



# Bois Forte NEWS

VOL. 49 NUMBER 12

## RTG holiday closings!

NETT LAKE AND VERMILION SECTOR— Just a friendly reminder of office closures for the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Government Buildings and Clinics for December and early January.

- December 12— All Staff Holiday Party
- December 24, 2025 - Close at Noon - Christmas Eve
- December 25, 2025 - Christmas Day
- December 26, 2025 - RTC Christmas Holiday
- January 1, 2026— New Year's Day.

## Boshey case update

VERMILION SECTOR— While December 17 marks the one-year anniversary of the tragic death of Bois Forte Band member Amanda Boshey's hit and run case, the trial for defendant Eric Scott Peterson will not take place until March. Look for an update in an upcoming issue of the Bois Forte News.

## Goggleye implores teamwork as she takes office

NETT LAKE— Being surrounded by family and friends was the perfect remedy for calming newly elected Bois Forte Tribal District I Representative Jeneal Goggleye.

"I was a little nervous at first for the swearing in ceremony to begin, but when I entered the Eagle Room—I seen my family members as well as a lot of people from the community that came to witness this milestone with me," said Goggleye, who was joined by her husband, Turk, daughter, Amanda, son, Robbie, and his wife, Nikki, and dozens of friends Monday, November 17.

Having that support meant the world to Goggleye, who will serve in her new capacity until 2028 and, unfortunately, has to relinquish her duties as the Housing Director for Bois Forte.

"This made me feel more comfortable, knowing that these people were here to show their support and wish me well in my new position as District I Representative," said Goggleye. "This was a very special and meaningful ceremony for me."

Millie Holmes, who is Bois Forte's Admissions/Occupancy Manager was one of the attendees on hand to witness the swearing in and to wish Goggleye much success.

"I know she will do her best for Bois Forte Band members," said Holmes after the



CONGRATULATIONS!— Newly seated District I Representative Jeneal Goggleye, left, and Lance Kingbird, right, get ready to hug after Goggleye was sworn into office by Secretary-Treasurer Tara Geshick. A long line formed for others to also hug and wish Goggleye nothing but the best as she begins her term on the Bois Forte Tribal Council.

ceremony.

Bois Forte Tribal Chair Carlos Hernandez gave the opening remarks before Secretary-Treasurer Tara Geshick performed the actual swearing-in ceremony, in which Goggleye had a few good laughs trying to repeat Geshick's instructions word for word without making any mistakes.

But in the end, Goggleye exuded confidence as she took the oath of office.

"I will support, honor and respect the Constitution of the United States, the revised

*See Goggleye on page 3*



HONOR AND RESPECT— Bois Forte Tribal Secretary-Treasurer Tara Geshick, right, did the honors of welcoming District I Representative Jeneal Goggleye to the Bois Forte Tribal Council as part of a swearing-in ceremony that took place in the Eagle room at the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Government Building Monday, November 17.

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
CAMBRIDGE, MN  
PERMIT #92

# MDH grant helps jumpstart outdoor activities

Submitted by Jill Schuchard  
Bois Forte MCH program

NETT LAKE— The Outside Together campaign was greatly successful thanks to the involvement and support of the Bois Forte communities.

Over the past year, the Maternal Child Health program was awarded a Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) grant to implement goals and activities encouraging outdoor activity for all ages.

Why is this so important, you might ask? Research has shown that going outside improves mental and physical health, leading to an overall improved sense of wellbeing. Going for a walk, biking, or having a bonfire are great ways to start enjoying nature. For some camping, fishing, ricing, hiking, hunting, skiing, or ATVing are enjoyable ways to get

fresh air while enjoying the great Northwoods. Individually or as a group, there is no wrong way to get outdoors.

With MDH funding, bikes, bike trailers, wagons, strollers, a family retreat, tubing at Giants Ridge and downhill skiing for elementary students are different ways Bois Forte community members went outside together!

There was an amazing response to the bike program as 109 bikes and 25 bike trailers are now out in the Nett Lake and Vermilion communities; 25 wagons, 10 strollers, five families participated in the retreat weekend, and 54 elementary students went downhill skiing.

Thank you again for staying active, teaching and encouraging a child or friend, and joining together to keep your community healthy.



ENJOYING A CRUISE!— This trio of youths were sporting new bikes as they cruised around the Nett Lake village, thanks to funding received through a Minnesota Department of Health grant.

**DAWN**  
DRIVING ACCESS TO  
WEALTH & NETWORKS

DAWNMN.ORG

Launching a business?  
Need capital? Scan the QR  
code to explore our Tribal  
SSBCI Loan Fund!

dawnmn.org/ssbci

In northeast Minnesota & northwest Wisconsin we are bolstering economic and community resilience through a suite of services and initiatives aimed at...

FORMING CONNECTIONS  
BUILDING CAPACITY  
ACCESSING CAPITAL

FUELED THROUGH GRANT FUNDING AND SUPPORT FROM  
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERS

POWERED BY NORTSPAN

**Tribal Scholarships  
Are Here!**

[newrangecoppernickel.com](http://newrangecoppernickel.com)

NEW RANGE  
COPPER NICKEL

# Over \$53,000 raised for Bois Forte Scholarship fund!

VERMILION SECTOR—Thanks to the generous sponsors of the 2025 Indian Summer Classic, the Bois Forte Scholarship fund were the recipients of over \$53,000!

“On behalf of Bois Forte and all that students that are going to benefit from this generous donation, we are generally humbled and appreciative,” said Bois Forte Tribal Chair Carlos Hernandez.

Bois Forte’s Kalvyn Benner, who just got home for Thanksgiving break was equally impressed.

“We are very appreciative of this support,” said Benner, who is in his first year of college at North Dakota State University and is majoring in architecture.

Meanwhile, 477 Director Vonda Carr called the donation amazing.

“Thank you so, so much,” said Carr of the sponsors, Fortune Bay Resort Casino staff and The Wilderness at Fortune Bay staff. “It’s going to be such a benefit to our scholarship program. \$53,000—holy cow! Leanne (Hoffman) is just going to be thrilled. She might even cry—it’s huge!

The trio was asked prior to the check presentation how much the check would be as last year’s tally was



GRATEFUL!— Bois Forte had plenty of reasons to be thankful Wednesday, November 26 as a check presentation was held at The Wilderness at Fortune Bay. Pictured, left to right, are Bois Forte Tribal Chair Carlos Hernandez, Kalvyn Benner, who is a freshman at North Dakota State University, and 477 Director Vonda Carr.

around \$15,000. Each of the three, plus Kalvyn’s mom, Simona Benner, all guessed under \$15,000 so they were definitely surprised to hear the amount was over \$53,000.

Here are the sponsors of the 2025 ISC and the amount they provided to the Bois Forte Scholarship fund.

TITLE (\$4,250): Safelite Auto Glass, Pepsi, U.S. Steel, The Jacobson

Law Group, NewRange Copper Nickel, Performance Foods, BlueLink.

EVENT (\$2,750): Twin Metals, Park State Bank, Northern State Bank, Slotco, Aristocrat, The Wilderness at Fortune Bay, Fortune Bay Resort Casino.

