Brimley 4392 Deceivers head to Houston competition

BRIMLEY — The Brimley Robotics Team, 4392-The Deceivers, will compete in the world competition this weekend. The group qualified over Easter weekend, giving them just hours to plan their trip to Houston, Texas. The 11 team members and their 7 mentors will take their robot, Icarus, to compete for the championship.

With the robot packed in a trailer, and the team carpooling along, the group will arrive in Houston approximately Wednesday, to register for the event. Brimley’s robotics program began in 2012 and has grown each year since.

“My daughter has been in all kinds of sports, but this is different. I’ve not seen the camaraderie and dedication that I’ve seen in robotics. It’s so accepting of kids and there is something for everyone to do,” said Kelly Cain, mother of team member sophomore Abigail Hoffman. “The meets are inclusive and fun.”

This year’s challenge is called “rapid react.” Two alliances made up of three teams each try to score points by shooting balls into “hubs.” Additional points can be awarded for the robot completing other tasks. This must all be accomplished in three minutes.

High school students from over 450 teams compete on the special playing fields with robots they have designed, programmed, and built themselves.

Hoffman’s experience in the program has inspired her to look at a new career path.

We all work together. One minute we are facing off against someone in an opposite alliance, and the next round they are on your alliance. Everyone works together like a family,” said Hoffman. “If someone breaks something or needs a part, you help them, no matter the alliance.”

You can view the championship activities in Houston online by downloading the app. More information is available at https://www.firstchampionship.org.
Chairperson’s Report

General Tribal Council meeting held

By Whitney Gravelle
Bay Mills Tribal Chairperson

On April 13 we held an official General Tribal Council meeting that provided several updates for our tribal citizens throughout Bay Mills Indian Community.

First, the General Tribal Council voted to set a redevelopment plan for Kings Club Casino, which will allow us redesign the space into a usable facility for the entire Tribe. The re-development plan selected is a mixed-use facility that will blend various uses, such as residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or entertainment, into one space that can be utilized by everyone. We expect to bring more of this concept design back to the General Tribal Council now that a future idea has been selected.

Additionally, over the next two weeks Bay Mills Indian Community will be mailing a census to all tribal citizen households. This is the first time we have ever created a census by which we are collecting our own data. The data collected will be critical to us understanding community needs and will help us not only plan for the future, but also secure grant funding, tailor programming, and guide future development. Please see the flyer at the right for more information.

This census will also be critical to the work we are completing this year to create a comprehensive plan for our Tribal Nation. Having a comprehensive plan is important because it not only captures where we are now, but it will also help guide us to where we want to be in the future. We have only had one comprehensive plan in our entire history, which was completed in 1977. During that time we had 61 employees, 469 tribal citizens, and our unemployment rate was 58.7% overall. If you compare that to 2022, we now have 765 employees, 2,324 tribal citizens, and our unemployment is now 7.8% overall. Please help Bay Mills plan for the future by filling out the census when it arrives to your home.

Second, Bay Mills Indian Community has developed a mobile app in order to share and streamline information. You can now head to your Google Play or Apple App Store and search Bay Mills Indian Community to download. This mobile app is just another example of various ways our Tribal Nation seeks to improve communication with our tribal citizens, employees, and community members. It will serve as a central source of information, services, websites, recreation, and food throughout Bay Mills Indian Community. Furthermore, the mobile app will also allow for push notifications for important and/or emergency events, which will alert all individuals who install the app. This may include inclement weather, power outages, bear sightings, or other events as identified. Please check it out, and download today.

Third, the Bay Mills Pow Wow Committee has fundraised to support a mural that will be painted on the Waishkey building and in partnership with the Michigan Art Cultural Commission grant. This mural sought input from both Ojibwe Charter School and the Pow Wow Committee to represent a cultural reflection of Bay Mills Indian Community. Don’t forget to make plan for the 31st Annual “Honoring Our Veterans” Pow Wow this year as well from June 24 – 26th, 2022!

Finally, Bay Mills Indian Community also continues to strive to be able to support and protect our traditional lifeways, culture, and language to ensure that there is a strong connection between our past to our present and our future. The Journey to Healing program continues to host cultural workshops throughout Bay Mills Indian Community. Over the next two weekends a Dish Bag workshop will be held with Chelsea Moon. We will continue to plan more events throughout the summer and expect to announce those soon!

Our teams continue to strive to finish our infrastructure projects across reservation as well. The new Health Center opened on April 21, the Boys & Girls Club building will open on June 8, 2022; the elders housing development project will be finished in September; and water, sewer, and power will be finished on Plantation Hills in the late fall as well. There is much going on for our Tribal Nation, and one thing remains sure – the future is bright! Please check out our tribal website or the official Tribal Chairperson Facebook Page for regular updates about what is going on here at Bay Mills. Please don’t hesitate to call, email, or stop by for a visit to share your thoughts, questions, and concerns with me. You can reach me at 906-248-8100 or wgravelle@baymills.org.
Executive Council discusses business at regular meeting

Reports from the April 11 meeting

President Whitney Gravelle

— Final walk thru of health center on April 12, opening date April 21 to general public. This concludes almost two year multi-million dollar construction project.

— Recreation:New playground equipment discussed with recreation. Areas to be preserved for recreation (rails, etc.) We are looking to protect these areas from development in the future. A resolution will be brought forward.

— Met with MEDC: Looking into diversification across the tribe. Destination Bay Mills was discussed and how to tie it together to tell our story.

— Climate issues/change discussed with the state. Our input was given and recommendations given. We need to move toward more renewable energy resources.

— The Pow Wow Committee has drafted a mural for the Washtuky Building, which will be done at the end of May. This is part of a grant.

— The Journey to Healing program continues to host cultural workshops throughout the community. We continue to build and integrating culture into everyday life.

— Line 5 continues, as do consent decree negotiations.

