



Covering the Ho-Chunk Nation



HOC AK WORAK



Vol. XL, Issue 7

Ho hiroginiṅ wira | Fish Drying Moon

April 10, 2026



National 2026 Reservation Economic Summit in Las Vegas Features Ho-Chunk Voices

Page 3



HCN Education Department Employee Spotlight: Arielle Hall

Page 4



2026 Graduate Showcase Materials Due June 19

Page 8

Imagine This & Indian Gaming Association Honors Kathy DeCamp with 2026 Native American Woman of the Year

Congratulations to Kathy DeCamp, General Manager of Ho-Chunk Gaming Nekoosa, on being honored as the 2026 Native American Woman of the Year by Imagine This and the Indian Gaming Association (IGA). The award recognizes individuals who demonstrate exceptional leadership and a lifelong commitment to strengthening their tribal communities through service and involvement in tribal gaming.

With over 30 years of experience in gaming, Kathy's dedication to the Ho-Chunk Nation and her exceptional leadership in gaming operations and tribal governance have made a lasting impact. A proud U.S. Army veteran, Kathy's journey of service began in the military, where she learned the values of discipline and duty—principles that continue to guide her today.

Since 1991, she has devoted herself to the Ho-Chunk Nation, including her time as a legislator, where she embraced the profound responsibility of practicing sovereignty within tribal enterprises. Her leadership reflects

a lifelong commitment to integrity, resilience, and service to others.

In her heartfelt acceptance, Kathy expressed deep gratitude to Imagine This – IGA, her team, and the family and

friends who have supported and believed in her along the way. She shared that her energy and passion come from the people she serves—a true testament to her character and purpose.

Kathy is an inspiration to us all, and the Ho-Chunk Nation is beyond proud. Congratulations, Kathy, on this well-deserved honor as Native American Woman of the Year!



U.S. Army Veteran and respected leader within the Ho-Chunk Nation, Kathy DeCamp, was presented the award at the 2026 Indian Gaming Tradeshow and Convention in San Diego, CA.

FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 203
Eau Claire, WI

HOC AK WORAK NEWSPAPER
P.O. BOX 667
BLACK RIVER FALLS, WI 54615

HOC AK WORAK NEWSPAPER
TEL: (800) 472-3089 FAX: (715) 284-7852
Please notify the Newspaper of any address changes or corrections

District 1 Community Supply Drive Supports Our Relatives in the Twin Cities

The District 1 Community Supply Drive has come to a close, and the Ho-Chunk Nation Legislative Branch is grateful for the donations and help.

This effort began as a motion from the Black River Falls District 1 community to support our relatives in the Twin Cities—especially those facing challenges getting out of their homes or navigating the city. Donations came in from across many Ho-Chunk communities.

Continued on Page 15



INSIDE SCOOP...

Letters.....	2
News.....	2-4
Announcements.....	4-10
Health.....	7-10
Notices.....	10-11,13
Legislative Minutes.....	12-13
Shoutouts.....	14-15
Ads.....	16

Want something special placed in the Hocak Worak? Limited space is available so send your request in early. Submissions will be handled on a first come first serve basis.

Madison365 Recognizes Ho-Chunk Leaders Among Wisconsin's Most Influential Native Voices for 2026

Kailli Berg

Several Ho-Chunk leaders are being recognized among Wisconsin's most influential Native voices for 2026.

The list, published by Madison365, includes 28 Indigenous leaders from across the state. The annual recognition highlights Native leaders shaping their communities and aims to inspire future generations.

Among those honored are multiple members of the Ho-Chunk Nation.

Sherman Funmaker, a Bear Clan elder from Baraboo, was recognized for his work as a poet, storyteller, and cultural educator. His recent book, *Bear Tracks: Memories of a Ho-Chunk Elder*, reflects on his upbringing and helps pass down Ho-Chunk history and teachings.

Tara Tindall was honored for her leadership in education as Native American teacher leader in the Madison Metropolitan School District, where she supports Native students and helps guide culturally accurate curriculum under Act 31.

In the health field, Will Funmaker was recognized

for his work as director of the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center and executive director of the Great Lakes Area Tribal Health Board, improving health outcomes for Native communities across the region.

Casey Brown, a filmmaker and cultural preservationist, was also named to the list. His work documenting Ho-Chunk history and art, including an Emmy Award-winning film on Truman Lowe, continues to elevate Indigenous storytelling.

The statewide list also includes leaders from other tribal nations and communities across Wisconsin, representing a wide range of fields.

Those recognized include Nathan King, Katie Ackley, Dr. Lauren W. Yowelunh McLester-Davis, Dr. Jeneile Luebke, Alexx Zawada, Natasha Chevalier, Vincent Miresse, Lauren Cornelius, Debra J. Danforth, and Dr. James E. Pete, among others.

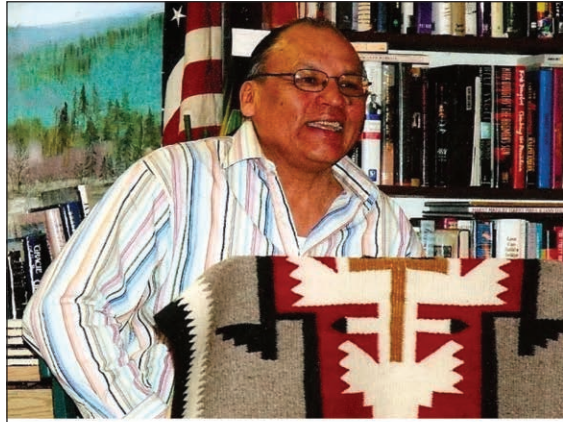
Additional honorees named throughout the five-part series include Nicole Boyd, Gimiwan Dustin Burnette,

Elizabeth Arbuckle, Tracey Cordova, Alison Bowman, Biskakone Greg Johnson, and others highlighted for their

work in leadership, culture, education, and community development.

Madison365 notes that

the list is not exhaustive but reflects the depth and diversity of Native leadership across the state.



Sherman Funmaker, Tara Tindall, Will Funmaker, and Casey Brown are the Ho-Chunk leaders spotlighted for shaping their communities and who aim to inspire future generations.

Gov. Evers Slams President Trump, Announces Lawsuit Against Efforts to Undermine Wisconsin's Safe and Secure Elections

Governor makes good on promise to take president to court over new illegal effort to suppress the rights of voters

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced Wisconsin is joining a new multi-state lawsuit in response to President Donald J.

Trump's latest executive order directing the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to force states to use a nationwide list of voters provided by the Trump Administration, further suppressing the rights of voters, undermining democracy, and sowing

distrust in Wisconsin's fair, safe, and secure elections.

"Thanks to Wisconsin's dedicated clerks, election administrators, and poll workers, our state's elections are safe, free, and secure—and we want to keep them that way. In America, states

run our elections, not the president, and the president cannot just wake up one morning and decide to rewrite our laws because he doesn't like them—that's not how laws work in this country," said Gov. Evers. "I was clear from the get-go we'd

sue President Trump over this illegal order that tries to radically change our elections and potentially disenfranchise millions of eligible voters, and we're delivering on that promise today."

Earlier this week, Gov. *Continued on Page 5*

Aho hñjkaragiwi,
We are deeply grateful for all the love, support, and prayers we received during this time of my mom's passing. It has been a difficult time, but it was made more bearable through your kindness and presence. We are truly blessed with an amazing family and community. Even in her passing, my mom brought us all together.
Our sons/Cušges traveled home from afar—one from Colorado, and another who was granted leave while serving in the U.S. Marine Corps. It meant so much to have them here. My sister and her family also returned safely from their trip, and many relatives and friends traveled great distances to be with us, surrounding us with comfort and strength.
We are eternally thankful to our Cexji hikikarač, Hųų hikikarač, and Woonagire Waąš'ik hikikarač relatives. Your hard work, kindness, and unwavering support lifted us during this time. Your strength carried us through, and we are beyond grateful, humbled, and appreciative.
We were honored to provide a beautiful military service for my mom, with the assistance of three American Legion posts: Sanford White Eagle Post 556 of Baraboo, Joseph J. White Post 442 of Wisconsin Rapids, and Andrew Blackhawk Post 129. Two active service members of the U.S. Air Force traveled from North Dakota to present the American flag. It was incredibly moving to witness all the Hinųk Wašoše who stood guard by Mom.
To everyone who visited Mom at the Tomah VA, to the medical staff who provided such compassionate care, and to all who attended the wake and funeral, sent messages, or called to support me and my family—we are truly thankful and blessed to have you in our lives.
My Mom is whole again. She is with our relatives and loved ones who have gone before us. Her journey continues now.
Pñinagigiwiŋo,
Wa'iniŋinapwiŋa,
Fletcher Collins and Family

Contribution Supports Early-Learning Space at the Beloit Public Library

Ho-Chunk Nation District 3 Rep. Shelby Visintin recently presented a contribution at the Beloit Public Library in support of Discovery PLAYce, alongside library leadership including Nick Dimassis.