CORPORATE (\$2,250): Delta Dental of Minnesota, Light & Wonder, TPI, Capitol Hill Associates, Suntory Global Spirits, Cleveland Cliffs, Pavilion Pay-

ment, Nordic Group, IGT, RSM, Alpha, and DSGW.

DINNER SPONSORS (\$1,750): Prairie Island Indian Community, Brodeen & Paulson, PLLP.

LUNCH SPONSORS (\$1,250): IRRR, mark-it Smart.

INDIVIDUAL TEAMS (\$1,200): Bois Forte RTG (2X), Boys and Girls Club, CTC, Ishkode Dispensary, Y Store/C Store.

HOLE SPONSORS (\$250): In Memory of Mark Anderson—sponsored by Reid LeBeau of Capitol Hill Associates; C&L Distributing, Range Reliable Agency, CTC, and Ishkode Dispensary.

Hoffman was unable to make the check presentation ceremony, but she too was extremely grateful for the support given to the Bois Forte Scholarship fund.

“Chi-miigwech to all of the sponsors! Your generosity helps empower Bois Forte students as they pursue their goals through secondary education,” said Hoffman, who is the 477 Workforce Development Coordinator. “Thank you for standing with our community!”

## Goggleye from page 1

Constitution and bylaws of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe,” repeated Goggleye after Geshick. “(And) the bylaws, customs and traditions of the Bois Forte Band. I will faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of my office to the best of my judgment and ability, so help me God.”

In Hernandez’s opening remarks, he spoke of how it was so good to see everyone show up to support Goggleye as she took office.

“Miigwech—thank you for being with us today as we welcome our new leadership and continue to work for the Bois Forte Band,” said Hernandez, who did some of his opening remarks in Ojibwe before translating them in

English. “I want to recognize Jeneal as our new District I Representative.”

With that, the crowd of 50 or so clapped and the Bois Forte Drum group, including David “Squidg” Morrison and Lance Kingbird, gave a few taps on the drum. The other District I Representative, Shane Drift, joined the duo later for the honor song, which was done to commemorate Goggleye joining the tribal council.

Hernandez commended Goggleye, who beat out challengers William Isham and Travis Morrison, for stepping forward to serve her people.

“Miigwech for your commitment to your community, your elders, youth, and families,” said Hernandez, who has done an admirable job speaking at community events since taking office

this past July. “It is appreciated.”

Monday’s ceremony marked the first time since August that the tribal council has had full representation. Prior to Hernandez taking office in July, the council was down to four members from late January until he took office over five months later and at one point was done to three members.

“Leadership is about service and working together,” said Hernandez. “And I am confident this council will move forward in unity.”

Goggleye did her own welcome speech to those gathered in person and watching online as she took office. She spoke of feeling honored to represent the Bois Forte people and added that she truly promises to serve to the best of her ability.

“Our people are speaking out and we must listen,” said Goggleye. “We must work together as one team.”

As elected leaders, Goggleye said the tribal council is here to serve all Bois Forte Band members—and the same can be said for directors and staff at the Reservation Tribal Government.

“We need to strengthen the service we already provide and find meaningful solutions to the challenges we face as we serve our tribal citizens,” said Goggleye. “It’s time to listen and realize it is a new day and to move forward for the betterment of all Bois Forte band members. Thank you, Bois Forte for allowing me to serve.”

# Ceremony is Not a Costume: Cultural Appropriation in the U.S. Youth Education (1879 - 2025)

*Guest column by Jessa Boyer, Bois Forte Band of Chippewa*

To the generations who carried truth in silence.

For our Ancestors, Grandmothers and Mothers who once wept, their children will now rise.

This is dedicated to you.

## **Dedication:**

For Zaawebinesiik (Yellow Bird), my Grandmother, who went by her English name Joanne Donald. She spent her life dedicated to education for the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa. My Grandmother's lessons on education are the reason I spent countless months, weeks, days, and hours preparing this writing. Without my beloved Gram, I wouldn't be who I am today. Miigwech, Gram, for your unwavering love and guidance.

## **Introduction:**

I write this as a Native woman and mother who has watched with both heartbreak and fury as Indigenous cultures have been treated as performative material for current 'youth education.' For over a century, Indigenous people across North America have witnessed the misappropriation, commodification, and disfigurement of our sacred traditions in non-Native institutions.

This includes camps, schools, museums, churches, and youth education programs; all of which are claiming to "honor" Native cultures. These acts are not isolated; they are woven into the very fabric of systematic colonialism, the purpose of which was to erase our Indigenous identities while simultaneously exploiting our imagery and spirituality for profit under the guise of education. The purpose of this article is to name the historical and ongoing harm caused when youth programs misuse Indigenous culture, and to call for the end of these culturally appropriative practices in youth education.

This writing provides a brief historical overview of the cultural harm perpetuated from 1879 - 2025. The focus is on youth education, calls for recognition, restitution, and structural accountability. Understanding this history is essential to understanding why these practices must end.

Historical Context: The Boarding

School Era:

In 1879 the era began with the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania by Captain Richard Henry Pratt, who declared his mission to "Kill the Indian, save the man."

This became the model for over 400 schools operated across the United States and Canada, many which were funded through church-state partnerships. These institutions forcibly removed Native children from their families and homes, cutting their hair, changing their given names, forbade them from using their own languages, punishing them for expressing any form of their Native identity and forcing them to adopt Christianity and manual labor as a twisted form of civilization. This was forced assimilation to destroy tribal cultures and replace them with foreigners' customs. These 'schools' were militarized, our ancestors were regimented like soldiers, made to wear uniforms, punished with physical violence, endured horrific sexual abuse, suffered malnutrition and disease, tormented with severe emotional trauma, and beaten to death. This was cultural genocide in an attempt to eradicate us. There are unknown numbers of children who died in these institutions and thousands were thrown into incinerators or buried in unmarked graves.

From 1900 until the 1990s, Native children in Minnesota, Wisconsin, the Dakotas and Canada were still being removed from their homes under threat of violence. Many never returned and many graves have never been found. The legacy of those schools still reverberates pain through every Native American family alive today, including my own.

## **The Shift to "Cultural Imitation" in Youth Education:**

Next we shift to cultural imitation. When the U.S. federal government began phasing out some boarding schools, mainstream organizations such as the Boy Scouts and YMCA programs adopted "Indian lore" as character education. These non-Native organizations romanticized our traditions in forming "Indian clubs," "tribal councils," and private camps integrated into their youth educational programs that reinforced racial hierar-

chies, stealing songs, dances, symbols, and teaching youth to "play Indian" as part of their funded programming.

All while the United States government criminalized and punished Native American elders, men, women and children for practicing sacred traditions.

By 1922, Camp Kooch-i-ching in Northern Minnesota opened as an all-boys camp. Like many camps of its time, it built its ceremonies, "councils", and secret societies based on the misuse of Native American and Indigenous spiritual practices, languages, and culture. These activities were framed to those who participated as education yet it perpetuated false notions of tribal primitivism and reinforced white entitlement to Native identity.

In 1922, Native Americans were not considered United States Citizens. The dates alone should be enough to shock anyone.