— Waiting for marijuana compact to come out of committee. Legislature has been on a break.

Tribal Manager Rachel Lyons

— Army Corps meeting attended, questions addressed regarding locations.

— History Dept. meeting held. They are working remote due to new flooring. The Senior Center has new flooring but it must be sealed in some areas.

— There are numerous grant opportunities on the horizon. Collaborating with grants team.

— Met with Boys & Girls Club about staffing levels and funding for programs.

— Attended MMIP planning meeting to help update plan.

Chief Financial Officer Albert Bertram

— Met with IT about various projects.

— Working to get Amazon Smile linked in with purchases.

— Continuing to work on audits.

— Helped NLCC with their budget.

— Human Resources Director Kendal Perron

— Kronos: Still working on it. Some new things done with holiday leave programming, etc.

— Recruiting is going well.

— Health Director Audrey Breake

— Looking at move out and move in dates for her department. Want to make sure everything gets moved properly.

— Last week Chippewa County had 48 cases of COVID, 4 total on the reservation. Giving 50 and older boosters.

— Mask mandate still in effect at BMHC.

— Looking at how pandemic will be defined in the future by authorities.

— Working on grant for school nursing program. Space allocated at Middle School. Going to see what is available for grant (very competitive).

— Would like outside of new health center cleaned up before we move in.

— Grand opening of health center (several speakers) planned. Art being hung next week.

— Sault Clinic (204 E. Portage) will be assessed for costs.

— We have not had a physician recruiter for awhile. We would like to have our own HR person in the building.


BMGA General Manager Richard LeBlanc

— Ongoing projects: We expect to be in contract with contractor for the project exterior to be completed sometime in May. We continue to renovate hotel rooms. Delivery of materials has been a challenge. The rooms should be ready for the summer.

— Sportsbook: Looking at video displays, etc.

— Putting together changes to casino bathrooms. Two have been prioritized for renovations. We have a budget we are working with.

— Marketing efforts continue. Looking at our digital campaign.

BMBH General Manager Kimmi Walden

— Went over construction budget recently. We are moving forward.

— Maintenance schedule: We are doing updates to Bay Mart and Four Seasons.

— We have chosen surveillance systems for our properties.

— Working on incentive programs for employees that fits within our budget.

— Looking to work with Washkay Bay Farms on items at Four Seasons.

— Four Seasons is currently only cash-only. We are working on that.

— When tanks are being replaced at Bay Mart, it will shut down the facility for a month. We want to do this in the off-season. Working on a date.

— Cultivation manager is in pace with NLCC.

New Business

• Resolution No. 22-04-11A: Waiver of Sovereign Immunity Hallmark Construction, Inc. — Bay Mills Support Building. This is for the building off of the Bay Mills Health Center. Same waiver previously approved. Approved.

• Resolution No. 22-04-11B: Waiver of Sovereign Immunity U.P. Engineers & Architects, Inc. - Plantation Road Sewer Improvements, Phase 3 Approved. Approved.

• Resolution No. 22-04-11C: Authorization Michigan Balance of State Continuum of Care for Housing Services. Through HUD. Monies available through the state. By joining this program, we can apply for funds. This can address housing crisis. Approved.

• Resolution No. 22-04-11D: Application of Office on Violence Against Women FY 2022. Applying for grant that requires this resolution. No match required. Approved.

• Resolution No. 22-04-11E: Support to apply for Native Youth Community Program, Indian Education Demonstration Grant. This is for Boys & Girls Club. Grant packet needs formal resolution to submit with application. BGC has received this award previously. Approved.

• Resolution No. 22-04-11F: Waiver of Sovereign Immunity Imagine Medical Group, Inc. – Bay Mills Health Center – Services Contract. This is for tele-behavioral health to meet the needs of our clients at the health center. Approved.

• Bay Mills Health Center – Dental Services Contract. This is due to contracting policy. The doctor has been with the health center since 2015. Approved.

• Acceptance of BIA Consolidated Tribal Government Program Funds - $194,872. This supplements current program. Increase to base contract. Approved.

• Approval to Submit Application for FY2022 Low or No emission Grant Program and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program. Approved.

• Bay Mills Gaming Commission – Sportsbook Rules and Regulations. Just amended the gaming age to 18 as it already is at BMRC for the retail sports book location. (Michigan online requires 21 years old.) Approved.

• BMRC Liquor License No. 23-001. Approved.

• Wild Bluff Liquor License No. 23-002. Approved.

• Donation Request

— Friends of Pendills Creek Hatchery, Sat. June 4 12th annual Youth Fishing Day from 10 a.m. to noon. Looking for donations and volunteers. $100 donation approved.

• Tribal family seeking help to cover emergency medical expenses. Asking for $300 to assist. Approved.

— Liza McGahey request: Bay Mills Victims Services has paired up with Tackling task Force and Diane Pepper. They are trying to bring awareness to the issue. They will be showing a movie. Looking for movie food sponsor. $700 requested to cover trail mix, popcorn, coffee, water. Approved.

Tribal Member Comment

Tribal member could have used some home health care over weekend with an injection, but could not get care. Would like the need to be looked into for home health nursing. Chairperson Gravelle said it would be discussed as they move forward.

Question: Status of Elder’s Committee?

— How would we get that back together? Rachel Lyons said this was not a tribally formed committee, it was a group of volunteers. She will reach out to last known contact member of the group and see what can be done from there. Chairperson Gravelle agreed it is worth the discussion. Lyons will take on the task of this.

Adjournment at 4:31 PM.
Are you terrible at names?

Tyraades! by Danny Tyree

If you have a habit of forgetting names as soon as you’re introduced, join the club.

In all fairness, I have a mind like a steel trap when it comes to appointments, debts and trivia; it’s just that names tend to chew their leg off in order to escape.