This contribution will help fund the Native Ecology Area—an interactive space designed to give kids and families a place to explore, play, and learn together. The area will include hands-on features like musical cattails and a musical dragonfly, along with nature-themed visuals and literacy elements built into the space to encourage curiosity and early learning.

Pinagigi to everyone who helped make this possible.



National 2026 Reservation Economic Summit in Las Vegas Features Ho-Chunk Voices

Kaili Berg

Tribal leaders, entrepreneurs and policymakers from across Indian Country gathered March 23–26 for the 2026 Reservation Economic Summit (RES), hosted by the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development at Caesars Palace.

Known as the largest Native business conference in the country, RES brings together thousands of attendees for networking, business development sessions, and policy discussions focused on strengthening tribal economies.

This year’s theme, “Rising Together,” highlighted collaboration and growth across Indigenous communities.

The four-day conference

featured dozens of breakout sessions and panels covering topics such as economic development, entrepreneurship, federal contracting, financial literacy, and emerging industries like cannabis.

Among those contributing to the national conversation were members of the Ho-Chunk Nation.

Ryan Crain, Executive Director of Education for the Ho-Chunk Nation, spoke during the panel “Empowering Citizens: Financial Literacy in Tribal Communities,” where he shared insights into the Ho-Chunk Nation’s financial literacy program.

The session focused on building stronger financial knowledge at the community

Continued on Page 13



Executive Director of Education Ryan Crain shares insights into the Ho-Chunk Nation's Financial Literacy Program.

Former Miss Indian Worlds react to the pageant ending after 42 years *‘It’s really beautiful to see how far that title has taken a lot of young women’*

Kalle Benallie

Reprint from ICT

As one major powwow is being held for the last time, another iconic title will fade alongside it.

The Gathering of Nations is ending this year after 43 years, with it, the title of “Miss Indian World” is too.

Over 41 Indigenous women from across North America

have held the title.

They traveled and spoke on behalf of the Gathering of Nations and their tribes. The Gathering of Nations and “Miss Indian World” was created by Derek and Lita Mathews in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Since its inception, it became one of the largest powwows and prestigious pageantry titles in

Indigenous communities.

For five days, dozens of contestants prove their public speaking skills, traditional talent, dance, write an essay and conduct an interview.

Now, Dania Wahwasuck, Prairie Band Potawatomi and Pyramid Lake Paiute, will be the last Miss Indian World and the title, “Miss Indian World” can no longer be used

further since it’s copyrighted by the Gathering of Nations.

“To young women who will not have the opportunity to compete moving forward, we ask that you continue to embody qualities of Miss Indian World. Keep practicing and learning about your culture and languages. Continue to shine bright and bring hope to your

community. You make us all proud,” the Gathering of Nations posted on their website.

Miss Indian World 2013-2014, Kansas Begaye, said she was emotional finding out it was not continuing because she was once that little girl who felt inspired by Miss Indian World.

Continued on Page 14

Refusing to Let Relatives be Forgotten *Book Review of Where They Last Saw Her*

Submitted by Ryan John Crain, Sr.

In *Where They Last Saw Her*, Marcie R. Rendon tells a powerful story that reflects a reality many Native communities know all too well. Set in the Midwest, the novel follows Quill, a determined Native woman who hears a scream in the woods and can't shake the feeling that something terrible has happened. Quill begins to uncover a troubling pattern of missing Indigenous women in her community. As she searches for answers, the story

unfolds into both a gripping mystery and a testament to the strength of Native women who refuse to let their relatives be forgotten.

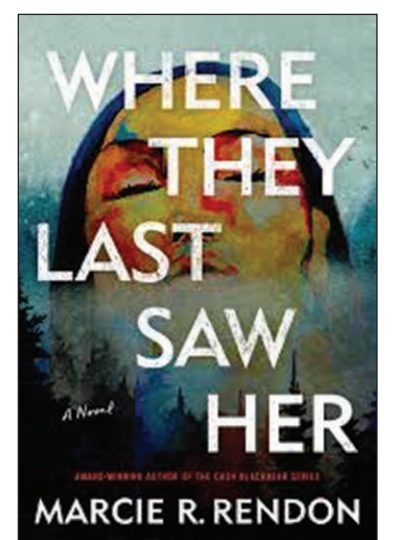
Rendon writes with authenticity and care, reflecting the ongoing crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW). The book does not sensationalize violence; instead, it centers on community, resilience, and the responsibility to protect one another when outside systems fall short. Quill is a particularly compelling

protagonist: flawed, brave, and deeply devoted to her people. Her determination anchors the story and keeps readers invested even during its darkest moments.

For our own tribal community, this story echoes the advocacy work happening locally—whether through awareness walks, Heart Spirits, community forums, youth education, or partnerships with tribal law enforcement. Like Quill, many of our relatives continue to speak up, organize, and demand accountability.

Where They Last Saw Her is more than a thriller. It is a reminder that storytelling can be a form of advocacy—honoring those we have lost while strengthening the movement to protect those still with us.

The Ho-Chunk Community Library houses a collection of over 7,000 books and resources, with a significant emphasis on works by Indigenous authors. Hours currently are Monday through Thursday, 10 am to 7 pm, and by appointment.



Attention: The Next Deadline of the Hocak Worak will be April 17th which will be published on April 24th. Please contact Hocak Worak at ext. 11004 if you have a change of address or would like to be placed on the mailing list.

The Hocak Worak is a periodical published twice monthly by the Ho-Chunk Nation. Editorials and articles appearing in the Hocak Worak are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or attitude of the Hocak Worak staff or the Ho-Chunk Nation.

The Hocak Worak encourages the submission of letters to the Editor. All letters must include the signature, address and telephone number of the author. Letters are subject to editing for grammar, length, malicious and libelous content. The Hocak Worak reserves the right to reject any advertising, material, or letters submitted for publication. The submission of articles, poetry, artwork and photos is encouraged. The Editor makes the sole decision of what is published in the Hocak Worak. The Hocak Worak will not assume any responsibility for unsolicited material.

Submissions deadlines for the Hocak Worak are by 4:30 PM. We cannot guarantee the publication of submissions meeting these deadlines if the space is not available. No part of this publication may be produced without express written consent from the Editor.

HOCÁK WORÁK NEWSLETTER
P.O. Box 667, Black River Falls, WI 54615

- **PHONE:** (800) 472-3089
- **FAX:** (715) 284-7852
- **EMAIL:** newsletter@ho-chunk.com
- **ONLINE:** www.ho-chunknation.com

www.hocakworak.com

The Hocak Worak is a member of:
Indigenous Journalists Association

INDIGENOUS Journalists Association

WNA 2016 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST AWARD WINNER
WISCONSIN NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION

Ho-Chunk Nation Education Department Employee Spotlight: Arielle Hall

We are excited to recognize Arielle Hall, Tutor Services Division Director for the Ho-Chunk Nation, for her leadership, dedication, and generous spirit.

Ms. Hall brings 10 years of classroom teaching experience into her role, giving her a strong foundation in instructional practice and student support. She now channels that experience into guiding and supporting our tutor services staff, ensuring they have the tools, knowledge, and encouragement needed to help students succeed.

Arielle is especially known for her deep understanding of Act 31 and her commitment to sharing that knowledge with others. She consistently works to strengthen awareness, understanding, and implementation, helping ensure educational environments are culturally informed and responsive.

With many talents and skills, Ms. Hall is always willing to step up and

volunteer her time to support initiatives that benefit students, staff, and the broader community. Her willingness to serve reflects her genuine care and dedication.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Arielle's heart shines through in her love for her kiddos and her horse—both of which bring her great joy and balance.

Thank you, Ms. Hall, for your leadership, expertise, and the passion you bring to Tutor Services each and every day!



PART-TIME CORRECTIONS OFFICER JACKSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Jackson County Sheriff's Office is accepting applications to fill current part-time Corrections Officer vacancies. Position is responsible for guarding inmates in the penal institution in accordance with established policies, regulations, and procedures. This is a non-sworn position without arrest powers.

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS: Applicants must be 18 years of age, possess a high school diploma or equivalent, post-secondary course work and/or knowledge of public safety and security is preferred. Must possess a valid Wisconsin driver's license.

2026 Starting Wage is \$25.34 per hour. These are non-benefited positions.

To apply, scan the QR code or visit our Employment Opportunities page at www.co.jackson.wi.us. Deadline will remain open until filled.



Jackson County Human Resources Department
307 Main Street – 2nd Floor
Black River Falls, WI 54615
715-284-0216
www.co.jackson.wi.us
Jackson County is an EEO/AA/ADA Employer
Jackson County is a Family Friendly Workplace

Ho-Chunk Elders

Are you have problems filling your prescription drugs; Benistar or Express Scripts?