The 1934 Indian Reorganization Act was apparently intended to restore tribal self-governance yet, it continued assimilation. Federal policies still dictated the structures of our tribal governments. Native Nations were still pressured to conform to the 'white man' way of life.

During this time, Native identity, culture, and spirituality remained inseparable yet always under a constant threat of destruction. Ceremonial practices were still under surveillance or prohibited in places, traditional knowledge was forced to be hidden. This intergenerational trauma continues today. Our grandparents still carry fear in teaching us our own languages. My grandmother, in fact, died afraid of speaking it in our home or teaching her children or grandchildren our language.

During the 1934 era and to this day, non-Native youth organizations continued with their so-called Native Programming with "Indian lore" at its core.

## **Evolving Exploitation (1960-2000)**

By the 1960s, Indigenous activism began to rise; from the American Indian Movement (AIM) to local community organizing for sovereignty and education. Yet, while Native voices called for justice, many youth camps and institutions continued "Indian pageants" and "powwow dances."

Camp Kooch-i-ching and others like it maintained ceremonial imitations despite federal recognition of tribes' rights to self-determination. The disconnect between genuine cultural resurgence and white institutions' "honorary Indian" rituals symbolized ongoing cultural theft and resistance to accountability.

## **Modern Assessment (2000 - 2025):**

In the 21st century, conversations around cultural appropriation have become more visible.

Indigenous scholars such as Dr. Anton Treuer and organizations like Native Governance Center, NCAI, and Cultural Survival have documented how performative "allyship" hides behind continued exploitation. Despite calls for reform, camps and non-profit organizations which include 501(c)(3) institutions have continued to profit from distorted representations of our Native spirituality and sacred cultures.

## **Human Impact:**

My experience in witnessing the blatant disregard for our cultures has left a lasting impact.

Emotionally, spiritually, and physically. When I first witnessed evidence in August 2025, I felt an ache deep in my spirit, the kind that cannot be unseen or undone. It has taken me four months to process, to find my words, and to reflect on how the same systems that tried to erase our very existence and identities are continuing to exploit them. This work has been both grief and medicine: grief for what was taken and medicine through my truth-telling.

Cultural appropriation in youth education does not exist in isolation. In fact, it reinforces centuries of trauma that live deep within our bones, spirits and those of our ancestors. It is teaching non-Native youth that our ceremonies are costumes and our ancestors' prayers are performances. It teaches non-Native youth that being Indigenous is something to imitate or mock rather than understand. The psychological and spiritual harm extends beyond individuals and entire communities, our sacred practices are misrepresented in a large public consciousness which hurts more than just one family, it hurts us all.

**Pathway to Repair:**

During my time as Event Manager at Native Governance Center, I helped develop “A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgement.” On Indigenous Peoples’ Day, October 14, 2019, I co-hosted an event at Metropolitan State University that focused on the growing national movement around Land Acknowledgements. That event became the foundation for our continued work, “Beyond Land Acknowledgement,” which can be found on Native Governance Center’s website.

Through this work, I learned firsthand how performative “Land Acknowledgement” statements can often become a form of optical allyship, symbolic gestures that replace genuine action. Too often, non-Native organizations request unpaid emotional or intellectual labor from Native people under the banner of “honoring” us, while failing to invest in real structural change. This pattern mirrors the same imbalance I describe throughout this writing: Indigenous knowledge continually extracted, rarely compensated, and almost never credited in proportion to its value. True repair begins when acknowledgment moves from words to action, from optics to equity.

**Indigenous communities do not need empty words any longer:**

Repair now needs to start with a call to action and an action plan, restitution and structural change. The following are proposed recommendations for youth educational organizations or institutions that have financially benefited from Indigenous cultural appropriation:

- Issue a public statement acknowledging the harm caused and ceasing all “Native-themed” Programming.
- Establish reparative funding streams directed toward local tribal education departments and Native-led youth programs.
- Include a Native representative who will be compensated under negotiation to ensure all curriculum and program decisions to Indigenous culture have been erased and all programming will be done culturally appropriate.
- Offer financial restitution to Tribal Nations whose culture heritage was exploited.

Develop long-term partnerships rooted in equity, transparency and consent. No parent should ever have to learn the aftermath their child was subjected to non-consented religious or culturally mis-

appropriated practices.

**Existing Models of Education Repair in Minnesota**

Minnesota is beginning to model what reparative education can look like when policy aligns with truth. While the path to justice remains long, several state and university programs have taken meaningful steps toward restitution by acknowledging the systemic barriers Indigenous students have faced for generations. These initiatives represent more than scholarships; they are acts of recognition, designed to repair the inequities that stem from forced assimilation and the ongoing erasure of Native identity within education systems.

The following examples demonstrate how institutional commitment can move from symbolic acknowledgment to tangible repair:

- Native American Promise Tuition Program at the University of Minnesota: For Fall 2022 onward, this program covers 100% of tuition for qualifying students (with family income up to \$125,000) who are enrolled citizens of one of Minnesota’s 11 federally recognized Tribal Nations and are admitted to one of four U of M campuses.

- American Indian Scholars Program (Minnesota): Established in the 2023 Minnesota Legislative Session. Provides a first-dollar tuition and fee-free pathway for eligible enrolled members/citizens of federally recognized American Indian Tribes/First Nations or Minnesota Tribal Nations, attending a Minnesota State institution or U of M campus.

- Augsburg University – American Indian Recognition Full Tuition Program: Covers 100% of unmet tuition and fees for eligible students (American Indian, Alaska Native) pursuing their first bachelor’s degree. Students don’t need to be Minnesota residents.

- University of Minnesota Morris Tuition Waiver: The campus admits American Indian students qualified for admission free of tuition charges, a historic statutory mandate.

These are just a few programs in Minnesota who took the important steps toward educational equity and reparative justice. They provide living examples of how institutions can begin to honor their commitments to Indigenous communities through concrete, systemic action.

**Reflection and Call to Action**

These programs are not the end of

repair; they are the beginning. They show what becomes possible when institutions replace performative allyship with structural commitment, when acknowledgment turns into investment, and when words are met with measurable action.

Minnesota’s steps toward equitable education must now be expanded and replicated nationwide, ensuring that every Tribal Nation has access to the same pathways of restitution and opportunity.

True repair will not come from grants or tuition alone; it will come when Indigenous knowledge, leadership, and sovereignty guide the systems that once sought to silence us. Until then, the work continues. We will keep writing, teaching, organizing, and demanding that our cultures be treated not as costumes or curiosities, but as living, sacred knowledge systems that deserve protection, respect, and return.

**In Closing**

This report is not a shame on anyone but a call to systems of accountability. The endurance Indigenous peoples have shown in the face of centuries of attempted erasure is itself a testament to survival. To those who have profited from misuse of our cultures, it is time to give back. To those willing to listen, I hope you finally understand. To those who are Indigenous, your culture is not a costume; it is sacred. Ending these practices are essential for the dignity, safety, and well-being of Native youth.

Our ceremonies are not costumes; they are living prayers. They are not to be imitated, only honored.