Bless his heart, my son Gideon is even worse. We’ll be out shopping, and some peer will shout a hearty, “Hi, Gideon!” It may be someone who bullied him through six years of school or the person who saved his life three times with the Heinrich maneuver, but 95 percent of the time he gets a “deer in the headlights” look when asked their name.

It’s just that his mind is always running in a thousand different directions. It’s not that he considers his classmates to be lesser beings. (Gideon, stop shining so many different directions.

Too few names fall into that “sweet spot” of being neither too mundane nor too obscure. Visualization doesn’t help make lasting connections with these extreme cases. With the former, I invariably picture myself watching paint dry. With the latter, I typically conjure an image of whatever their parents were smoking when they concocted that name.

Well-timed flatulence is an excellent defense mechanism. If you are introduced to someone whose name you will probably forget, cut loose with appropriate volume. Hold your hand to your ear and give that plaintive “didn’t quite hear you” grimace. Repeat until they give up.

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When they give you a blank stare, provide them a chance to save face by muttering, “Oh… I really shouldn’t have expected you to remember OUR song all this time. And I hate to bring it up, but it looks like you forgot to bring that pony you promised my paraplegic son, Wee Angus.”

Either they will apologize profusely to YOU, or they will call 9-1-1. (“There’s this potentially dangerous visitor in the office. No, I can’t remember his name, but...”)

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Danny Tyree welcomes email responses at tyretyrades@aol.com and visits his Facebook fan page “Tyre’s Tyraades.”

Learning to appreciate the regular flu

By Tom Purcell

I recommend the seasonal flu — but please allow me to explain.

About a week ago, I felt suddenly rundown and weak. I just wanted to lie down.

I thought nothing of it at the time. My family is facing some difficulties at the moment, difficulties we all must face now and again — and all of us are getting beat down.

But it wasn’t just fatigue.

Was it the big C, I wondered?

Nope.

I’d never tested positive for having COVID-19. Did that dreaded virus finally find a way to feast on my blessed good health?

Nope.

It turned out to be just a regular flu — but there was nothing regular about it.

A particularly nasty and highly contagious bug that’s spreading rapidly around my region, it turned out to be the worst case of flu I ever recall having in my life.

With the intense national — and global — focus on a deadly “novel coronavirus” these past three years, it’s easy to forget how deadly the regular flu is. According to the CDC, which has always had a hard time pinning down the exact numbers, the flu has been killing anywhere from 17,000 to 97,000 Americans every year since 2012.

Healthline says the flu has caused at least “3.5 million flu illnesses, 34,000 hospitalizations, and 2,000 deaths” in the United States this season.

And I was among its victims.

I went to the ER to make sure it was the bug causing my issues, and that my heart and fundamentals were sound — and I am very lucky they were (and are).

Then I returned home and commenced immediately lying in the same spot without moving — no food, nothing — for the next four days.

My teeth itched. I felt like a piano was sitting on my chest. The nausea would not relent.

It was one of the best weeks of my life.

It’s a challenge all too common in affluent America: you can easily lose sight of how good you have it until you are reminded how bad things can get.

I recall filling my truck up for $40 a tank not long ago — and now it costs $70 a tank.

All I can think of is as I stand there pumping is how hard I worked the prior few years and how I was able to put a nice little buffer in my savings account to prepare for a rainy day.

Now I think of the 1% return my savings account is paying against the 8.4% inflation rate from last month — and the 9.6% rate it is going to be this month — and I realize how much I took for granted the low-low inflation rate we’ve been enjoying for several decades.

Having your good health taken from you suddenly — but temporarily in my case, thankfully — makes me want to focus my energy on important matters, not trivial ones.

From now on I do not want to waste one fraction of a single second discussing politics on social media, but I do want to spend as much time as possible with my mom and dad as long as we have them to enjoy.

Every time I see them now — and I wasn’t able to do so at all the past week — I ask them a new question about their lives and other family members.

They are a fountain of wisdom and I want to capture as much of their experience and knowledge as I can while they are still able to share it.

And now you know why I recommend the seasonal flu!

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Tom Purcell is an author and humor columnist for the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. Email him at Tom@TomPurcell.com.
By KAYLA NELSEN
Capital News Service

LANSING – At the northwest corner of Lake Huron, in the Eastern Upper Peninsula, is an 80-square-mile town of 240 people, one phone booth – and one boat building school.

That school is growing explosively, bringing the entire community along with it.

Experts estimate that a planned expansion of the Great Lakes Boat Building School could bring an additional $2.5 million to residents of Cedarville.

The small town has a rich history of wooden boat building and repair. For over a century, wooden boats have been the primary mode of transportation around the nearby Les Cheneaux Islands. As the boating crafters grew older, the artful skill risked being lost.

To keep its wooden boat building heritage alive, the Cedarville community founded the school in 2005.

“In all of these academic qualifications we have for high school students, we have neglected our need for tradespeople,” said Ken Drenth, the former Great Lakes Boat Building School president and current director of the Les Cheneaux Islands Community Foundation.

“Everybody doesn’t have to get a four-year university degree. We need plumbers and electricians and wooden boat builders,” Drenth said.

Since 2005, the demand for highly skilled marine technicians to operate and maintain the technological components of boats has increased, Drenth said.

“You talk to any marina operator and they’ll say, ‘We need technicians badly. Badly,’” he said. “All that started the discussion of a revenue source the boat school could initiate that would also meet the needs that were jumping off the table.”

It shifted from a school mainly for hobbyists and added two programs: marine service technology and marine electronics technology. In 2018, the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges certified it as meeting academic standards that allow it to offer scholarships.

“Nowhere else in the country is offering this right now,” said Nikki Storey, the school’s president.

In all that the school offers to students, it also benefits the community.

“The quality of instruction that the students are receiving is second to none,” Drenth said.

For the first time this year, the school’s boat building and marine service technology programs waitlisted applicants.