We can help, contact the Ho-Chunk Insurance Division 1-800-232-0086.

Wisconsin's General Fishing Season Opens May 2; New Regulations In Effect

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds anglers the 2026 – 2027 general inland fishing season will open statewide Saturday, May 2. Several new regulations and season structures are now in effect, and anglers are encouraged to review the regulations before hitting the water.

With more than 15,000 inland lakes, 42,000 miles of perennial streams and rivers, 1,000 miles of Great Lakes shoreline and 260 miles of the Mississippi River, there are plenty of great places to wet a line over opening weekend and all season long.

No matter where anglers decide to fish, all Wisconsin residents and nonresidents age 16 or older are required to purchase a fishing license. Annual resident licenses cost \$20 each, or purchase a spousal license for \$31 so you and your spouse can fish together. All fishing licenses and stamps can be purchased online via Go Wild, at a registered sales location or at DNR Service Centers.

What's New For 2026 –

2027?

Several new regulations, season structures and bag limits have been implemented this season. These changes include:

- The statewide inland trout season opens April 4 and run through Oct. 15, 2026.
- The muskellunge season opens May 2 on all inland waters of the state. There is no longer a separate season for the Northern Zone.
- The muskellunge season structures for the Great Lakes, Green Bay and Michigan/Minnesota boundary waters are unchanged.
- A catch-and-release season for lake sturgeon will occur on select waters from June 6, 2026 through March 7, 2027.
- New lake and species-specific bag and length limits are in place on specific waters across the state.

Anglers can find a full list of the 2026 – 2027 fishing regulation changes along with the full 2026 – 2027 hook and line fishing and trout fishing regulations on the DNR's Fishing Regulations webpage. Protecting The Resource As anglers head out to their

favorite fishing locations across the state, the DNR would like to share these reminders:

- Help minimize the spread

of aquatic invasive species by removing plants and animals from boats before and after launching, draining all water from compartments and never

moving live fish away from any waterbody.

- To prevent the spread of fish diseases, remove all

Continued on Page 12

SHERMAN FUNMAKER

April 24th 5pm-7pm

BEAR TRACKS
MEMORIES OF A HO-CHUNK ELDER



- Ho-Chunk Author Book Talk / Q&A
- Book Signing
- Book available for purchase at event
- Haiku Contest
- Light meal and refreshments provided



In the Multipurpose Room at the District One Community Center in Black River Falls, WI For questions and info about event, contact Lucas Quackenbush at 715-284-0905 x 15230



Continued from Page 2
 Evers promised to bring this issue to court in a statement following the announcement of the president's executive order, stating the president's order to undermine and interfere with Wisconsin's safe and secure elections was "bullshit" and "illegal."
 This latest lawsuit comes as

President Trump and the Trump Administration have continuously spread disinformation about Trump's election loss in 2020, including about Wisconsin's elections, despite numerous lawsuits, audits, and investigations that have confirmed the accuracy and outcome of the election.



Student of the Month

April 2026

Trisha May Carriaga


Hinuk Haja Pij Wi - Pretty Doe




Western Technical College
 Parents: Sara WhiteEagle & Timothy King

Trisha is a part-time student at Western Technical College who is committed to personal growth and lifelong learning. While balancing her roles as a full-time employee, mother, naqni, and wife, she continues to pursue her education with determination and resilience.

Known for her kind heart and ability to uplift those around her, Trisha leads by example, showing that it is never too late to invest in yourself. Her journey reflects strength, perseverance, and a deep commitment to both her family and her future.



In Loving Memory
4th Memorial Gathering





Dale Louise WhiteEagle
"Ahuusgainga"
 December 3, 1937 – May 23, 2022

Please join us as we come together to honor, remember, and celebrate her life.

Friday, May 22nd
 Dinner begins at 5:00 PM
 Lunch will be served on Saturday at 11:30 AM
 Meeting to follow after dinner



Sanford WhiteEagle Legion Post
 E11046 North Reedsburg Road
 Baraboo, WI 53913

Student of the Month

April 2026

Sheri Boyd "Caašgeguhajije"

7th Grade - Black River Falls Middle School
 Parent: Eunice Winneshiek

Sheri is a hardworking and positive student who consistently gives her best in school. She is kind, respectful, and a great team player who lifts others up and leads by example. Sheri is actively involved in Volleyball, Track & Field, and Band, and she enjoys dancing Hoocak applique. Outside of school, she loves spending time with friends, family, and pets, as well as horse riding and barrel racing.



Student of the Month

April 2026

Lyniah Coon "Ahugiparaŋ"

11th Grade - Black River Falls High School
 Parents: Devin Funmaker

Lyniah Coon is a positive and inspiring leader at Black River Falls High School. Known for her kindness and welcoming nature, she makes everyone feel included. Lyniah actively supports her school community working on the yearbook that reflects student life year-round. She is also very proud of the titles she currently holds, including Njoxawanj Youth Princess, Vice President of the Black River Falls Youth Council, Social Media Manager for the Waqšik Wacek, and Editor-in-Chief of the BRFHS Yearbook.

When asked how she's doing, she always says "amazing"—and she truly is!





Gathering of Nations: The end of an era

The final Gathering of Nations Powwow, which drew thousands from across the world, will be held April 24-25 in Albuquerque, New Mexico

Pauly Denetclaw
Reprint from ICT

One of the largest powwows in North America is set to close this year. For the past 43 years, Indigenous people from all over the world gathered in the high

deserts of the Southwest to dance, sing, perform, compete and others were there to just experience the pulsing excitement of more than 2,000 powwow dancers. The event drew 100,000 visitors and attendance throughout the event remained above 20,000

attendees at any one time, according to data from the City of Albuquerque.

The final Gathering of Nations Powwow will be held April 24th and 25th at Expo New Mexico in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

According to their

frequently asked questions, the powwow is ending because of long-term planning and coordination challenges that are beyond their control — for this reason they have chosen to “close this chapter.”

The event was produced by Gathering of Nations,

Ltd, a nonprofit organization, founded by Derek Matthews, who has no tribal affiliation, and his wife Lita Matthews, Santa Clara Pueblo. Derek and Lita Matthews are directors for the nonprofit and serve as two of the three
Continued on Page 9

Everyone Is Invited
43RD INDIGENEOUS WORLD CELEBRATION

GATHERING OF NATIONS

POW WOV

THE LAST DANCE



MISS INDIAN WORLD
2025-26: Dania Wahwasuck - Mayetta, KS



STAGE 49
Applications available October 1st at www.gatheringofnations.com



NEW MEXICO TRUE
APRIL 24 - 25, 2026
TINGLEY COLISEUM - EXPO NEW MEXICO
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO



INDIAN TRADERS MARKET
Applications for booth spaces available Oct 1st - until sold out www.gatheringofnations.com

HEADLINING CAST

ANNOUNCERS: Vince Beyl - Bemidji, MN
Ruben Littlehead - Lawrence, KS
Juaquin Hamilton-Young Bird - New Town, ND
Jackson "Rolling Thunder" Tahuka - CA
James Edwards (Announcements) - Santa Fe, NM
Jason Whitehouse (Roving) - Mt Pleasant, MI
Nilkki Santos (Roving) - Washington D.C.
Bart Powaukee (Parade) - Fort Duchesne, UT

ARENA DIRECTORS: Randy Medicine Bear - Loveland, CO
George 'Crickit' Shields - Shawnee, OK

ASSISTANT ARENA DIRECTOR: Daryl Powaukee - Ft Duchesne, UT

NO. DANCE JUDGE: Irene Oaks - Maple Creek, SK
SO. DANCE JUDGE: Corey Reeder - Anadarko, OK
NO. DRUM JUDGE: Timothy Eashappie - Carry the Kettle, SK
SO. DRUM JUDGE: Rick Yazzie - Flagstaff, AZ

HEAD DANCERS: Poncho & Rebecca Brady - New Town, ND
INVITED DRUMS: Leading Arrow - Pawnee, OK
HoChunk Station - Lyndon Station, WI
Cozad - Hog Creek, OK
Young Spirit - Frog Lake, Alberta
Rio Grande - Pueblos of New Mexico
War Scout - West Valley, Utah

CASH AWARDS
OVER \$200,000 IN CASH & PRIZES TO BE AWARDED
34 Categories - Masters (70+), Golden Age (55-69), Adults (19-54)
1st: \$2,000 - All Adult Categories (19-54)
1st: \$10,000 - "WORLD CLASS" Northern Singing (no limit)
1st: \$10,000 - "WORLD CLASS" Southern Singing (no limit)

DANCER & DRUM REGISTRATION:
Thurs: April 23 (10am to 3pm) - Inside Gate 8
Fri: April 24 (Opens at 9am) - Inside Tingley Coliseum
Sat: April 26 (9am - 6pm) - Inside Tingley Coliseum

GRAND ENTRIES: Fri: Noon & 7pm • Sat: 12 & 6pm
A FAIR CONTEST FOR ALL DANCERS & SINGERS!