**Sources Cited:**

1. Pratt, Richard Henry. “The Advan-

tages of Mingling Indians with Whites.” Proceedings of the National Conference of Charities and Correction, 1892.

2. Deloria, Philip J. *Playing Indian*. Yale University Press, 1998.

3. Camp Koochiching Historical Archives, 1922–present, International Falls, MN.

4. Indian Reorganization Act, U.S. Public Law 73-383, 1934.

5. United States Boy Scout Activities: Indian Lore.

6. Treuer, Anton. “Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask.”

7. Native Governance Center: “Cultural Appropriation vs Appreciation.” 2021.

8. Native Governance Center: “Beyond Land Acknowledgement: A Guide.” 2021

9. National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). “Tribal Sovereignty and Education.” 2019.

10. Cultural Survival. “Indigenous Rights and Representation.” 2020.

11. Indian Affairs Association. “Historical Overview of U.S. Indian Policy.” 2020.

12. Bois Forte Band of Chippewa. “History and Education Initiatives.” Accessed 2025.

13. University of Minnesota System. Native American Promise Tuition Program. 2022.

14. Minnesota Office of Higher Education. American Indian Scholars Program. 2023.

15. Augsburg University. American Indian Recognition Full Tuition Program. 2022.

16. Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Educational Programs to Consider. 2024.

**Update from the Bois Forte Housing Department**

*Submitted by Millie Holmes*

*Admissions/Occupancy Manager*

Aaniin. Greetings from the staff here in the Bois Forte Housing Department. Rules and regs are our stock in trade as we manage the various housing programs available here on the reservation.

And yes, some more changes have been made when the administration of our department changed at the beginning of November 2025. Was it only one week ago? A lot has hap-

pened in the ensuing month since our last little chat.

And here is the main change:

For December we will be meeting once a week with clients in both Vermilion and Nett Lake from 10 AM-2 PM on Mondays. Then in January 2026 we will switch to the second Friday of the month in Vermilion and the third Friday of the month in Nett Lake.

ChiiMiiGwitch for your support and cooperation as we navigate the waters of Rules and Regulations.

# Morrison impressed by song Bois Forte youth created

NETT LAKE—When David “Squidg” Morrison, Jr. put out a call for Bois Forte youth to step forward for a music experience workshop, he didn’t really know what to expect.

But four days after enlisting the help of Music Producer Tufawon (2 for 1), Morrison was truly blown away by the talents of Bois Forters’ Alyvia Kingbird, Kash Meyer, Wilbur Lein and Raquelle Morgan.

What makes it more impressive is that Kingbird is only 11, while Meyer and Morgan, are only 13 and Lein is just 17.

Morrison said that Tufawon (2 for 1) is a Dakota/Bonicia singer-songwriter, rapper, producer and teaching artist from Minneapolis.

“His music blends hip hop, R&B, dancehall, reggaeton reflecting his identity, struggles, and hopes, while uplifting community voices,” said Morrison in providing Tufawon’s background. “He has a passion for teaching youth by bringing his portable recording studio and giving them the opportunity to make music.”

The Bois Forte youth made an in-



**LASER FOCUSED**— 13-year-old North Woods School student Kash Meyer, left, Tufawon, center, and Wilbur Lein, a 17-year-old student from the Vermilion County School, were busy in the studio creating the song titled, “Aurora.”

stant connection with Tufawon and with his guidance, the four youth created a song called, “Aurora,” which pays homage to the northern lights, which brings to life many feelings for people.

“The Aurora gives people courage, hope, even just the beauty in seeing

them,” said Morrison.

The song meant so much to Morrison that he played it at the 2025 Bois Forte Diabetes Fair at the Iron Trail Event Center in Virginia in mid-November.

“I was so proud of the youth for making such an amazing song,” said

## **SONG TITLE: AURORA**

**Artists:**  
Alyvia Kingbird, 11, Nett Lake Elementary; Kash Meyer, 13, North Woods School; Wilbur Lein, 17, Vermilion County School; and Raquelle Morgan, 13, North Woods School.

**Produced and Cowritten by Tufawon.**

**Executive Producer: Bois Forte Cannabis Prevention Grant.**

**This project was setup by David “Squidg” Morrison Jr.**

Morrison. “In hearing about Tufawon’s music experience and his curriculum, I was excited and jumped at the opportunity to offer such an awesome opportunity for the youth to make some music.”

Those in attendance at the Diabetes Fair listened intently as the song was amplified through the sound system—and it wasn’t hard to see the

*See Morrison page 8*



**READY TO GO**— Nett Lake Elementary student Alyvia Kingbird, left, is shown working with artist Tufawon as part of a music experience workshop that resulted in the creation of a song titled, “Aurora,” which pays homage to the northern lights.



**LIGHTER MOMENT**— Pictured, left to right, are: Kash Meyer, 13, from North Woods School; Alyvia Kingbird, 11, from the Nett Lake Elementary School; Raquelle Morgan, 13, from the North Woods School, and the artist Tufawon.

# Diabetes Fair offers hope and inspiration

VIRGINIA— The 2025 Diabetes Fair had something for everyone, as Bois Forte Band members were treated to several informative breakout sessions offering plenty of tips on how to lead a healthier life.

There was the traditional panel discussion where band members shared their struggles and triumphs with living with diabetes, while there were also sessions on using traditional food as medicine for diabetes, wound care, informational booths, including blood pressure and blood sugar tests; Diabetes and Substance Abuse; and an invigorating exercise session headed up by David “Squid” Morrison.

The latter also provided an opportunity for Morrison to debut a song created by Bois Forte youth as part of a project in Nett Lake (see related story on page 6).

Regarding Morrison’s exercise session, Morrison did a great job of leading the 100 or so band members through a string of exercises that really resonated with those taking part. His timing was perfect as the group had just finished a hearty lunch, and it was a great way to reinvigorate themselves for the remaining sessions of the day.

The exercise started out slowly with Morrison encouraging participants to stretch their calves, followed by marching in place and then recovering for a couple of seconds. This was followed by some arm crosses, back to marching in place, clapping both hands over the head, which then led to Bois Forte Band member Tracey Dagen improvising this exercise with a SKOL chant for her beloved Minnesota Vikings.

The group then stepped things up a tad by doing some knee highs, before going back to marching and then kicking their own behinds to stretch their legs further. It was then back to marching in place, which led attendees to crouch and lunge like they were skiing to gain some speed. From there,

Morrison led the group back to marching, followed by forward arm circles and then reverse arm circles.

“Okay, now do shoulder shrugs,” said Morrison, who then told the group to do reverse shoulder shrugs next. He then had the group bob and weave, left to right and then right to left, like they were a boxer; followed by pretending they were washing windows, up and down with the left hand, followed by up and down with the right hand.

That led some participants to say, “Boy, he’s tough,” “He’s working us hard,” or “He’s not giving us any breaks!”

It was all in good fun though, as Morrison continued his exercises with the attendees, who ranged from kids under five to elders 70+

“Okay, now walk around and tell everyone good job,” said Morrison as he made his way around the room with Lance Kingbird, giving attendees a high five or a fist bump for a job well done.