To accommodate the increased applicant pool, the nonprofit school plans to construct an additional facility with a recent $2.7 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

The other 20% of the funds needed for the project will come from donations from the community and businesses in the marine industry. Mackinac County, Tiara Yachts of Holland and Walstrom Marine of Harbor Springs have already made significant donations, Storey said.

Students will not be the only parties to benefit from the expansion. Central Michigan University estimated in 2013 the economic benefit generated by the school for Cedarville.

“At that time, about $3.75 million was put into the local economy by the school,” Storey said. “And that was when we had fewer students. Based on our current number of students, we’ve determined that the impact of the facility expansions are going to be about $2.5 million annually to the Eastern Upper Peninsula.”

The boat school enrolls about 25 students annually. Enrollment is expected to double with the expansion, Storey said.

Drenth said the students have become an integral part of Cedarville, volunteering their time and labor to events and community affairs.

“The most important thing is just keeping that school going,” he said. “We realize that this community is small. And our ability to keep that boat school operating with annual donations is a real testament to the community’s desire to keep it here.”

Michigan alone employs upwards of 60,000 workers in its growing marine industry.

“You think about how large the marine industry is in Michigan and here’s one of the vital supporters of that industry in some little community on the north shore of Lake Huron,” Drenth said.

“Where’s the Great Lakes Boat Building School? Well, it’s in a little town called Cedarville.”

Kayla Nelsen writes for Great Lakes Echo.
Real estate market still red hot but could slow down

By SYDNEY BOWLER
Capital News Service

LANSING – “Pretty much every offer I put was in the dark, where you’d just cross your fingers and pray and hope that it gets accepted,” said Corbin Holwerda of Grand Rapids.

Holwerda is a first-time homebuyer who has been looking for a house in Grand Rapids since mid-January.

“I’ve put in seven or eight offers, and it’s really tough because half of those I’m losing to all-cash offers,” he said. “I’m still a young adult. I don’t have $250,000 in the bank that I can just front and put up for a house.”

A recent study by Redfin, a full-service real estate brokerage, found that 68.8% of home offers written by Redfin agents nationally faced competition in February. That’s the highest share reported by its agents since at least April 2020.

“Even if we are able to go above ask (price), there are still people waiving inspections and going $50,000, $60,000 or $70,000 above asking in some cases,” Holwerda said.

According to a new Congressional Research Service report, the main factor causing record-high home prices is that in traditional years, there are more homes for sale than there are houses for sale. It’s a question of supply and demand, the report said.

“We have people selling homes with 40 offers on one home,” said Shirley Smith, the executive officer of the Hillsdale County Board of Realtors.

“There is a huge amount of competition right now, and the reason for that is because inventory is low. House prices have been going up the last few years and inventory has not increased appreciably,” Smith said.

“I think we’re also seeing more cash offers because those are the offers that get accepted more quickly,” she said. Sometimes offers are contingent on the sale of the buyer’s current home, a bank loan or inspections to be done, and that can take more time, she said.

But cash offers move the process along more quickly.

“Generally, when we have high housing prices like this, it doesn’t go on forever. I think I, and most Realtors, expect that in the not-so-distant future there will be a change in the trend,” she said.

According to Smith, projections from the National Association of Realtors say housing prices may increase 5% in the coming year, which is much lower than several years past.

“That might be a tapering off in the market,” she said. According to the Case-Shiller Detroit Home Price Index, home prices in Detroit have gone up about 8.6% per year since January 2012. But from January 2021 to January 2022, prices rose 13.9%.

That can be compared with neighboring states’ large cities, like Cleveland, rising 13.3% and Chicago, rising 12.5%. Nationally, home prices rose 19.1% from January 2021 to January 2022, according to Case-Shiller’s national data.

“The interesting thing here (regarding the increases) is that in traditional years, only 3 to 5% of the housing on the market is actually new houses,” said Wayne State University economics professor Allen Goodman.

“As a result, most housing supply occurs kind of above the middle of the market. We don’t allow people to build new, low-quality houses,” said Goodman, who specializes in housing and health economics.

He said some new houses are resold multiple times and “as a result, the housing gets toward the upper end of the market, and what’s left there is sometimes said to filter down to other buyers.”

“A lot of this goes back to COVID, in part,” said Goodman. “To keep the economy growing, the federal government and Federal Reserve banks have had what were historically low interest rates. What it meant was that people who wanted to buy houses were faced with mortgage rates of like 3%.”

“A combination of low interest rates and a smaller-than-traditional supply lead to increases in the price of housing,” Goodman said.

Monitoring estimates of the value of his own Huntington Woods home over the years, he said it lost half its value from 2007 to 2009.

The value can vastly change by month. In one recent month, his home’s value was estimated to have increased around $30,000, but in a previous month it was estimated to have dropped $20,000.

“But really over the past year, it’s pretty much been the same, at least according to Zillow,” he said, referring to the online real estate-market national company.

Juried Show results from Alberta Arts Center

SAULT STE. MARIE — Bonifas Art Center selected Alpaca Pencil as their featured artist of an invitational award. Their work will be showcased April 6 - May 18, 2023 in their Studio Gallery in Escanaba.

Kate Dupre (a Mackinac Island artist and appointed juror) determined recipients of other gallery board sponsored awards and recognition.

First Place: Judy Merrill-Smith for “Fragmented Skies,” a three dimensional fiber art piece
Second Place: Paul Rose for “White on White Rose Canoe” Photography
Third Place: Paulette Attie for her fiber art “Superior Loon”

Three honorable mentions were also selected.

Phil Bellfy “Hydraulic Reflection” (Photography)
Alpaca Pencil. “Master of the Skies (Line Cut Print and Acrylic)”
Stefanie Moran “Tugboat” (Oil on Linen)

The show will be on display the duration of April and the public is welcome to view it during gallery hours of Thursday-Saturday 11-4 p.m. at 217 Ferris St. in Sault, Mich.