SPECIAL CONTESTS

HONORING THE LIFE OF JAMES REEDER
MEN'S SOUTHERN FANCY
1st \$1000/Buckle/Starquilt • 2 Consolations
65+ MEN'S SOUTHERN FANCY
Champion Buckle • 5 Places Cash Awards/Starquils

DR. LITA'S "WOMENS JINGLE" SPECIAL
RECOGNIZING ORGAN DONATION - SAVING LIVES
1st: \$500 • 2nd: \$300 • 3rd: \$200

MIDNIGHT LUCK OF THE DRAW
1 Mens & 1 Womens Category - \$10,000 to each
Sponsored by Poncho & Rebecca Brady - Head Dancers

HORSE REGALIA PARADE AND COMPETITION
HONORING THE SPIRIT OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN HORSE CULTURE
Parade and Competition Held Daily at 4pm
On Main Street on the Pow Wow Grounds
1st Place: \$1,000 - (Three Places for Each Category)
• Men's & Women's Categories (all ages)
• Horse Swag Bags to First 25 Registered
• Horse Regalia & Rider's Outfit Judged Together
• Feed, Water, Stable & Horse Trailer Parking Provided
Registration online beginning October 1, 2025
Coordinated by the Abrahamson Family - Ft. Hall, ID
www.gatheringofnations.com/horseparade

TRAVEL
More info: www.gatheringofnations.com
DoubleTree Hotel, 201 Marquette Ave NW
For Special Rate (505) 247-3344
Ramada Plaza by Wyndham, 2020 Manual Blvd NE
For Special Rate (505) 884-2511

RV CAMPING on the Expo NM Grounds
Reserve Online - Three Night Packages Only
Reservations Open October 1, 2025 (Limited)
• RV Full Hook-ups & Non-Hook-up
• Bathrooms & Showers Available
• No Tents or Car Camping
www.gatheringofnations.com

TICKETS
Advance Tickets at www.gatheringofnations.com - Oct 1, 2025
On-Site Tickets: At Gate 3 & Infield - Gate 8
One-Day Admission: \$25 (e-Ticket)
Two-Day Wristband: \$45 (In/Out Privilege)
VIP: \$90 (In/Out, VIP Reserved Seat, Special Entry, VIP Lounge)
All Wristbands Require Will Call Pick-up - NO REFUNDS!

WILL CALL TICKET PICK UP: Thurs, April 23, 2026 (10am-3pm)
Fri, April 24, 2026 (9am-10pm) • Sat, April 25, 2026 (9am-10pm)

DANCER/DRUM DISCOUNT CARDS: Dancers & Drum Groups on GON mailing list will receive a discount card (for 2-day wristband) in the mail to present at Dancer Registration. Good ONLY until Friday at 3pm
Redeemable only Inside Gate 8 at Dancer Registration

GENERAL PARKING: Managed Exclusively & Provided by Expo NM
All Fees Charged by Expo NM not Gathering of Nations
Directions: Enter Gate 8 (Louisiana Blvd)

BUS PARKING: Gate 1 (Central Ave)

DROP OFF/PICK-UP/RIDESHARE: Gate 4 (San Pedro Dr)

North America's Biggest Powwow!

The Gathering of Nations is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Family Event - Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons and Pets are NOT ALLOWED. All artwork and logos are property of and official trademarks of Gathering of Nations and are not to be reproduced without permission. Not responsible for accidents, theft, short-funded travelers, contracting Covid-19 or Acts of God. Photos and video permitted for personal use - Audio recording not allowed. Press must register at main ticket office day of event, prior to entry, must show valid media credentials. Schedule subject to change, no refunds.

Indian Gaming Association Opens 2026 Convention Focused on Illegal Prediction Markets

by Native News Online Staff

Reprint from Native News Online

The Indian Gaming Association opened the first day of its 2026 Indian Gaming Tradeshow & Convention with a unified focus on what leaders described as one of the most urgent challenges facing tribal gaming: the rise of illegal prediction markets and their threat to tribal sovereignty and regulated gaming.

The opening day featured a series of high-level workshops and panel discussions aimed at educating and mobilizing tribal leaders, regulators, and industry partners around the risks posed by unregulated event contracts operating under the oversight of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC).

A key session, "Prediction Markets: Building the Coalition for the Fight Ahead," brought together industry leaders to discuss strategies for expanding advocacy efforts. Moderated by Victor Rocha, the panel included James Siva, chairman of the California Nations Indian Gaming Association, and David Z. Bean, chairman of the Indian Gaming Association. Panelists emphasized the importance of building alliances beyond Indian Country by engaging states, attorneys general, regulators, and partner organizations.

Throughout the day, speakers stressed that the issue extends well beyond gaming, raising broader concerns about consumer protection, regulatory

authority, and the preservation of both tribal and state sovereignty.

Chairman David Z. Bean closed the day's programming with a forceful call to action, underscoring the stakes and the need for coordinated advocacy.

"This is bigger than Indian gaming. This is about protecting the integrity of our industry, protecting tribal sovereignty, and protecting state sovereignty. What we are seeing right now impacts all of us," Bean said.

He warned that a lack of federal regulatory action has allowed illegal gambling activity to grow unchecked.

"Through their inaction, the message being sent is that our laws, our operations, and our sovereignty do not matter. That is something we cannot and will not accept," he said.

Bean emphasized that tribes are building momentum through partnerships with states, industry groups, and policymakers.

"It makes sense for us to build a coalition of partners who share common interests in protecting lawful markets and regulatory authority. We cannot do this alone, because this affects more than just tribes," he said.

Across sessions, a clear strategy emerged: a coordinated approach that includes education, coalition-building, litigation, and federal legislative advocacy.

"We are pursuing a parallel path forward through litigation and legislation. We are preparing to defend our rights and ensure that the law is upheld," Bean said.

He also highlighted the

need for greater awareness within Indian Country and beyond.

"There are still communities that are not fully aware of what is happening. Our

responsibility is to educate, to inform, and to make

Continued on Page 15



Saturday, May 16, 2026

WAZEE LAKE RECREATION AREA, BLACK RIVER FALLS, WI

8:00am PACE & PEDAL DUATHLON \$30 per person or \$45 per team
4.7 Mile Trail Run & 10.3 Mile Bike (chip timed; helmet required)

8:30am 5K WAZEE COLOR FUN RUN/WALK \$10 per person 12 & under FREE
3.1 Mile Run/Walk (fully paved, strollers welcome, no pets please)

10:00am YOUTH COLOR FUN RUN/WALK FREE for 12 & under
1.0 Mile (fully paved, strollers welcome, no pets please)

NO REFUNDS: All events will take place rain or shine. If lightning occurs, times will be backed up in 30 minute increments. Cancellation will occur after 2 hours.


*Shirts are not included in the registration price but are available to purchase until April 24, 2025.

REGISTER ONLINE www.JacksonInAction.org/pace-and-pedal



All proceeds benefit Jackson in Action, a community coalition promoting healthy lifestyles in Jackson County.

PATHWAYS HOMEBUYER CLASS




WEDNESDAY, MAY 6TH, 2026
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Nekoosa Community Center
916 Chak Ha Chee Ln. Nekoosa, WI 54457


FREE CLASS!

TOPICS WE'LL COVER

- ✓ Homebuyer Readiness
- ✓ Financial Management
- ✓ Home Maintenance
- ✓ Home Purchase Process
- ✓ Understanding Credit



CEDAR GROWTH



Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Housing
HOB Home Ownership Division
QUESTIONS? CALL 608-374-1225

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/P7PGSZX>

SAVE THE DATE



2026 HO-CHUNK NATION FAMILY HEALING CAMP

August 4, 5, & 6

Andrew Blackhawk Memorial Pow-Wow Grounds

W8426 WI-54
Black River Falls, WI

Questions and Updates?
FHC@ho-chunk.com
facebook.com/groups/familyhealingcamp



HO-CHUNK NATION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

SUMMER 2026 BLOCK PARTIES

"A Summer of Mental Wellness"
SAVE THE DATES!
MORE INFO COMING SOON

JUNE 10 - WITTENBERG
JUNE 24 - TOMAH
JULY 8 - BARABOO
JULY 22 - NEKOOSA
JULY 29 - MADISON
AUGUST 12 - BLACK RIVER FALLS

Free event for tribal members and employees of the Ho-Chunk Nation.
This is a drug and alcohol free event.
For more info: Melissa.Govek@ho-chunk.com 715.284.9851 x35052

PHAB
CREATED 2/27/26 AM

Community Health Foot Clinics



APRIL 2026
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

A Registered Nurse will clip/file your nails, and dremel if necessary. For ingrown toenail removal, please contact podiatry.