Morrison was impressed with how everyone in the spacious ballroom at the Iron Trail Event Center let their guards down and eagerly participated in the activity.

“Regular exercise has many benefits for managing diabetes,” said Morrison before giving his session. “It helps improve insulin, lower blood pressure, and blood sugar levels. It also helps improve balance and flexibility, helps lose and maintain weight, reduces stress, tension, and anxiety, and improves your overall health.”

He reminded attendees to consult their doctor before beginning any exercise regimen, as doctors can advise them on whether it is safe for them to undertake. He also said it is essential to warm up and cool down after every exercise.

“You should strive for three to four times a week and go for 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week,” said Morrison. “Spread it over several days and make sure to include stretching



**BUSY LINE!**— Bois Forte’s Earl Villebrun, right, was a busy man working his booth at the 2025 Diabetes Fair, which was held at the Iron Trail Event Center in Virginia, Friday, November 14. Villebrun was assisting Judy Jacka, who had just spun the wheel to win a prize. Pictured in the background was Bois Forte Community Wellness Coordinator Becca Adams, who did a great job with her presentation titled, “Sunchoke, Our 7th Sister,” which centered around the health benefits of using sunflower in their diets.

two times a week, while monitoring your blood sugar levels before and after to see how exercise affects you.”

Earlier in the day, Bois Forte Health and Human Services Public Nurse Dawn Anderson talked about the importance of taking care of your feet.

“Foot care is crucial for people living with diabetes,” said Anderson. “Diabetes can lead to nerve damage (neuropathy) and poor circulation, which can reduce the ability to feel pain and slow down healing.”

She said signs of neuropathy may include burning or sharp pain; numbness or reduced ability to feel pain or temperature; tingling or “pins and needles” sensations; and increased sensitivity to touch.

Her slideshow also talked about what high blood sugar can do to your

blood vessels, which are tubes that carry blood to all parts of your body. If a person’s blood sugar stays high for an extended period of time, it can lead to:

#### **Sticky sugar buildup:**

- Too much sugar in the blood sticks to the walls of the blood vessels, which makes the walls stiff and less flexible, like old rubber bands.

#### **Slower blood flow:**

- Damaged vessels don’t carry blood as well—that means less oxygen and nutrients getting to your feet, eyes, kidneys, and other parts of the body.

#### **Harder to heal:**

- Cuts and sores take longer to heal because the blood can’t bring enough healing power, which can lead to in-

*See Diabetes page 9*

*Morrison from page 6*

impact the youth's music had on Morrison.

"The kids were really committed to this project, and they stayed late each of the four nights they were together to get the song just right," said Morrison, who added that the kids all got permission from their parents to stay roughly two hours late each night.

Morrison said the workshop he helped put on encompassed several steps over the course of the four-day project. Those steps included beat making and producing—creating

beats and playing the guitar and bass guitar.

"It also included songwriting where the youth wrote lyrics, choruses that reflect their voices and stories," said Morrison. "And finally, recording—vocals and bringing their songs to life."

He said because the youth had knowledge of the equipment, they were able to go right into beat making, which helped move the project along.

"They tried various beats until they made the one they wanted to use for the song," said Morrison. "On day two, they began the writing portion—

they sat and vibed to the beat, pulling energy of the beat to guide them in the process of what they wanted to write about. It took courage to write what they wanted to tell."

Days three and four revolved around the kids experimenting with the recording process, which can be a daunting task for sure.

"For never recording music, I couldn't imagine how nervous they were," explained Morrison. "So, recording until they got the right sound was a process. But once they got into the rhythm and process, they were getting the recording done in one shot."

Quite the feat for sure, especially with how well the finished product turned out.

"The youth ended up doing roughly 14 hours for a three-minute song," said Morrison. "I was very impressed with their time, talents and efforts they put into creating the song— I am very proud of them all."

*Note: If you would like a copy of the recording, please email David Morrison, Jr. at dmorrisonjr@boisforte-nsn.gov*

**Supporting Our Community This Holiday Season**

**Supporting Families & Elders in Need • December 1-23**  
**477 is organizing weekly winter-themed baskets to support families and elders in our community. Departments are invited to join the fun, give back, and help brighten the season for households in need.**

**HOW IT WORKS**

- Departments sign up to participate (smaller depts, can team up).
- Once registered, each department chooses a themed basket to create.
- Themes can include: Comfort & Warmth. Family Night. Holiday Treats, Essential Needs, and more.
- Departments gather items throughout the week and assemble their basket.

**BASKET DELIVERY**

- Families and elders can be nominated to receive a basket.
- 477 staff will select recipients from the nominations submitted.
- Baskets will be delivered before December 23.

**NOMINATE A FAMILY OR ELDER**  
**Know someone who could use a little extra support? Submit a confidential nomination to Chrissy in the 477 dept.**  
**Include:**

- Household size
- General needs (children, elder, baby items)
- Any helpful notes (allergies, dietary needs, etc.)

**Department Recognition A winning department will be selected based on:**

- Creativity
- Participation
- Theme execution

**The winner will receive a Trophy of Appreciation from 477!**

**Sign your department up! To participate, contact: Chrissy Fairchild - 477 Program Phone: ext. 1200 chrissyfairchild@boisforte-nsn.gov**

**Once signed up, your department will receive full instructions, deadlines and theme options. Let's make this winter season brighter for our community together!**

**Bois Tribal Enrollment to issue Tribal IDs December 10**

VERMILION SECTOR—Bois Forte Tribal Enrollment will be available at the Vermilion Social Center Office to issue Bois Forte Tribal Identification cards.

The staff will be available on Wednesday, December 10 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. No appointment is needed, but please bring one of the following to receive a Tribal ID:

- Original Certified Birth Certificate

(No photocopies allowed).

- State issued driver's license (Not expired).
- State issued ID card (Not expired).
- Valid passport.

Note: For name changes, please bring legal document.

If you have any questions, please contact Tribal Coordinator Kathie Holman at 218-757-3261, ext. 1162 or [kathie.holman@boisforte-nsn.gov](mailto:kathie.holman@boisforte-nsn.gov)

**Bois Forte Tribal Court is looking for the following individuals:**

Defendant	DOB
Adams, Michael Lorne	05/08/1974
Buckanaga, Christopher Charles	06/26/1969
Burns, Riley William	08/25/1995
Butcher, Ryan Allen James	07/29/1986
Deegan, Peter James	08/21/1977
Drift, Mark Edward Jr.	10/10/1995
Guenthner Jr., Loren Bruce	10/23/1995
Hartland, David Russell	01/19/1970
Hartland, Rustin Kent Sr.	12/13/1976
Hughes, Dustin James Lee	06/16/1990

Defendant	DOB
Isham, John Edward Sr.	04/24/1976
Isham, Michael Bryan	03/01/1983
Jenkins, Robert Wayne	06/20/1960
Johnson, Robert Gerald Jr.	01/22/1996
Lightfeather, Gewedinodin	02/23/1985
Littlewolf, Toni Lynn	01/21/1972
Love, Jacque	11/12/1987
Medicine, David Kevin	06/24/1985
Nelson, Thomas Jr.	06/07/1990
Villebrun, Jordan Frank	06/24/1994

If your name is on this list, you have an active warrant for your arrest by our Court. Please contact the Tribal Court to get your criminal matter addressed. Failure to do so could result in your arrest. If you are reading this and know someone on this list, help them to get the information.