NOW HIRING! SEASONAL MUSEUM JOBS

Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum in Whitefish Point, Michigan is seeking retail sales, museum custodial, and historical interpreter personnel. Positions begin in late April or early May through Oct. 31. Competitive wages and flexible schedules, full or part time. Please contact Bruce Lynn, Executive Director, at 906-635-1742, or blynn@shipwreckmuseum.com

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SAULT STE. MARIE – AmeriCorps Seniors Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is pleased to announce that Holly Watkins has been hired as the program’s Elder Empowerment Specialist. With her she brings innovative ideas to form and grow this program into a great resource for the entire community, specifically seniors.

“I originally began my journey with United Way of the EUP in February of 2021 with a communications internship for my degree. During my internship I got to help organize different events across the EUP and the ‘United Way’ spark was ignited. Ever since I was a child, I’ve had the desire to help people in any way I could, which is why I believe I gravitated towards what the United Way does for the individuals in our community. I am so excited to be an official part of the team and I cannot wait to get started working with all of our amazing volunteers around the EUP.”

RSVP is an AmeriCorps Seniors program hosted by United Way of the EUP. As the Elder Empowerment Specialist, Watkins will be responsible for coordinating RSVP’s Elder Empowerment Program. This goal of this program is to bring awareness to scams and fraud that target seniors throughout the EUP and to support seniors to get started working with all of our amazing volunteers around the EUP.

Concert to take place April 22

Soo Theatre has announced its spring orchestra and beginning strings concert this Friday, April 22 at 7 p.m. on the historic Soo Theatre stage.

The concert will include the youngest string players up to the most advanced in our program. The early strings students will perform Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star as well as French Folk Song, and a popular Fiddle Tune, Boil Them Cabbage Down. A group of cellists will perform a tango as well as classics Can-Can and Habanera. The early orchestra will also perform a tango while the intermediate orchestra will delight with a piece featuring violas, the middle voice of the orchestra. The viola looks like a violin, but is slightly bigger and has a lower sound, like the cello. The advanced orchestra will perform a bluegrass selection as well as an arrangement of the famous Brandenburg Concerto Number 3.

This concert is open to the public and admission is by donation.

MDOT announces road projects

CHIPPEWA COUNTY — The Michigan Department of Transportation will be investing $3.3 million to upgrade I-75 north of St. Ignace to south of Sault Ste. Marie. Work includes about 57 miles of freeway sign upgrades, overhead sign structures, guardrail upgrades, and reflective roadside delineators.

Counties impacted include Mackinac and Chippewa. Work will begin on Tuesday, April 19, with an estimated completion date of Friday, Oct. 14.

Traffic restrictions:
- A minimum of one lane will be open at all times on northbound and southbound I-75. All work will be performed during daytime hours. Work will require intermittent shoulder or single-lane closures. A 12-foot lane width restriction will be in effect.
- Based on economic modeling, this investment is expected to directly and indirectly support 47 jobs.

This project will improve sign visibility for motorists. Upgraded guardrails and added delineators will increase safety.

The AAH program began in Michigan in 1990. Today, around 2,900 groups have adopted more than 6,000 miles of state highway. In a typical year, these volunteers collect 60,000 to 70,000 bags of trash annually, an estimated $5 million value for the state. Volunteers pick up litter three times each year. Statewide, there will be a summer pickup from July 16 to 24 and a fall pickup from Sept. 24 to Oct. 2.

AAH groups wear high-visibility, yellow-green safety vests required by federal regulations when working within a highway right of way. MDOT provides free vests and trash bags, and arranges to haul away the trash. Volunteers include members of various civic groups, businesses and families. Crew members have to be at least 12 years old, and each group must number at least three people.

Sections of highway are still available for adoption. Groups are asked to adopt a section for at least two years. AAH signs bearing a group’s name are posted along the stretch of adopted highway. There is no fee to participate.

Several landfills in southwestern Michigan are also chipping in to help the AAH program. Westside Landfill in St. Joseph County, C&C Landfill in Calhoun County, Orchard Hill Landfill in Berrien County, Southeast Berrien County Landfill near Niles, and Republic Services Gembrit Circle Transfer Station in Kalamazoo have all agreed to accept trash generated by the three annual AAH pickups at no charge. In exchange, these businesses receive a sign recognizing their support.
BMIC’s Old Indian Burial Ground faces threats

By John Carlisle
Detroit Free Press Columnist/USA Today Network

BAY MILLS — “What is this?” she asked the other elders. “Why is this here?”

Paula Carrick, 62, was on the Bay Mills Indian Community’s reservation, which lies along the northern coast of the Upper Peninsula, just west of Saub Ste. Marie. She was standing with several others inside a cemetery known simply as the Old Indian Burial Ground. They were looking down at a small pile of sand next to a very old grave.

“No idea,” said her sister, Wanda Perron, 73. “Poke it a little bit. There could be ants in there.”

Carrick stuck her hand into the mound. Nothing came out. It wasn’t an anthill. This cemetery officially dates to 1841, but tradition says it’s much older. It overlooks St. Mary’s River, where Lake Superior narrows before spilling into Lake Huron. Hundreds of graves lie beneath the shade of pines, in view of the water. Some are covered with spirit houses, which are little wooden boxes shaped like tiny cabins. They’re meant to protect the ancestors’ bodies while their souls travel to the spirit world, and in their weathered old age, the spirit houses were sun-blasted and covered in soft green mosses.

By now, several others stood around the sand pile, looking down, offering ideas. They noted that Carrick, the tribe’s official historian, is the only person with a key to the graveyard gates, and this mound wasn’t here the last time she visited. They pointed out that the sand pile wasn’t covered in fallen pine needles from the trees like the rest of the cemetery, suggesting that the mound was fresh. And unlike piles of dirt left by burrowing animals, there was no hole nearby.