<p>Black River Falls - 4/13, 4/16, 4/22 Community Health Office W9850 Airport Road (715) 896-1343</p> <p>Tomah - 4/16 Tribal Aging Unit 358 Eos Road (608) 372-5202</p> <p>La Crosse - 4/21 Three Rivers House 724 Main Street (608) 783-6025</p> <p>Madison - 4/21 Branch Office 4724 Tradewinds Pkwy (608) 277-9964</p>	<p>Baraboo - 4/21 House Of Wellness S2845 White Eagle Road (608) 355-1240 x35509</p> <p>Nekoosa - 4/23 Nekoosa Health Office 1021 County Road G (715) 886-5444</p> <p>Wittenberg - 4/30 Siga Funmaker Center W17634 Radke Road (715) 701-2069</p>
---	--

Open to Tribal Members - No walk-ins - Appointment is now needed.



**Sobriety looks
GREAT
on you!**

PSA from the HCN Healing to Wellness Court



HCN Health & Wellness Division


"Be one with nature"

Countering Cortisol

Manage stress, improve markers of metabolic health, and reduce risk of chronic diseases with good nutrition and other lifestyle habits.

Thursdays, April 2nd - April 30th at 5:00 PM
Five 30-45 Minute Virtual Sessions on Webex

Contact:
Alex Richeson MS, RDN, CD - Nutritionist
608-355-1240 Ext. 35511
alex.richeson@ho-chunk.com



2026 GRADUATE SHOWCASE

The *Hocak Worak* will spotlight our 2026 College, High School, and Head Start graduates.

Email the following before **June 19:**

1. Photo
2. Name of Graduate
3. Hocak Name (optional)
4. Guardians' Names
5. Place Graduating From
6. College Degree Name
7. Future Endeavors or Extra-Curricular Activities

Congrats!

HOCAK WORAK
NEWSLETTER@ho-chunk.com





FITNESS QUICKIES

THURSDAYS AT 9 AM - VIRTUAL VIA WEBEX

Need a little boost to your day?
Join Kathleen on Thursdays for a quick 10 minute activity session that you can do seated or standing.

Contact: Kathleen Clemons at kathleen.clemons@ho-chunk.com or ext. 35308 to get on the e-mail distribution list.

Link will be sent out weekly.
Come join the fun!

ALL FITNESS LEVELS & ABILITIES WELCOME



12/29/25 LK

Continued from Page 6

board members, according to New Mexico's Secretary of State website.

The nonprofit that produces Gathering of Nations, which owns the trademarks for Miss Indian World and Gathering of Nations Powwow, will remain to exist. Beyond the powwow the nonprofit will continue its work and mission.

In its 2013 tax filing, the nonprofit stated that its mission is to "promote and highlight American Indian culture

and traditions, to promote positive lifestyles for Native Americans. Production of annual Gathering of Nations Powwow." Its most recent tax filing was not found.

The powwow unofficially began in 1983 at the University of New Mexico. It was held for many years at the iconic "Pit," the University of New Mexico's 15,411 seated indoor arena. In 2017, it moved to Expo New Mexico, which hosts the annual New Mexico Powwow. *Continued on Page 10*

**Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Health
Division of Public Health**

Wažookj woo'ehi

family conversations

We invite you to gather, learn, and share at our virtual education series on Ho-Chunk culture, resources, services, and connection to health.
Wednesdays 1pm-2pm

April 1st
Chasing the Yellow Blaze
Amy Lord, Ice Age Trail Alliance

April 8th
Ready. Set. Action!
Jamie Decorah & Ronelle McKernan

April 15th
Alcohol Awareness
Salena Lemieux, Behavioral Health Clinician

April 22nd
Getting off the Fence
Kathleen Clemons, Exercise Physiologist

JOIN NOW

If you have a topic you'd like to learn about, a topic you'd like to present, and to learn more contact:

Jamie.Decorah@Ho-Chunk.com 715.896.1126
Ronelle.McKernan@Ho-Chunk.com 715.896.2570

Created 11.12.24RM

ATTENTION Ho-Chunk Nation Members

The Annual General Council Meeting is on
September 19, 2026.

The deadline to submit a proposed resolution is
July 21, 2026.

A fillable resolution form is available on the Ho-Chunk Nation website under the Office of General Council tab.

Submit proposed resolutions to:
Henry.WhiteThunder@ho-chunk.com

Jackson In Action's Earth Day Highway Cleanup

Sat, April 25, 2026 9am-11am

We will be cleaning up the stretch of highway surrounding Wazee Lake Recreation Area, along N Brockway and Castle Mound Rd.

Meet at the intersection of W Bauer Rd and N Brockway Rd at 9am. Trash bags and gloves will be provided.

Questions? Contact Kathleen Clemons 715-299-0870

Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Health

DANCING THROUGH THE DECADES:

A sober celebration

4/18/2026 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF:
HIGH ENERGY BEATS BY LIVE DJ
LAUGH OUT LOUD COMEDY
INTERACTIVE PHOTO BOOTH MOMENTS
MOCCASIN GAME
FUN, FRIENDS AND UNFORGETTABLE
MEMORIES
REFRESHING MOCKTAILS AND TASTY SNACKS
INSPIRING GUEST SPEAKER

HOUSE OF WELLNESS
S2845 WHITE EAGLE RD BARABOO, WI 53913

Formal dress not required come as you are!

Open to Tribal members, their families, and employees of the Ho-Chunk Nation

For more information: Ronelle.McKernan@Ho-Chunk.com 715-896-2570

HOO HIROGINI WIIRA Fish Spawning Month: April

HARVEST OF THE MONTH

Cuyšereke (Fiddlehead Ferns)

SPRING FIDDLEHEAD & SAUSAGE PASTA/RICE

About Fiddleheads

- Fiddleheads are the young, curled-up leaves of ferns, eaten in traditional diets in Asia, North America, and Oceania.
- Fiddleheads have been eaten for thousands of years in many cultures and were often used in traditional medicine to treat illnesses and boost health.
- They are very rich in antioxidants, even more than leafy greens like spinach and arugula in some cases.
- Fiddleheads are a good plant-based source of healthy fats, especially omega-3 and omega-6, which support the brain and heart.
- Fiddleheads must be cooked properly (boiled or steamed) before eating to remove natural toxins and make them safe to eat.

For more info:
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7928283/>

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was funded by USDA's supplemental nutrition assistance program-SNAP.

Ingredients:

- 2 cooked venison or bison sausage, sliced (or use Italian sausage)
- 1 small onion, sliced (or wild onion or ramps, if available)
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 cup fiddleheads, cooked (fresh or frozen, cleaned & blanched)
- 2 cups cooked pasta (or substitute with wild rice)
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Salt & black pepper, to taste

Steps:

- In a skillet over medium heat, melt the butter. Add sausage, onion, and garlic. Cook until the sausage is browned and the onion is soft.
- Add the fiddleheads and sauté for another 2-3 minutes.
- Stir in the cooked pasta, or wild rice. Season with salt and pepper. Toss well and serve warm.

Recipe inspired by: <https://www.earthfoodandfire.com/fiddlehead-sausage-penne/>

**For more Information Contact a
HCN Registered
Dietitian/ Nutritionist:**

BRF, Tomah, Wittenberg areas:
(888) 685-4422, ext. 35335

BRF, La Crosse areas:
(888) 685-4422, ext. 35340

Dells, Nekoosa, Madison areas:
(888) 552-7889, ext. 35554

HCN HEALTH & WELLNESS DIV.
<http://health.ho-chunk.com/>
Created 8/25 MB

Continued from Page 10
 traditional and jingle.

If she does, it won't be as a contest contemporary.

"I would go dance traditionally," Kingbird said. "I can say that I was there, and was able to dance, for those who can't dance any longer."

In 2024, Charlotte, 13, and Jessie Morse, 11, both Haliwa Saponi, flew with their family from the East Coast to attend and compete in the powwow. It was overwhelming for the sisters at first. This was the largest powwow they had ever danced in.

Jessie Morse remembered how challenging it was to dance because there were so many people.

"People's jingles and dresses kept kind of hitting me, and I kept, like, bumping into people, because I can only move like a step, and then I'd be stopped again by another person," Jessie Morse said.

Charlotte and Jessie are growing up in Washington, D.C., hundreds of miles from

their tribal nation in North Carolina. At times, they're the only Native American students in their schools or classes. It was exciting for them to be around so many other Indigenous people.

"I definitely felt, like, very comfortable. Like, no one's judging anyone. We're all connected, even though all our tribes are different," Charlotte Morse said. "I really liked it because it's not really something I experienced a lot, but it really felt different."

Their mother Dana Hedgpeth, Haliwa Saponi, was really grateful that her family — daughters, mother, aunt, sister, and nephews — were able to attend the powwow at least once. It was challenging to align the schedules of six adults and four kids, but in the end it was so worth it.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime trip for us," Hedgpeth said. "It was a great experience for us, and we're blessed and lucky, we got to go before it ended."

Economic impact

The City of Albuquerque

has seen economic benefits to its local economy because of the annual powwow.

