. He also like planting gardens and “entertaining.” There were fun times with all. He loved his siblings and growing up together.

Duze is preceded in death by his mother, Josephine P. Chavers; siblings, Michael

Leecy, Merle “Ike” Leecy, Dale Leecy, Charmaine Leecy, Carol “Lumbar” Isham, Janice Day, and Lavelle Chavers.

Duze is survived by his siblings, Jeanne Ann Day, Jewel Day Walker, Jim Chavers, Edward Chavers and children Greg Drift, Daniel Adams, Mitchell Chavers, Benjamin Sharp, Dave Chavers, Billie

Jean Drift, Jen Head, along with his grandchildren, great grandchild and numerous nieces and nephews and many friends.

A Wake was held on Sunday, March 15, 2026, at Bois Forte Government and Services Center. The Celebration of Life took place the next day on Monday, March 16, 2026, also at the center.

Victoria “Wick-o” Ann Holmes Villebrun



Victoria “Wick-o” Ann Holmes Villebrun died peacefully at the Essentia Health-Virginia on March 13, 2026. She was born August 23, 1958, to

Marjorie and Axel Holmes Sr.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Marjorie Alice Wakemup Holmes and Axel James Holmes, Sr. and her husband, Raymond Elmer Villebrun, Sr.

She’s survived by her sons: Raymond E. Villebrun Jr., Aaron “Supe” Villebrun, Ryne Villebrun and daughters: Marjorie Jane Villebrun and Nicole Fairbanks; her sisters: Mildred “Millie” Holmes, Marian Holmes, Vera Holmes Branstrom and brothers, Axel Holmes Jr. and Charles Holmes

Sr.; and two grandchildren, Branson and Christopher, whom she doted on as many grandmas do.

Wick-o’s many nieces and nephews were the recipients of her annual Christmas and birthday presents.

She loved celebrating holidays, having family dinners and her latest projects were the scrapbooks she made for all her children and grandchildren. She made and sold beaded earrings to help raise money for her family. She loved Candy Crush, myVegas Slots

and would wait patiently for her chance to collect for her games each day.

She recently retired from her position as Executive Secretary for the Bois Forte Tribal Council where she worked for 44 years. She worked in other positions for Bois Forte after receiving her AA in Culinary Arts from Lake Superior Technical College. She graduated from Orr High School in 1976 and attended College of St. Scholastica before transferring to Lake Superior Technical College.

She was almost as great a fan of the Green Bay Packers as her father was. She would happily wait for the Viking-Packer games and heartily cheer her team on...even when they occasionally lost to the Vikes.

Gilbert Smith officiated her traditional wake, which was held on Tuesday March 17, 2026, in the Migizi Room at the Bois Forte Tribal Government Center in Nett Lake. Her traditional funeral service followed the next day at the Bois Forte Tribal Government Center in Nett Lake.

Adeline Rosalie Wooster

Adeline Rosalie Wooster, 82, of Linden Grove Township, passed away peacefully at her home surrounded by loved ones, on March 3, 2026.

Adeline was born in Duluth, MN to Gerald and Rosalie Sheehy. She married George Wooster on December 9, 1999.

Adeline was a devoted wife and mother and served as a

Tribal Judge for Bois Forte.

Adeline was an avid quilter. She loved her flowers, birds and her little rat terriers. Adeline loved fishing and gardening and helping George on the farm. She was a long-time member of the Bear River Lutheran Church.

Adeline was preceded in death by her parents; brothers: John Sheehy and Tom Sheehy;

and sisters: Grace Isham and Geraldine Sheehy/Polasky.

Adeline is survived by her loving husband George Wooster: her sons: Brian Wooster (Billie Jo), Cody Wooster (Jennifer), Adam Wooster (Jordan), Ernest Jr. Landgren (Pauline), Gregory Landgren (Esther), Terry Landgren (Theresa); daughter Lorna Landgren; 20 grandchildren,

17 great-grandchildren, and five great-great-grandchildren; brother Bill Sheehy; and sisters: Darla Flett and Carla Gustafson.

A Funeral Service was held on Saturday, March 14, 2026 at Bear River Lutheran Church. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service at the church.



District 1 Representative Shane Drift

Howah!

Boozho Bois Forte Band Members! I sincerely hope that you are doing well. I recently attended an Arrowhead Regional Development Commission's



comprehensive economic development strategy meeting at Fortune Bay Resort Casino on Monday, March 16th, 2026.

I wanted to share the following information with you because the information is very important for us as a tribe to keep track of.

Outdoor recreation contributes

\$13.9 billion to Minnesota's economy – 99,000 jobs statewide.