Bois Forte Tribal Court now inputs ac-

tive warrants into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system.

To address your warrant, call the Tribal Court during business hours Monday-Friday 8:00-4:30 at 218-757-3462 and request to be placed on the docket to address your court matters.

**Diabetes from page 7**

fections or wounds that won't go away.  
**Nerve damage:**

- Poor blood flow can also hurt your nerves, causing numbness or pain—especially in your feet.

Anderson said that if you have neuropathy or poor circulation, it can lead to increased risk of infections, increased risk of ulcers, and even amputation.

To prevent these, Anderson said it is important to check your feet daily for cuts, redness, swelling, sores, blisters, corns, calluses, or other changes to the skin or nails.

“Use a mirror if you can't see the bottom of your feet or ask a family member to help,” said Anderson, who also talked about the importance of washing and thoroughly drying your feet daily and then applying lotion to the top and bottoms of your feet, but not between your toes, as that could lead to a fungal infection.

Another tip she mentioned was letting attendees know not to go barefoot when walking, even inside their homes, in case they step on something and get a cut or other injury. She also told attendees to make sure they are wearing shoes that fit well and to trim their nails straight across, not at an

angle, as that could also lead to an infection.

When you go in for a doctor's visit, Anderson said to make sure your provider checks your feet. If they do not offer, make sure you remind them, she cautioned.

“If you notice an injury, sore, or any changes to your feet, contact your doctor right away,” said Anderson, who added that exercise, even walking, can help get your blood flowing to help improve your circulation. “By walking 10 minutes after a meal, you can decrease your blood sugars and increase your circulation, so you can get two things done at once. It really

does help.”

Anderson also implored those living with diabetes to make the necessary lifestyle changes, so they do not end up having to have their toe, feet, or legs amputated.

“Do not let diabetes define you,” said Anderson.

*Editor's note: We will have additional stories from the Diabetes Fair on food been used as medicine; Sunchokes, Our 7th Sister; and the session on Diabetes and Substance Abuse in the January issue.*

## Bois Forte News Briefs

### Early Childhood Program Manager needed

NETT LAKE— The Bois Forte Tribal Government is looking to hire an Early Childhood Program Manager at the Nett Lake office.

The program manager provides leadership and vision in carrying out the day-to-day administration, management, and supervision of the Head Start and Early Head Start Child Care programs by developing and implementing plans, policies and procedures to ensure that Federal, State, Tribal and local regulations and standards under the direction of Tribal Government, Administration and Policy Council are met.

For more information, call 218-757-3261, Ext. 1200 or fill out an application at [boisforte.com/employment/](http://boisforte.com/employment/)

### Cook needed for Early Childhood program

NETT LAKE— A cook is needed at the Early Childhood program in Nett Lake. The cook is responsible for the food service program, planning, ordering, preparation, clean up and record keeping for children, staff and parents and other program people.

The cook prepares menus and submits records of daily food production,

inventory, purchases, orders groceries and related items.

The person hired follows all child and adult food program, Head Start nutrition, childcare and Indian Health Service regulations.

You can fill out an application at [boisforte.com/employment/](http://boisforte.com/employment/) or call 218-757-3261, Ext. 1200.

### Teacher's Aide needed

VERMILION SECTOR—The Bois Forte Early Childhood Program is looking to hire a teacher's aide at the Vermilion offices.

The Head Start Teacher's Aide is responsible in assisting the Head Start teacher in carrying out the classroom activities and component plans and will provide support through classroom and playground supervision of all children. Must work closely with parents and families to secure the needs of the children in the classroom.

For more information, call 218-757-3261, Ext. 1200 or fill out an application at [boisforte.com/employment/](http://boisforte.com/employment/)

### Winter Craft Wreath Making Class

COOK—Bois Forte is putting on a Winter Craft Wreath Making Class in Cook on December 6.

The class is being held at the Watering Can Shop, 210 Vermilion Drive, beginning at 10 a.m.

Crafting will take place in the greenhouse and will require standing, using a pruning tool and bending wire. Please note there is no bathroom available.

To sign up, call Jill Schuchard at 218-410-3293.

### Diabetes Cooking Class

VERMILION SECTOR— Bois Forte is putting on a Diabetes Cooking Class from noon until 1 p.m. on Thursday, December 18 at the Vermilion Social Center.

Attendees will make a chicken salad sandwich and mini-pumpkin tart.

Each attendee will receive an insulated grocery tote, groceries for recipe, a \$20 Super One gift card and be treated to a fun game of Jeopardy for additional prizes!

This event is limited to the first 20 people who sign up via email to Melissa Hawk or Julie Skoglund. You must sign up before 3 p.m. on December 17.

### Bake Sale scheduled!

NETT LAKE— If you would like to support the Bois Forte Head Start and Early Head Start programs, please stop

by the Reservation Tribal Government Building on December 8!

The bake sale will take place in the main entryway of the Reservation Tribal Government Building, which is located at 5344 Lakeshore Dr., from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m.

This is a great way to help reduce your stress by having someone else bake your holiday goodies!

### Anties Tea Time!

VERMILION SECTOR AND NETT LAKE — If herbal tea is your cup of tea, then you'll want to join host April Smith for Anties Tea Time on December 18!

Smith will show attendees how to make herbal teas—there is limited seating for both classes, which are sponsored by the Bois Forte Food Sovereignty program.

Smith's first session will take place at the Vermilion Social Center from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m., followed by a session at the Nett Lake ENP from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m.

To sign up, scan the QR code — thank you!





# Minute with Millie



Today's view out my window is slightly bleak for a change. Where did the summer go? The Winter months are upon us.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's holiday season which is always kicked off, least for us residents of the ol' hometown of Nett Lake, with the advent of Halloween, then Thanksgiving rounding off the annual Gifting Season with New Year's Day.

But, you may asking yourself, why is this day slightly bleak?

It's wet, cold and dark just before sunrise. I keep looking for the first rays

of sunshine. Lo an behold...none. The sky is full of clouds hiding the face of the morning sunrise.

I know it's on its way cause the sky keeps lighting up with a slightly grayish tint. I fling the curtains shut with speed when the cold air seeps through the window panes I forgot to cover with caulking and plastic of some sort.

Hence, the bleakness.

I'd planned, this year, to have all my windows freshly caulked and blocked with plastic so I could at least watch for sunrise with some clarity. Nope.

Gotta hide behind the curtains

hoping the clouds dissipate before I must venture out into the freezing cold air hoping the car will start. Even with the handy dandy new battery, it can be pretty iffy as to whether or not the car will start of a given morning. Thereby forcing me to either walk or catch some one of the various relatives who are also trekking to work with hopefully warm cars.

Yep, mighty bleak outside right about now.

## Bois Forte Obituary

### David Russell Hartland Sr.

David Russell Hartland Sr., age 55, passed away on Wednesday, October 29, 2025. He was born on January 19, 1970, to Russell and Janice (Cury) Hartland in Minneapolis, MN.