"It's really hard to say overall, because we would have to go back, and look at every single year individually. But what we can see in at least the last three to five years is that they've brought in anywhere from \$24 to \$30 million — whether that be through hotels, through food venues, vendors that are traveling as well as tourists," Brandi Ahmie, liaison for the city's Office of Native American Affairs, told ICT.

People stay at the event for an average of nearly five hours with 27,000 to 35,000 people entering throughout the day.

"We can see that between the U.S. and Canada, there were over 700 different tribes that came to either participate or just celebrate in these gatherings, as well as non-Natives alike," Ahmie, Pueblo of Laguna, said. "As much as we focus on the tribes that attend, this was also a gathering for people

that were experiencing this, sometimes for the first time, like international travelers."

Around the powwow, hotel occupancies increased by 20 percent, said Ahmie.

"We're going to see that it is a loss in many ways, economically, as well as visitors that are coming to attend," she said. "But overall, to be in existence for 43 years says something."

Boycotts, viral rants and critiques

The powwow has not been without controversy. Many people criticized Derek Matthews for being a non-Native person who is profiting off a powwow, which is a part of many tribes' cultural practices and ceremonies. A boycott was called after the public discovered that Indigenous singers, bands, rappers and other artists who perform at Stage 49 weren't being compensated.

The powwow became too expensive to attend, and compete in. Yet, organizers complained about profitability, causing some to

question where the revenue was going.

Matthews went viral two years ago for going on a rant to address online criticism. His six-minute speech concluded with him flashing a handheld mirror at the packed arena and telling his critics to look in the mirror.

Multiple requests for an interview with the Gathering of Nations organizers went unanswered by the time this story was published.

Ahmie is hopeful that the Indigenous community in Albuquerque will consider continuing an annual powwow.

"As much as it's sad to see in many ways, the community around Albuquerque is not going away. We still have very strong powwow ties," Ahmie said. "Although we're seeing this as something that's ending, there's also the potential for growth. What can the community do to step back into this space?"

MEETING NOTICE

Trust and Investment Commission

Quarterly Meeting

Thursday, April 23rd, 2026

11:00am – 2:30pm

In-person at the Madison Community Center

For Information, email:

Keith.Doxtator@ho-chunk.com

MEETING PURPOSE: to discuss and consider matter related to the Nation's financial assets; investments, employer retirement plan funds, and long- and short-term portfolios.

The Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Justice Seeks Tribal Members for its Board of Directors

The Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Justice (DOJ) is seeking qualified and dedicated individuals to serve on its Board of Directors. The DOJ functions as the defender of the sovereignty of the Ho-Chunk Nation and all branches of its government on matters concerning the Nation's interest and welfare. The appointment term will be for a period of two (2) years.

The purpose of the DOJ Board of Directors is:

- To serve in an advisory capacity on matters referred by the Attorney General;
- To participate in the Department's strategic planning;
- To consult during the development of the Department's annual goals and objectives.

Qualifications: Board Members are to possess the requisite skills, knowledge, and education to provide professional and expert advice and recommendations to the Attorney General. The Board of Directors will meet at least two times per year, in addition to special meetings as needed. Compensation will be provided for attendance at each Board Meeting at the rate established by the Ho-Chunk Nation Legislature.

If interested in serving on the DOJ Board of Directors, please contact Jennifer Arms at the Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Justice at 715-284-3170 or by e-mail at DOJHotline@ho-chunk.com by **no later than April 24th, 2026.**

Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Justice

PO Box 667 • W9814 Airport Rd
 Black River Falls, WI 54615
 Phone (715) 284-3170 • (800) 501-8039 • FAX (715)284-7851



HO-CHUNK NATION
 DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

NOTICE OF VACANCY

The Department of Housing is seeking (1) D-1Housing Board of Director

Duties:

- Be involved in the Department's strategic community housing plan
- Serve as a consultant during the development of the Department's annual goals and objectives required pursuant to the *Appropriations and Budget Process Act*.
- Serve in an advisory capacity on matters referred by the Executive Director of Housing.

Qualifications:

- Enrolled member of the Ho-Chunk Nation
- Shall have the requisite skill, knowledge specific to housing
- Provide professional and expert advice and recommendations
- Board experience and having a flexible scheduling are beneficial to being appointed

Membership:

- Shall not be an employee of the Department of Housing
- Shall not be a member of more than two (2) department Boards of Directors
- Shall not be appointed nor serve as a member of a subordinate advisory board within the Department of Housing
- Shall not be appointed nor serve as a Commissioner of the Ho-Chunk Housing and Community Development Agency

Term:

- Shall serve two (2) year terms and may serve for more than one (1) term. The term shall be alternated so that two (2) Directors are appointed or re-appointed after the first year and every two (2) years thereafter

If you have any questions or need additional information, you can reach me at (608) 374-1225 Ext: 15915 or via email Denise.Wright@ho-chunk.com

Thank you,
Denise Wright
 Executive Director
 Department of Housing



HO-CHUNK NATION
 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



**MEETING NOTICE
 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 MEETING**

Friday, May 1, 2026

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Eileen Decorah Conference Room

Ho-Chunk Health Care Center
 N6520 Lumberjack Guy Road
 Black River Falls, WI 54615

Virtual option available via WebEx

Please contact Lorinda Bird for virtual meeting information.

715-284-9851 ext. 35351

Email: Lorinda.Bird@ho-chunk.com

Ho-Chunk Health Care Center
 N6520 Lumberjack Guy Road
 Black River Falls, WI 54615
 Ph. 715-284-9851 FAX 715-284-5150

House of Wellness
 52845 White Eagle Rd
 Baraboo, WI 53913
 Ph. 888-552-7889 FAX 608-355-9643

**HO-CHUNK NATION
LEGISLATURE
REGULAR MEETING
EXECUTIVE OFFICES
BLACK RIVER FALLS, WI
MARCH 17, 2026**

Call to Order: President Jon Greendeer called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Roll Call:

President Jon Greendeer-P
Vice President Lambert Cleveland, Jr.-EX
Rep. Phyllis Smoke-P
Rep. Tracy Thundercloud-P
Rep. Paul Fox-VC
Rep. Damian Thundercloud-EX
Rep. Stephanie Begay-P
Rep. Kyle White Eagle-P
Rep. Shelby Visintin-VC
Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle-P
Rep. Edward Mullen-VC
Rep. David Greendeer-VC
Rep. Sandra Whitewing-VC

VC-Video Conference

Determination of Quorum: Quorum is established at 10:01 a.m.

Opening Prayer: President Jon Greendeer offered a word of prayer.

Approval of Agenda: MOTION by Rep. Stephanie Begay to approve the agenda ADDING under New Business H. Confirmation Hearing for Executive Director of Labor Nominee and I. Resolution-Confirmation/Denial of Myra Jo Price to the Position of Executive Director of the Department of Labor. Second by Rep. Paul Fox. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: *Legislative Meeting-March 3, 2026*

MOTION by Rep. Stephanie Begay to approve the March 3, 2026 Legislative Meeting minutes with corrections. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

Commission Reports:
Gaming Commission Report

The Gaming Commission was online, and a written report was received.

MOTION by Rep. Stephanie Begay to accept the Gaming Commission Report. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

Government Administration Commission-March 5, 2026

MOTION by Rep. Stephanie Begay to approve the March 5, 2026 Government Administration Commission Meeting minutes with corrections. Second by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

Unfinished Business: No agenda items.

New Business:
West Central Metropolitan Enforcement Group (WCMEG)

Robert Walensky, Investigative Coordinator of WCMEG was in attendance. WCMEG is a six-county drug task force that is comprised of Monroe, Jackson, La Crosse, Vernon, Crawford and Trempealeau counties. The Ho-Chunk Nation has partnered with WCMEG since 2013, and has provided financial assistance to operate the WCMEG. WCMEG is requesting funding to help pay wages of officers, training for officers, equipment, acquisition and maintenance of vehicles used for drug investigations, and other expenses. No action taken.

HHCDA Annual IHBG FY25 (HHCDA Funding)
HHCDA IHBG Competitive FY23 (11 Winnebago Heights Rental Units)
HHCDA IHBG Competitive FY24 (Dane and La Crosse Projects)

HHCDA Grants Manager Melanie Stacy was present. The three agenda items on the agenda today are annual performance reports, specific to each project.

MOTION by Rep. Stephanie Begay to approve the HHCDA Annual IHBG FY25, IHBG Competitive FY23 for 11 Winnebago Heights rental units, IHBG Competitive

FY24 for Dane and La Crosse projects, and authorize Vice President signature on the documents. Second by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle. MOTION IS AMENDED to include approval of the annual performance reports. Second concurs. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

Resolution-Authorization to Place the Proposed Department of Housing Rental Ordinance (8 HCC § 17) out for Forty-Five Day Public Comment

MOTION by Rep. Phyllis Smoke to adopt **Resolution 03-17-26 A**, Authorization to Place the Proposed Department of Housing Rental Ordinance (8 HCC § 17) out for Forty-Five Day Public Comment. Second by Rep. Paul Fox. 8-1(Rep. David Greendeer)-1(Rep. Stephanie Begay) MOTION CARRIED.