\$166M regional GDP tied to national forest activity.

Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) visitors spend \$57M annually in nearby communities.

64,000+ acres of wild rice waters statewide.

Tourism plays a major part in our casino's financial success. Fortune Bay Resort Casino sends money to the tribal government annually. The monies from Fortune Bay Resort Casino are put into various programs and services that impact our band members.

This is why I am so adamant about protecting our treaty area, our natural

resources, and our treaty rights. Fortune Bay Resort Casino relies heavily on tourism.

What is a huge concern for me as the District I Representative is that some lakes within the 1854 treaty are impaired already. As more lakes become impaired within the 1854 treaty area over the next ten years this will eventually start affecting tourism. This in turn will affect the monies Fortune Bay Resort Casino sends to the tribe. This will also affect our 1854 treaty payments.

I have addressed my concerns regarding our 1854 treaty area, treaty rights, resources, and tourism with the Minnesota Department of Natural

Resources in past consultations. I will continue to fight for our treaty rights, treaty area, resources, and tourism.

The following is from one of the slides from the meeting, "Land, water, and outdoor recreation are deeply connected to both the economy and the cultural heritage of the arrowhead region." This information is so very true.

If you have any questions or concerns, please send me an email at Sdrift@boisforte-nsn.gov or call me at 218-404-8220 (my council phone number). Mii'iw miigwech! Shane Drift, District I Representative.

SOTB from page 3

treaty payments for band members, protecting the 1854 Treaty area, revisiting the 1866 treaty to ensure band members have the right to hunt, fish and gather.

Drift also talked about how we, as a tribe and a nation, have gone through a lot over the past several months as we struggle with unrest, financial hardships and more.

"What we have been going through over the last few months has been heartbreaking," said Drift, who, like others on the council, gave much appreciation and respect to employees working for the tribal government, Fortune Bay, Ishkode Dispensary, The Wilderness at Fortune Bay, the Y Store and the C Store. "The uncertainty that we face as a nation is very worrisome—the challenges we face as a tribe have been quite challenging... but they are challenges that I have welcomed wholeheartedly for the last eight years."

From a personal level, he told attendees not to listen to lies and rumors, and if they ever have a question of where he stands on an issue, to ask him directly—don't listen to gossip.

He also reiterated the fact that he

has stood alongside decisions made by the council but has also stood alone on other issues. However, at the end of the day, he is here to serve all band members as they are the reason he continues to serve our people.

"It has been an honor and a privilege serving you," said Drift.

Secretary-Treasurer Tara Geshick discussed implementing a new accounting software system to help the band catch up on its financial audits. She said it was a long, arduous process and thanked the tribal government staff for all of their hard work and dedication to learning the system.

She also mentioned how proud she was of the band's growth in its financial reserves to \$2.5 million.

"It is a critical step toward long-term stability and our sovereignty," said Geshick, who also touted success stories like the new DNR building being built, expanding Big Woods Transit operations, expanding sewer and water from the Nett Lake village to Bois Forte's Maintenance Building and other improvements. "These projects strengthen our community, our economy and provide new opportunities and support for future generations."

Geshick opened her speech by making sure we remember those peo-

ple who are hurting due to the loss of a loved one, or are struggling with homelessness, mental health or addiction. She also praised our people for being resilient, as those living in urban areas had to deal with injustices caused by the presence of ICE personnel, and also paid tribute to Missing, Murdered Indigenous Relatives.

"If there is one lesson this past year has taught us, it is this," said Geshick. "When we move together—we move farther. It takes more than one person to accomplish great things. It is created

by a community that believes in each other and works side by side for something greater—to all of you who contribute to that vision every day, Chi-Miigwech."

Editor's note: We will run a separate story on Bois Forte Tribal Chairman Carlos Hernandez's 2026 State of

the Band speech in the May issue. Because of events unfolding in the Bois Forte community, he was not able to give his inauguration speech when he took office last summer. However, he did present it at the 2026 State of the Band, so please see page 8 for that story. As a reminder, all speeches made by the tribal council can be seen by visiting Bois Forte Tribal Government's YouTube channel.

Sah Gii Bah Gah Pow Wow 2026



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the
Date

June 5-7, 2026

Nett Lake, Mn.
55772

Election from page 1

systems.

“I will focus on strengthening the success and efficiency of Bois Forte RTG and Fortune Bay enterprises,” said Geshick. “We need to invest in Fortune Bay, reinvent itself. I am committed to pursuing truly profitable business opportunities while fostering a stronger sense of unity and connection among our band membership—one that inspires engagement, attracts new leadership, and encourages fresh ideas for our future.”