David was a master electrician and a certified HV/AC technician. He was very experienced and good at what he did. He enjoyed working on houses and cars. He also loved to drive cars, which he did at an early age for his liking. He loved cats and beer and was very outgoing. He was kind and protective and looked out for his family. He was a good son and father.

David was preceded in death by his mother Janice Hartland; uncles: Alec, Howard and Arthur; and aunts: Myrna and Annie.

David is survived by his father Russell Hartland and his wife Dorothy; children: Justin Hartland-Hank, David Hartland Jr, Alerick Hartland and Nevaha Hartland; brothers: Dan P. Curry Sr. and Rustin Hartland; and many nieces and nephews.

A Wake was held on Thursday, November 6, 2025, at the Vermilion Wellness Center in Tower. The Traditional Service took place Friday, November 7, 2025.



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

**Dec. 1:** Chicken Fried Steak, Mashed Potatoes, Country Gravy, Peas & Carrots, Fruit

**Dec. 2:** Pork Chop, Rice Pilaf, Cauliflower, Fruit

**Dec. 3:** Chicken Noodle Soup, Dinner Roll, Fruit

**Dec. 4:** Lasagna, California Veggies, Garlic Bread, Fruit

**Dec. 5:** Tator Tot Hotdish, Green Beans, Fruit

**Dec. 8:** Goulash, Peas, Bread Stick, Fruit

**Dec. 9:** Taco in a Bag, Spanish Rice, Lettuce, Salsa, Sour Cream, Fruit

**Dec. 10:** Wild Rice Meatballs, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Corn, Chef's Choice of Fruit

**Dec. 11:** Breakfast Hotdish, Potato Wedges or Tots, Muffin, Chef's Choice of Fruit

**Dec. 12:** Closed - Employee Holiday Party

**Dec. 15:** Roast Beef, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Roasted Root Vegetables, Chef's Choice of Fruit

**Dec. 16:** BBQ Pork Riblette, AuGra-

December 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12
	14	15	16	17	18	19
	21	22	23	24	25	26
	28	29	30	31	1	2
					3	

tin Potatoes, Broccoli Slaw, Chef's Choice of Fruit

**Dec. 17:** Grilled Chicken Breast, Rice Pilaf, Italian Blend Vegetables, Chef's Choice of Fruit

**Dec. 18:** Bison/Beef Meatloaf, Baked Sweet Potato, Brussel Sprouts, Chef's Choice of Fruit

**Dec. 19:** Stir Fry Chicken/Egg Roll, Stir Fry Vegetables, Steamed Brown Rice, Chef's Choice of Fruit

**Dec. 22:** Chicken Pot Pie, Biscuit, Steamed Broccoli, Chef's Choice of Fruit

**Dec. 23:** Ham, Scalloped Potatoes, Peas, Fruit

**Dec. 24-26:** Holiday Garden Vegetable Soup, Chicken Salad Croissant, Fruit

**Dec. 29:** Breaded Chicken Patty, Poultry Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Peas, Dinner Roll, Fruit

**Dec. 30:** Pork Chow Mein, Rice, Chef's Choice of Fruit

**Dec. 31:** Beef/Bison Stew, Seven Grain Bun, Green Bean Casserole, Chef's Choice of Fruit

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Bois Forte Tribal Council and the Reservation Tribal Government employees—may your holiday season be filled with health, happiness and new memories shared with your loved ones!

# Pilot program addresses youth housing instability

VERMILION SECTOR— One does not have to look very far to find some success stories from the Ozhitoon Onwaachige (Building Future) Direct Cash Transfer Pilot Program.

After all, the pilot program tabbed 30 Bois Forte Band members and descendants (aged 18-24) to provide them with some much-needed financial assistance as well as personal guidance in how they can create a positive future for themselves.

One such success story is Talia Carlson, who is 20 years old, graduated last May with an associate's degree in nursing, and is currently working on her bachelor's degree at Bemidji State University.

"Nursing isn't just a career for me — it's how I live out my role as a healer, turning the pain of the past into hope for the future," shared Carlson at a recent conference in Rochester, Minnesota, highlighting the pilot program.

Like many young adults, finding affordable housing and sometimes just a place to sleep can be challenging. For Carlson, housing instability has always been a constant in her life.

"Growing up with a single mom, there were times we slept in the car because we didn't have anywhere else to go. By the time I was 16 or 17, I was living with my grandpa, but that environment wasn't safe for me," said Carlson. "When I turned 18, I bounced between different places — my ex-boyfriend's parents' house, his grandparents' house, and then a townhouse where I was eventually kicked out. There were even nights I slept in my own car because I had nowhere else to go."

But thanks to the Ozhitoon Onwaachige (Building Future) Direct Cash Transfer Pilot Program, Carlson no longer has to worry about that, and she's incredibly grateful to the likes of Sarah Kinnunen, Amanda Helgerson, Michelle Smith, and Malita Spears.

That's because the aforementioned worked extremely hard to make Bois Forte the first Indigenous specific direct cash transfer pilot program in the nation. All four work for Bois Forte's Housing Stability Program, which is supervised by Theresa Drift, and delivers a range of support services designed to address and reduce housing instability with youth in the community.

And the work the women do, along with the pilot program, has been a Godsend to Carlson.

"What sticks with me most isn't just moving from place to place, but the feeling that the ground could be pulled out from under me at any moment. When you grow up like that, you start to view the world as against you," said Carlson. "But over time,



LIKE A FAMILY!— Members of the Bois Forte Housing Stability program attended a conference in Rochester touting the new pilot program that helps Bois Forte young adults pay for housing. Pictured, left to right, are: Sarah Kinnunen, Amanda Helgerson, Alexis Martinez, Tylila Carlson, D'Marko Connor, Michelle Smith, and Malita Spears. Martinez, Carlson and Connor, who are participants in the pilot program, did a great job telling the attendees how the program has helped turn their lives around.

I've learned that those experiences didn't break me — they gave me strength. They taught me how to survive, how to keep going, and how to fight for the stability I deserve. And now, I carry that strength into everything I do."

Kinnunen said that one of the key initiatives of the Ozhitoon Onwaachige (building future) direct cash transfer pilot program is supporting 30 band members and descendants residing in St. Louis County and Hennepin County. She added that this innovative pilot program provides direct financial support to individuals, empowering them to secure and maintain stable housing.

"Together, we work collaboratively to ensure that Bois Forte band members, particularly those ages 18 to 24, have the resources and support they'll need to thrive," explained Kinnunen, who credited St. Louis County, YouthPrise, and Chapin Hall for making the pilot program possible. "Our work reinforces the community's overall well-being, resilience, and future prosperity."

Carlson was one of roughly three dozen band members or descendants who agreed to apply for the pilot program, without really knowing what was in it for them when filling out some forms. They viewed the paperwork as a way to let others know about the struggles they faced in finding affordable housing, especially in this day and age.

"It's just amazing — anything we've asked them to do they've just been willing to do it," said Smith of the 30 participants in the pilot program, who have to fill out monthly surveys to retain their eligibility.