Resolution-Adoption of Amendments to the Ho-Chunk Tribal Member Assistance and Charitable Request Act (4 HCC § 8)

MOTION by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle to adopt **Resolution 03-17-26 B**, Adoption of Amendments to the Ho-Chunk Tribal Member Assistance and Charitable Request Act (4 HCC § 8). Second by Rep. Stephanie Begay. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

Resolution-Authorization for the Department of Natural Resources to Pursue a Tribal Membership with the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society

MOTION by Rep. Tracy Thundercloud to adopt **Resolution 03-17-26 C**, Authorization for the Department of Natural Resources to Pursue a Tribal Membership with the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

Confirmation Hearing for the Executive Director of Labor Nominee

Rep. Stephanie Begay stated that the Legislature received the nomination of Myra Jo Price for the position of Executive Director of Labor yesterday.

Myra Jo Price was in attendance and thanked the Legislature for adding her Confirmation Hearing to the agenda today. Mrs. Price overviewed her experience and leadership qualities with the Legislature.

Resolution-Confirmation of Myra Jo Price to the Position of Executive Director of the Department of Labor

MOTION by Rep. Stephanie Begay to adopt **Resolution 03-17-26 D**, Confirmation of Myra Jo Price to the Position of Executive Director of the Department of Labor. Second by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

District Meetings:
D1 Nj̄oxawanj̄ – March 11, 2026

MOTION by Rep. Paul Fox to refer to Legislative Legal and Department of Justice the MOTION by Darcy Funmaker to proceed with the nomination process for Nathan Longtail Jr. for the Housing Board member for District 1 and investigate the eligibility qualifications related to past records over 10 years ago as reason for disqualification. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Rep. Paul Fox to refer to Legislative Legal, District 1 Legislators, Office of the President and Department of Justice the MOTION by Darcy Funmaker to have legislature research the commission policies over concerns about law enforcement committee representation due to absences at district meetings and no reports. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Rep. Paul Fox to refer to Legislative Legal,

Department of Treasury, Legislative Finance Team the MOTION by Darcy Funmaker for Legislature and legal to research the proper wording for the general welfare payments not to be considered income from State and Federal standards, to assist tribal members that are seeking programs and services. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

D1 Maan̄ico Horuzra – March 12, 2026

MOTION by Rep. Paul Fox to refer to the Finance Commission the MOTION by Libby Fairchild to approve the donation request of \$7,000 for the Wanaiguni Hikurus Hajawi 5K Run/Walk on May 15, 2026. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Rep. Paul Fox to refer to Legislative Legal and Department of Justice the MOTION by Mike Goze to support Nathaniel Longtail, Jr. to be the District 1 Housing Board member. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

D2 H̄n̄ukwas – March 9, 2026

No motions.

D3 Teš̄išk̄ – March 4, 2026

MOTION by Rep. Shelby Visintin to refer to TAU and Office of the President the MOTION by Yvonne Delarosa for elder transports to start again. Second by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Rep. Shelby Visintin to refer to TAU and Office of the President the MOTION by Yvonne Delarosa to have the CER worker deliver the food boxes to elders. Second by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle. 10-0-0 MOTION CARRIED.

D3 Pac cin̄ak – March 9, 2026

READ FOR THE RECORD: MOTION by Lanette Walker to access \$500 from the Shawano *Continued on Page 13*

Continued from Page 4

water, aquatic vegetation and/or mud from fishing equipment before leaving their fishing location. All fishing equipment, including boats, trailers, boots, waders, nets and float tubes, should be thoroughly cleaned and dried before being used again.

- If not keeping your catch, follow proper fish handling protocols to ensure a safe release.
- Follow safe boating procedures and always wear a life jacket when on the water.

- Review all the rules and regulations for the waters you intend to fish.

Anglers can also find additional information on the DNR's Fishing webpage or by contacting their local fisheries biologist.

Several new regulations and season structures are in effect for the 2026 – 2027 general inland fishing season. Anglers are encouraged to review the regulations before hitting the water.



Continued from Page 12
County Law Enforcement Grant for the Community Easter Egg Hunt.

MOTION by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle to refer to Heritage Preservation the MOTION by Lanette Walker for the Wittenberg area to receive 2 language apprentice positions. Second by Rep. Stephanie Begay. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle to refer to HHCDA the MOTION by Lanette Walker to allow Cassie's baseball team to use the baseball fields from April to July. Second by Rep. Shelby Visintin. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

D3 Tee hoikšek – March 10, 2026

No motions.

D3 Tejop – March 11, 2026

MOTION by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle to refer to Office of General Council and Department of Justice the MOTION by Marlys Whiteagle to nominate Saresa Ryckman as our spokesperson

for General Council. Second by Rep. Stephanie Begay. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Rep. Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle to refer to Office of General Council and Department of Justice the MOTION by Marlys Whiteagle to get a General Council Attorney that is not from another branch of the government. Second by Rep. Shelby Visintin. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

D4 Gųşgonąk – March 9, 2026

MOTION by Rep. Sandra Whitewing to refer Legislature, Enrollment, Heritage Preservation, Department of Business, and Office of General Council the MOTION by Casey Brown for Legislature to fund postcards to every Ho-Chunk tribal member to remind them that we are a district democracy and anyone can legislate at General Council. We should enfranchise and support every Ho-Chunk to support our inherent sovereignty. Second by Rep. David Greendeer. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Rep. Sandra Whitewing to refer to Department of Business and the Finance Commission the MOTION by Joann Maney for the Cape Cod Sharks AAU team to receive \$1000 donation. Second by Rep. Edward Mullen. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

MOTION by Rep. Sandra Whitewing to refer to Legislative Legal to draft a resolution regarding the MOTION by Joann Maney to nominate Dorothy Ramirez. Second by Rep. David Greendeer. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

Amendment to the Agenda:
MOTION by Rep. Sandra Whitewing to add to the agenda Resolution-Confirmation of Dorothy Ramirez to the Election Board as the District 4 Chicago Alternate. Second by Rep. David Greendeer. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

D4 Virtual Meeting – March 11, 2026

MOTION by Rep. Sandra Whitewing to refer to the Legislature the MOTION by Reta Littlegeorge for

legislature to include a California branch office to be in the next fiscal year budget. Second by Rep. Edward Mullen. 7-2(Rep. Stephanie Begay, Rep. Kyle White Eagle)-1(Rep. Shelby Visintin) **MOTION CARRIED.**

New Business (Re-visited): Resolution-Confirmation of Dorothy Ramirez to the Election Board as the District 4 Chicago Alternate

MOTION by Rep. Sandra Whitewing to adopt **Resolution 03-17-26 E**, Confirmation of Dorothy Ramirez to the Election Board as the District 4 Chicago Alternate. Second by Rep. Edward Mullen. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

Executive Session (Business Matters, Criminal Matters, Inter-governmental Relations, Land, Law Enforcement, Legal Advice, Personnel Matters, Public Safety or Well-Being):

MOTION by Rep. Paul Fox to move to Executive Session for Business Matters, Criminal Matters, Inter-governmental Relations, Land, Law Enforcement, Legal Advice,

Personnel Matters, Public Safety or Well-Being. Second by Rep. Sandra Whitewing. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

The meeting moved to Executive Session at 11:01 a.m.

MOTION by Rep. Paul Fox to return to Open Session. Second by Rep. Stephanie Begay. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

The meeting returned to Open Session at 1:11 p.m.

MOTION by Rep. Stephanie Begay to ratify all action taken in Executive Session. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

Adjournment:

MOTION by Rep. Stephanie Begay to adjourn the Legislative Meeting to April 8, 2026 at the Tribal Office Building in Black River Falls, Wisconsin. Second by Rep. Phyllis Smoke. 10-0-0 **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Legislative Meeting adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

Continued from Page 3
level, including strategies for budgeting, credit education, and long-term financial planning aimed at strengthening tribal economies from within.

Tribal member Samantha Skenandore, founding partner at Skenandore Wilson LLP, also participated as a panelist in "The Tribal Cannabis

Landscape in the U.S."

Her discussion highlighted the rapidly evolving role of tribal nations in the cannabis industry, including opportunities for economic growth, sovereignty considerations, and regulatory challenges facing tribes entering the market.


RES 2026 featured more than 70 sessions across

multiple tracks, along with matchmaking opportunities connecting Native-owned businesses with corporate and government partners.


The summit also included an artisan market and fashion show, allowing Native artists and entrepreneurs to showcase their work on a national stage.



Samantha Skenandore, Founding Partner at Skenandore Wilson LLP, highlights the rapidly evolving role of tribal nations in the cannabis industry.