“It kind of sends up red flags,” Carrick said. Anywhere else, a pile of sand wouldn’t cause concern. But this burial ground, like almost all Indian grave sites in America, has been looted countless times by grave robbers who dig up the remains of the ancestors to get the jewels and artifacts that were buried with them. It’s a constant threat against which the tribe is always on guard. And Carrick has made it her mission to stop it.

She’s confronted thieves in the act, chased trespassers through the woods, even put up iron gates to keep the grave robbers out. “It makes me very, very upset,” she said. “Those are my ancestors. That’s my grandma and my grandpa, you know? Leave them alone. I don’t go and bother yours.”

But just behind her loomed an even bigger threat that no gates will stop.

The Old Indian Burial Ground dates back almost 360 years, to a legendary conflict called the Battle of Iroquois Point. The Ojibwe who lived on the coast along Whitefish Bay and the St. Mary’s River had spent much of the 17th century at war with Iroquois tribes from the east who were expanding westward in an effort to take over the fabled trade routes through the Great Lakes.

In 1662, the Iroquois sent a war party to settle the matter once and for all. They camped on a small island just off the coast, preparing to invade the Upper Peninsula. Instead, the Ojibwe launched a surprise, preemptive attack as the Iroquois slept. They killed all but two of the warriors, who were mutilated and sent back east as a warning, while the bodies of their dead were strung up along the beach in case the Iroquois didn’t get the message. “They never did come this way again,” Carrick said.

The Ojibwe dead were buried in a mass grave nearby, with a view of the river, as custom dictated. That was the start of the Old Indian Burial Ground.

“This is a classic area that we bury our people, on a bluff overlooking the water,” said Wanda Perron, standing among the graves. The low autumn sun cast long shadows from the spirit houses at her feet, and the waves of Lake Superior washed loudly ashore just below. “If you ever notice old burial grounds, they’ll be at the mouth of a river or somewhere overlooking the water. This is our lifeline. This was life for us. We fish in the water, we travel by water, so it was just very important to us.”

Over time, many more Ojibwe were buried here, including several chiefs, according to old records and stories passed down by elders. Burials continued until the 1950s, until there was simply no more space. Scans of the area by ground-penetrating radar in recent years showed there might be up to 1,800 people buried here. Families still come to tend to the graves of distant relatives, still rebuild weather-beaten spirit houses, still pay their respects to ancestors they never knew.

“One thing our ancestors have always passed down is to take care of our dead,” said Carrick. “We’re always protecting this place. We’re always cleaning the graves.”

“There’s an old saying: ‘Our home is where our dead lie buried.’ It was important,” said Wanda Perron. “The biggest ceremony we had in our whole year is the Feast of the Dead. Tribes came from far and wide to honor the dead.”

“It’s not like other dead, that you never think about that person or honor that person or feast that person,” said Kayla Perron, Wanda’s 32-year-old daughter. “That’s continued always.”

That reverence made everything that followed far more upsetting.

As far back as the pilgrims, American Indian graves have been robbed. By their own accounts, the passengers on the Mayflower looted several Indian burial sites as soon as they arrived on the East Coast. And it hasn’t stopped since. For whatever reason, by legal means or otherwise, people have long been drawn to owning Indian artifacts and souvenirs.

“There’s this fascination, but also disrespect, for the history and the culture that is here, which I think a lot of people like to romanticize,” said Whitney Gravelle, the tribe’s chairperson. “And when I think of the legal Burial site structures that are in place or the enforcement measures, I know when something’s been stolen, the chances of it coming back to our tribe are so slim, that when you hear about it being lost, you know it’s gone forever.”

Natives traditionally buried their dead with items they were thought to need in the afterlife, including personal effects like moccasins, pottery, medicines and traditional foods like rice, berries and fish. And jewelry made of copper.

“We always had copper,” Carrick said. “A lot of our adornments were copper, and we had copper kettles, copper spoons. There were a lot of things made of cop-

Continued on next page
The Old Indian Burial Ground has long been plagued by looting. In the last big organized heist, 15 graves were dug up and robbed, a fact discovered only because Carrick noticed that someone didn’t place one of the spirit houses exactly back where they found it after digging out the grave beneath it.

Thieves even took some of the heavy limestone tombstones that marked a handful of graves. One reportedly became someone’s coffee table down in Flint. Another is said to be propped up in someone’s backyard downstate. Even outside the burial ground, residents in the area routinely find people scouring the reservation for any kind of artifact or souvenir they can dig out, from pottery to arrowheads to any kind of jewelry that a metal detector can locate.

“People think, ‘There’s no one that’s going to be fighting for that. They don’t exist.’” said Kayla Perron. “Working at the casino really opened my eyes to how many people don’t realize that we still exist. It’s like we’re a whimsical fairy tale, like a folklore. They have no idea that we still exist. We’re not really talked about as a living people.”

“I think a lot of people to this day don’t think of us as human,” said Wanda Perron. “We’re a long-gone culture that they can talk about, they can read about, they can look at artifacts in museums, but we’re not a living culture anymore. We’re not a living people anymore. A lot of people have that mentality. So if you see an artifact, ‘Hey that’s pretty cool, let’s take that.’ They can go home and say, ‘Look what I got!’ But what would you think if somebody went up to your mom’s grave and say, ‘What’? ‘Well, we took some stuff off the graves and brought them to the casino to see if it would bring us good luck.’ People still to this day put rocks and things, money on the graves, and they were taking it off and using it as charms.”

As she stood in the cemetery, telling the story, two passing tourists parked their car on the side of the road, walked up to the cemetery gate, said nothing to the gathering of elders and their families, and started taking pictures of the graves. Carrick walked over to have a friendly talk with them, patiently explaining the history of the cemetery and its importance to the tribe. Such curiosity by outsiders is understandable, said her sister. The burial ground is visible through the iron gates, and the spirit houses are a striking, mysterious sight.