"One of the biggest takeaways for me is just thinking where these kids would be without this program. It makes me think of how many other people this type of program could benefit, because some of them were literally homeless on the streets with nowhere to go."

Of the 30 youth selected via lottery for the pilot program, 10 live in northern St. Louis County, 10 in southern St. Louis County, and the other 10 in Hennepin County.

Those living in northern St. Louis County receive \$900 a month to help with rent and a one-time \$5,000 payment that can be used for any other needs they have. Those living in southern St. Louis County or Hennepin County receive \$1,000 a month, plus a one-time \$3,000 stipend to be used as they see fit. The pilot program runs for two years, and Kinnunen is hopeful it will become a permanent program to help others down the road. Those who were not selected in the lottery were referred to Lutheran Social Services to receive similar funding under its own pilot program called, "Investing in YOUth."

The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless conference in Rochester was a chance for the youth to let attendees know just how much the pilot program helped turn their lives around. A PowerPoint presentation highlighted the success stories that have unfolded since its inception last February. Within the presentation, three Bois Forte band members, Jeff Boshey III, Jamie Drift, and Israel Staine, talked about how much the financial support means to them as they work to get back on track.

*See Housing page 12*

## Bois Forte Tribal Council Special Meeting Minutes

### Minutes of a Special meeting, Regular Session, of the Bois Forte Reservation Tribal Council held September 17, 2025, at RTG-Eagle Room, Nett Lake, Minnesota-Hybrid.

Meeting called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Invocation done by Vern Adams.

Members Present: Carlos Hernandez, Tara Geshick, Shane Drift, Robert Moyer, Jr. (quorum present)

Members Absent: None

Others Present: See attached sign in for in-person and virtual attendees.

Moved by Robert Moyer, Jr.; seconded by Tara Geshick; to approve the agenda with the following addition: Statement from DNR Director and Conservation Committee regarding bear hunt. Carried 3-0-0

Moved by Tara Geshick; seconded by Robert Moyer, Jr.; to approve RTC meeting minutes from Special Meeting held September 3,

2025. Carried 3-0-0

Moved by Robert Moyer, Jr.; seconded by Tara Geshick; to approve RTC meeting minutes from Special Meeting held September 8, 2025. Carried 3-0-0

Moved by Shane Drift; seconded by Tara Geshick; to approve RTC meeting minutes from Special Meeting held September 12, 2025. Carried 3-0-0

Moved by Shane Drift; seconded by Tara Geshick; to approve the consent agenda as follows:

a) THPO-Lagoon excavation and recommendations 3-0-0

b) Donation Committee Recommendation-Terry Goodsky attend Hawaii all nation powwow 3-0-0

c) Resolution No. 26-2026, changing Park State Bank signatories for the Wilderness 3-0-0

Carried 3-0-0

Moved by Robert Moyer, Jr.; seconded by Tara Geshick; to approve donation committee recommendation of \$500 to the Pelican Lake Pickleball Association. Carried 3-0-0

Moved by Robert Moyer, Jr.; seconded by Tara Geshick; to approve all BIA 105 (I) fund stgo into one fund with sub departments, Moved by Robert Moyer, Jr.; seconded by Tara Geshick; to approve authorization for the chair to sign letter to BIA for 105(I) renewal request for FY 2026.

Carried 3-0-0

Moved by Shane Drift; seconded by Robert Moyer, Jr.; to table the State of MN Joint powers agreement for consulting services from the band with design and construction administration of a new multi-use structure and surrounding amenities at Lake Vermilion-Soudan Underground Mine State Park. Carried 3-0-0

Moved by Tara Geshick; seconded by Robert Moyer, Jr.; to approve the Mutual Aid Agreement for Public Health and Human Services and the use of resources including personnel and equipment with Aitkin County, Bois Forte Band of Chippewa; Carlton County, Cook County, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa; Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa; Itasca County; Koochiching County; Lake County; Leech Lake Ban of Ojibwe; and St. Louis County.

Carried 3-0-0

Miranda Lilya reads a statement from the DNR Director and the conservation committee regarding the bear hunt.

Moved by Robert Moyer, Jr.; seconded by Tara Geshick; to adjourn at 11:11 a.m.

Carried 3-0-0

Prepared by: Frances Irving

Approved at Regular RTC Meeting: October 1, 2025

### *Housing from page 11*

"I'm grateful for this opportunity," said the 21-year-old Boshey III, who is currently going to college full-time and is the father of an 8-month-old daughter. "I'd also just like to give thanks and some acknowledgment to those putting in the effort and the work to make this possible—not only myself, but all of the others involved in the program.... I'm truly honored to be part of it."

Boshey said the funds he receives each month have taken a massive weight off his shoulders.

"These funds have been a tremendous help considering I'm a young parent trying to do it all on my own here," said Boshey III, who was born and raised in Duluth.

Drift, who is 24 and grew up on the Nett Lake Reservation, has had some experiences with homelessness and is now living a better life due to the funds he receives.

"I'm just kind of getting into the real world after living on the reservation my whole life," said Drift. "You know, the biggest challenges I'm currently facing right now are maybe just getting into a routine of working and living life, I guess."

He added that the program and other resources he has received from Bois Forte's Housing Stability program have really helped turn his life around—the same can be said of Staine, who is also 24 years old.

"I'm really grateful for this program because I got a place and I'm living on my own," said Staine. "And I'm working on myself, so yeah, I'm thankful."

While the videos were a nice addition to the PowerPoint, Kinnunen said the speeches given by

Carlson, Alexis Martinez, and D'Marco Connor were very impactful and showed just how much this pilot program means to the 30 participants.

"I would say my biggest takeaway is how amazing the three young people were speaking in front of a crowd of professionals," said Kinnunen. "We had people from the state of Minnesota in attendance, and we didn't let them know that until after the conference because I didn't want them to get nervous. They did an excellent job telling the attendees how much this pilot program has meant to them."

For Helgerson, her most significant takeaway from the conference was seeing the development they've all shown since joining the pilot program.

"Listening to these kids and being there for these kids and seeing them grow in ways that they weren't able to before was inspiring," said Helgerson, who was tremendously proud while taking in their stories they shared with attendees. "We're all helping them to become a better person, so just kind of being there alongside them and letting them know that if they need us, we are here for them."

It's that type of bond Kinnunen, Helgerson, Smith, and Spears did not seek out when working to get this program off the ground, but it's one they definitely embrace today.

"Help is there, you just have to be patient because things don't always happen fast," said Smith. "I've had my own experience with homelessness, so I understand the barriers because I've been through it—just remember there is hope."

Helgerson had similar words of optimism for those experiencing homelessness or other forms of housing instability.

"We are letting them know we are on their side,"



ENJOYING A LIGHTER MOMENT!— Amanda Helgerson, left, Talia Carlson, center, and Alexis Martinez, right, seem to be having a great time at the conference in Rochester. Submitted photo.

said Helgerson, who has also experienced homelessness. "And if they need help—just keep reaching out because somewhere, somehow, somebody will know something. We have resources, and that is what we're here for."

For more information on Bois Forte Housing Stability programs, please call 218-753-3131.