Traffic to the polls was fairly slow at the Minneapolis Urban office and the Duluth Urban office, with only 43 votes cast for the secretary-treasurer race and 13 for District II, while the numbers were 26 and 14, respectively, in Duluth.

Tallies were much higher for the Vermilion Sector, as 170 votes were cast for the secretary-treasurer race and 147 were cast for the District II race.

The Nett Lake polling place saw 128 ballots cast for the secretary-treasurer race and a solo vote for the District II race.

In breaking down the secretary-treasurer race, Morrison, Sr. carried the Nett Lake polling place by a 56-36 margin. He also carried the Vermilion Sector by a 48-29 tally.

Morrison, Sr. also carried Minneapolis by a 21-14 count and a slim 25-23 edge with the absentee ballot.

Geshick won Duluth by an 11-4 count.

Meanwhile, in the District II race, Moyer, Jr. had 85 votes, while Sherman had 65 votes. Finishing in third place was Tim O’Leary, who collected 43 votes. A total of 193 votes were cast in this race.

Moyer, Jr. had 67 votes in Vermilion, while Sherman tallied 48 votes. Moyer, Jr. took the Duluth and absentee votes by slim 7-5 and 8-6 margins, while Sherman held a slim 5-3 advantage in Minneapolis. She also had one vote from the Nett Lake polling place.

“I’m someone people can talk to easily,” said Moyer, Jr., in explaining why he believes he moved on to the general election. “I’m approachable, patient and level headed— and I do my best to create a space where folks feel comfortable sharing what’s on their minds.”

Sherman was encouraged by the results, and she believes the community is ready for change. She wants to see progress, stronger communication and to see Vermilion more strongly advocated for.

“That’s something I take seriously,” said Sherman. “Throughout this campaign, I’ve focused on listening, showing up, and having real conversations about what matters most. I’ve been honest about wanting steady, thoughtful progress rather than making big promises, and I think voters connected with that. At the end of the day, people want to feel respected, included, and represented, and that’s

what I will continue to prioritize.”

Her game plan heading into the general election will be to continue doing what she has been doing—spending time with community members, listening, and building relationships.

“I want to keep those conversations going so people feel comfortable sharing their ideas, concerns and hopes for our future,” said Sherman. “I will also continue to clearly share my vision for improving communication, strengthening our community and creating more opportunities for our members. This campaign has always been about the people and that will remain my focus.”

For Moyer, Jr., he wants to build on relationships as well, and he welcomes band members’ ideas, hopes and visions for the future.

“Please reach out anytime—I’m here to listen,” said Moyer, Jr., who added band members can call him at 218-410-4008 or send him an email (jrmoyer72@gmail.com). “I’m committed to connecting with as many band members as possible — not just to share my own ideas, but to listen deeply, show up consistently, and do the work that is best for Bois Forte.”

There was no need for a primary election in the District I race as incumbent Shane Drift and challenger Millie Holmes were the only two candidates to file. They will face off in the June 9 general election to see if Drift will earn a third straight term or if Holmes will finally break through to earn a seat on the tribal council.

Throughout the Secretary-Trea-

surer and District II races, all candidates showed great professionalism and class.

Like those who advanced and those who didn’t win, including Burr, Mattson, Boney, and O’Leary—all of them encouraged band members to get out and vote even if it wasn’t for them. They also reminded their opponents to work on behalf of all band members. This show of respect was on full display at two candidate forums held leading up to the election and all candidates should be commended for their actions.

“I want to acknowledge the other candidates for stepping forward to serve—it takes time, effort, and commitment and I respect each of them for that,” said Sherman, who also sincerely thanked voters for their support and trust placed in her as she seeks office. “No matter the outcome, we all care deeply about our community and I look forward to continuing these conversations as we move forward together.”

Moyer, Jr. offered a heartfelt thanks to all the District II voters who supported him in the primary.

“Your trust, encouragement and belief in the work we’re doing together mean more than I can say,” said Moyer, Jr., who, like the others, was impressed with how all candidates were so professional throughout the election process and how it was a joy to share the stage with them at candidate forums. “I’m truly grateful you’ve chosen to stand with me.”



HATS OFF TO ALL OF THESE ELECTION JUDGES - Here are some photos from the Tuesday, March 31 primary election. Pictured to the left at the Vermilion Sector are Taylor King, Tracy Dagen and Monica Porter. Pictured holding up election ballots at the Duluth Urban Office is Virgil Sohm. Pictured to the right of Virgil, is Michelle Smith and Deborah Villebrun. Thank you all for helping out with the elections. As a reminder, the general election will take place on Tuesday, June 9.