“There’s a lot of disrespect in here, but a lot of people are wonderful, they really are,” said Wanda Perron. “But some make it bad for everybody, so we had to lock it. I just wish we could’ve locked it a hundred years ago, before all of our tombstones were stolen.”

Now, nature is threatening to do more damage than the grave robbers ever did.

For seven years, Lake Superior rose steadily to record levels. And its waves, thrown hard onto the shore by the lake’s high winds, have eroded the bluff along the beach and started pulling the cemetery itself down to the water’s edge.

“All of this is burial ground,” Carrick said, walking the beach below the graveyard, pointing to fallen trees and upturned roots at the foot of the sandy bluff. “This is all caved in since last year. Those trees right here, those were on top of the hill before, so that’s all fresh right there.”

The tribe recently discovered that the burial ground is bigger than they’d thought. Radar found graves well outside the iron fence that was meant to mark the graveyard’s boundaries. Those graves are being pulled out of the cemetery by erosion. And any bones or artifacts that emerge from the sandy soil will either wash away into the lake or be plucked by souvenir hunters wandering the beach.

“The erosion doesn’t engage me,” said Carrick. “Nature happens. It runs its course. But because of that erosion, it’s opening up things very easily for looters to get to. We’ve been watching it since it started eroding because things come out and people are like, ‘Oh!’ and scooping it up real quick.”

Once again, it was Carrick who sounded the alarm about the danger. “Paula brought it to our attention and she was kind of like, ‘If this keeps up we’re going to have ancestors rolling down the side of the hill,’” Gravelle said.

The tribe is in talks about possible solutions with the Army Corps of Engineers, which has suggested dredging the lake and putting sediment on the beach as a bulwark against further erosion. But even then, the threats to the ancestors are unlikely to end. Later that same day, after they’d left the burial ground, one of the elders caught someone using a metal detector on-another sacred site nearby, trying to find something worth digging up and taking home. In Bay Mills, the past isn’t left buried, and the dead are unlikely to rest in peace. And Carrick’s mission remains one without an end in sight.

“But I’m getting too old to actually run through the woods anymore,” she said, laughing. “I’ve had to do that. I’ve had to hide be-cause these people who are looting are carrying weapons. But I didn’t choose to be in this position. I believe the ancestors chose me to help protect them. I really do.”

Reprinted with permission. John Carlisle writes about people and places in Michigan. His stories can be found at freep.com/carlisle. Contact him: jcarlisle@freepress.com. Follow him on Twitter @johncarlisle. Facebook at johncarlisle.freet or on Instagram at johncarlisle.freep.

FRONT DESK CLERK for the Bay Mills Resort & Casino. Full Time starting wage is $15.25/hr or negotiable upon experience. Must be 18 yrs of age to apply. Must have excellent computer experience and work record with a friendly personality and able to pass a full criminal background check. Six months to one year of Hotel Front Desk Experience or equivalent combination of related hospitality/customer service experience strongly desired. Stop by Human Resources in the Ellen Marshall Building at 12104 W. Lakeshore Drive in Brimley next to King’s Club Casino to apply or email resume to Erin Forrester at eforrester@baymills.org. Preference may be given to qualified individuals of Native American descent. Closing Date: OPEN UNTIL FILLED
MSU Extension offering Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Program

You can learn how to prevent Type 2 Diabetes together with other Michigan residents in the National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP) on-line lifestyle change program offered by Michigan State University Extension. The program series starts Wednesday April 27th. Guided by two trained MSU Extension lifestyle coaches, groups of participants learn skills they need to make lasting changes such as losing a modest amount of weight, being more physically active, and managing stress.

People with prediabetes — higher-than-normal blood glucose (sugar) levels — are 5 to 15 times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than those with normal blood glucose levels. In fact, many people with prediabetes can be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes within 5 years.

“One in three American adults has prediabetes, so the need for prevention has never been greater,” said Tracie Abram, Extension Health Educator and NDPP Life Coach. “The National Diabetes Prevention program offers a proven approach to preventing or delaying the onset of type 2 diabetes through modest lifestyle changes made with the support of a coach and one’s peers.”

Participants learn how to eat healthy, add physical activity to their routine, manage stress, stay motivated, and solve problems that can get in the way of healthy changes. National Diabetes Prevention program groups meet for a year — once a week for the first eight weeks, bi-weekly the second eight weeks, then once or twice a month for the second 6 months to maintain healthy lifestyle changes. The program’s group setting provides a supportive environment with people who are facing similar challenges and trying to make the same changes. Together participants celebrate their successes and find ways to overcome obstacles.

The National Diabetes Prevention program is based on research that showed that people with prediabetes who lost 5 to 7 percent of their body weight (10 to 14 pounds for a 200-pound person) by making modest changes reduced their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58 percent! Nationwide implementation of the program could greatly reduce future cases of type 2 diabetes, a serious condition that can lead to heart attack; stroke; blindness; kidney failure; or loss of toes, feet, or legs.

The National Diabetes Prevention Program is led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The program is offered virtually using Zoom. Michigan State University Extension will be providing a series starting April 27, 2022, meeting on Wednesdays from 9:30-10:30 am EST. Contact Tracie Abram, MSU Extension Health Educator and a NDPP Lifestyle Coach at 906-235-2985 or abram@msu.edu to find out more and to pre-register. Abram states that “small changes can add up to a big difference!” “Working with a trained lifestyle coach who provides guidance, program participants are making lasting changes together.”