HO-CHUNK NATION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



MEETING NOTICE
HEALTH ACCREDITATION
BOARD MEETING

Friday, May 15, 2026
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.


Eileen Decorah Conference Room

Ho-Chunk Health Care Center
N6520 Lumberjack Guy Road
Black River Falls, WI 54615

Virtual Option also available via WebEx
Please contact Lorinda Bird for Virtual meeting information.
715-284-9851 ext. 35351
Email: Lorinda.Bird@ho-chunk.com

Ho-Chunk Health Care Center
N6520 Lumberjack Guy Road
Black River Falls, WI 54615
Ph. 715-284-9851 FAX 715-284-5150

House of Wellness
52845 White Eagle Rd
Baraboo, WI 53913
Ph. 888-552-7889 FAX 608-355-9643



HO-CHUNK NATION
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

NOTICE OF VACANCY

The Department of Housing (1) D-3Housing Board of Director

Duties:
Be involved in the Department's strategic community housing plan
Serve as a consultant during the development of the Department's annual goals and objectives required pursuant to the Appropriations and Budget Process Act.
Serve in an advisory capacity on matters referred by the Executive Director of Housing.

Qualifications:
Enrolled member of the Ho-Chunk Nation
Shall have the requisite skill, knowledge specific to housing
Provide professional and expert advice and recommendations
Board experience and having a flexible scheduling are beneficial to being appointed

Membership:
Shall not be an employee of the Department of Housing
Shall not be a member of more than two (2) department Boards of Directors
Shall not be appointed nor serve as a member of a subordinate advisory board within the Department of Housing
Shall not be appointed nor serve as a Commissioner of the Ho-Chunk Housing and Community Development Agency

Term:
Shall serve two (2) year terms and may serve for more than one (1) term. The term shall be alternated so that two (2) Directors are appointed or re-appointed after the first year and every two (2) years thereafter

If you have any questions or need additional information, you can reach me at (608) 374-1225 Ext: 15915 or via email Denise.Wright@ho-chunk.com

Thank you,
Denise Wright
Executive Director
Department of Housing

Continued from Page 3

“I really felt that loss that a lot of these young women that have wanted to become Miss Indian World one day, unfortunately won’t be able to fulfil that role in their lives in that dream and that thought of representing their communities in this really great platform,” she said.

Begaye, Diné, said she was one of the winners that didn’t win one year but tried again and succeeded. She feels for those that can’t run again.

“I’m sure there’s a lot of young women that were wanting to vie for that title this year and maybe the next following years, especially I’m sure the ones that had run like last year because, there’s a lot of them that run multiple years and are like, ‘Okay, the next year I got it.’ And unfortunately, that’s not going

to happen now,” she said.

Begaye hopes that the title can evolve and continue in another form. She said there have been discussions with other winners about the Santa Fe Indian Market being a possible place to continue it but everything is still up in the air.

She added that she hoped what Miss Indian World represented will continue for young Indigenous women.

“I think through all of our legacies. We’ve done that. We have doctors, we have lawyers right now, who are former Miss Indian Worlds, and have continued on that legacy in their own way and have children of their own even and grandchildren. It’s really beautiful to see how far that title has taken a lot of young women,” Begaye said.

Miss Indian World 2006-

2007, Violet Duncan, said she’s excited to see other powwows and communities get bigger, especially for northern communities who had harder access to the Gathering of Nations.

But she does feel for current Miss Indian World, Wahwasuck, who will not be able to crown the new winner.

“She doesn’t get that opportunity. And for me, it felt really good because it was like, I’m done. I’ve done my work, and on to the next one, and how do we support our next, this in world, our next sister? How can we keep supporting this program?” Duncan, Plains Cree and Taíno, said.

Duncan said she has talked to other Miss Indian Worlds who think it shouldn’t have to end.

“I firmly agree with that. It didn’t have to. It wasn’t in stride with the powwow. I always felt it was separate and it was beloved and supported by the community all over Indian Country. It was really upsetting,” she said.

“The title itself, Miss Indian World, having that in my bio, had definitely opened a lot of doors for me. It’s really unfortunate that all of that work that was put into it is

done.”

Duncan said she learned how hard work it was to be Miss Indian World. She had to know her community and what her focus in life was. It was through attending many meetings with tribal leaders and talking to people that she decided literacy was a priority for her and went on to become a book author.

Duncan said Miss Indian World created a community for so many Indigenous women who were just beginning their adult lives.

“When we all came together in that room, all of a sudden, the future just looked so much brighter. It was really exciting to see these educated, empowered, successful in their own ways, women coming from all different communities and kind of proudly representing their nation or tribes,” she said.

Miss Indian World 2003-2004, Onawa Haynes said she is sad that it won’t continue because of how much she gained from the experience and how many others benefited.

“I have a daughter myself. And so one of those things was, wondering if she would be interested in running for Miss Indian World one day,”

Haynes, Diné and Muscalero Apache, said.

Haynes who later was on the Miss Indian World committee said he knows how much energy it takes to run the pageant and she would like to see it continue.

“It’s been just one of those things that so many Native girls and Native women have really held as a dream in their heart. It was something that was a dream of mine. I would love for something like that to continue,” she said.

Haynes said it was one of the highlights of her life. Afterwards she would become the CEO and founder of Hozhonigo Consulting, and the founder and president of the Tribal Funding Registry.

“I’m really grateful for the opportunity to have that chapter in my life. I really am grateful to the Matthews family for the Gathering of Nations, to Melonie (Matthews) and Azella (Humetewa), for everything that they put into the pageant itself because like I said, it’s a lot of work,” Haynes said. “I think that they have really built something that will have a legacy and has meant a lot to a lot of people.”



2013-2014 Miss Indian World Kansas Begaye. (Photo courtesy of Kansas Begay)



Former Miss Indian World Kassie John crowning 2025-2026 Miss Indian World Dania Wahwasuck in Albuquerque, MN. (Photo by Kalle Benallie)



Congratulations to Ivel Smith for making it to State Wrestling. He is a seventh grader who wrestles for Askran Wrestling Academy

for 150-pound weight class and attends school at Jack Young Middle School in Baraboo, WI.



2025-2026 Miss Indian World winner Dania Wahwasuck, citizen of the Prairie Band Potawatomi. (Photo courtesy of the Gathering of Nations)

Continued from Page 1
Pinagigi to everyone who donated and contributed. Thank you to the Twin

Cities Branch Office staff for receiving and distributing items, HHCDA for donating items and assisting with

hauling, Tribal Office Building Maintenance for loading and transport support, and the Legislative Office

staff and other departments who helped in this effort. We also recognize District 1 Representatives—Tracy

Thundercloud, Phyllis Smoke, and Paul Fox—for their leadership throughout.



Continued from Page 7
sure every tribal leader understands what is at stake,” he said.

The opening day set the tone for the rest of the convention, signaling a unified and proactive stance from the Indian Gaming Association and its member tribes.

“We must be unapologetic in our approach. This is not a choice between interests. This is a choice between following

the law and ignoring the law,” Bean said.

As the tradeshow continues, association leadership plans to carry that message forward through additional sessions, meetings, and engagement with policymakers and partners.

The first day made clear that Indian Country is organized, mobilized, and committed to protecting the foundation of tribal government gaming for future generations.



Indian Gaming Association Chairman David Z. Bean addresses the audience in kickoff panel. (Photo by IGA)

Eastman “Kunu” Hill (Ho-Chunk Nation member and Oneida) from Oneida, WI. His parents are Landis and Latsiklanunha Hill. His grandparents are Phyllis Smoke and Wilfrid Cleveland. Kunu has been selected as a U12 midfielder for the Premier Lacrosse League (PLL) Jr. Championships

Series, taking place in Boston this August 2026! He’ll be drafted to one of eight Jr. Pro PLL teams during a virtual draft that will be streamed on YouTube in May and shared across PLL and PLL Play social channels. From there, Kunu will represent his team at the Jr. Championships Series on

a national stage and streamed on the ESPN+App in August. Games will be played at Harvard Stadium. Kunu currently plays for Oneida Warriors Lacrosse and Fluid Lacrosse on their National team. Lacrosse has been his passion since he started out as a U8 player.



DONATE BLOOD WITH THE

American Red Cross

MONDAY, JUNE 29

11:30AM - 5:30PM | Located in Lower Dells Ballroom



All presenting donors receive:

- \$15 Rewards Play
- Pint of Culvers Custard Coupon
- Sandwiches & Snacks

SHANIA TWIN TRIBUTE TO SHANIA TWAIN

21+

REWARDS CLUB
MEMBERSHIP
REQUIRED



FREE SHOW!

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



SATURDAY, APRIL 18

DOORS OPEN - 6:30PM | SHOW STARTS - 7PM

LOCATED IN UPPER DELLS BALLROOM

HO-CHUNK  GAMING
WISCONSIN DELLS