NOW HIRING

RADIOLOGY & MAMMOGRAPHY TECH for Bay Mills Health Center. Requirements: Associates degree or technical degree required. Training consisting of classroom instruction, including practice with radiologic equipment. Experience as X-Ray/Mammography Technician required. Certified in general radiologic technology and mammography by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) required. BLS certification required. Must be able to travel when needed. Must pass all pass all required background checks including a per hire drug screen. Benefits include BCBS, 401K employer/employee contributions, short term & long term disability coverage, life insurance coverage, liberal leave policy including your birthday off with pay, and yearly increases. To apply email Cover Letter, Resume and 3 Letters of reference to Erin Forrester at eforrester@baymills.org Complete position descriptions are available upon request by calling the Human Resources Department at 906-248-8500. Preference may be given to qualified individuals of Native American descent. Closing Date: Open Until Filled

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632-3384 705 Johnson St. (At Bridge) Sault Ste. Marie MI 49783
Mary Irene (Lumbert) Crisp

Mary Irene (Lumbert) Crisp of Rudyard, Michigan, died on April 6, 2022, at MyMichigan Medical Center in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, at the age of 74. She was born on November 15, 1947, in Ionia, Michigan to Kenneth and Doris (Daggett) Lumbert.

Mary moved to Lansing, Michigan, with her family as a young girl and attended high school there. She worked at a few department stores for a year after school. It was during this time that she met Arthur Glen Crisp while he was working at the local gas station. They married on February 5, 1966, in Mason, Michigan and began their family. Mary became a stay-at-home mother to her four children and the family moved to the Upper Peninsula. Once her children were adults and out of the house, she did some security work at the local casino but always made time for her grandchildren.

Mary was a member of the Rudyard Baptist Church.

Mary had a talent for crafts and enjoyed sewing, knitting and crocheting. She also spent time gardening and watching the bird that would visit her home. She enjoyed spending her downtime playing games on her computer and watching her grandbabies. She enjoyed all life had to offer and will be greatly missed.

Mary is survived by her husband of fifty-six years, Arthur; children, Arthur (Brenda) Crisp Jr. of Rudyard, Kevin (Ilean) Crisp of Rodney, Michigan, Tracy Peffers of Brimley, Michigan and Heather (Bob) Derrick of Laingsburg, Michigan; grandchildren, Teresa, Kenneth, Leanna Chelsey, Susan, Bobby, Sara, and Savanna and Billy; five great grandchildren; siblings, Stanley and Ida, as well as many other cousins and nieces and nephews.

Mary is preceded in death by her parents, Kenneth and Doris, mother-in-law, Lulla Williams, and brother, Bill.

A graveside service at Fairview Cemetery is planned for Spring 2022 with Pastor Steve officiating.

Galer Funeral Homes & Cremation, of Pickford, Michigan, is service the family. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.galerfuneralhomes.com.

Albert O’Brien

Albert O’Brien, 71, of Brimley, died on March 7, 2022 in Florida surrounded by his family.


Al was well known for his great skill of painting vehicles. He was employed at Johnson’s Auto Body Shop for many years. Al continued his skill of auto repair while working for the Chippewa County Road Commission. He took pride in the care of the I-75 rest area for several summers. After retirement, Al and Kathy wintered in Texas for many years.

Al loved his family, especially his boys. He spent countless hours coaching and watching his son’s play hockey. Anyone who knew Al, knows his love for Harley motorcycles. Al and Kathy loved to ride, attend rallies and spent every opportunity on the Harley. Al was a jokster and always had a good story or prank to share around the campfire. He had a very kind heart and was always willing to lend a hand.

Al is survived by his wife of 46 years, Kathy; three sons: Scott (Katherine) of Navarre, Florida; Chad of Sault Ste. Marie and Keith of Negaunee; seven grandchildren: Taylor, Alex, Austin, Emma, Logan, Kurt and Charlotte; brother Lewis and sister Betty Smart; brothers-in-law, Duane (Deb) Piche; Dave (Kim) Piche and sister-in-law, Theresa (Ron) Mills. He was preceded in death by his parents and brother Ken; father and mother-in-law, Archie and Grace Piche.

Celebration of life will be held this Summer 2022 in Brimley, Mich.

Life is not about waiting for the storms to pass, it’s about learning how to ride in the rain.

Colorectal Cancer Screening Saves Lives

Are you 45 or older? It’s Time to Get Screened

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1. COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH
2. A LACK OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO USE, MAY CONTRIBUTE TO AN_RISK FOR DEVELOPING COLORECTAL CANCER
3. WHAT AGE SHOULD YOU START GETTING SCREENED FOR COLORECTAL CANCER
4. ONE WAY TO TEST FOR COLORECTAL CANCER IS TO LOOK FOR HIDDEN＿IN THE STOOL WITH A Fecal IMMUNOCHEMICAL TEST (FIT)
5. KNOW YOUR＿TO SEE IF YOU ARE AT HIGHER RISK FOR DEVELOPING COLORECTAL CANCER
6. A Fecal IMMUNOCHEMICAL TEST (FIT) IS EXTREMELY EASY TO COMPLETE AND CAN BE DONE IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN＿
7. A SMALL GROWTH ON THE LINING OF THE COLON OR RECTUM

DOWN

1. COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH
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7. A SMALL GROWTH ON THE LINING OF THE COLON OR RECTUM
2021 BMIC Economic Impact Report

Highlights

Tribal Citizens
• 2,324 Enrolled Citizens
• 325 Elders (55+) that received a distribution

Charitable Contributions
$121,922

2% State Compact Net Win Distributions to Local Governments

Total Distribution: $340,688
• Superior Township, Bay Mills Township, and the Ambulance Service were given a total of $255,516
• Brimley Area Schools and Ojibwe Charter School were each given $32,586
• Chippewa County received $20,000

Employment
Bay Mills Indian Community Tribal Government and Enterprise Operations
This includes Bay Mills Business Holdings (Four Seasons, Bay Mart, and NLCC)

Affiliation Total Payroll

Total Employees: 617

BMIC Tribal Citizens: 337
Other: 280

Total Wages Paid: $21,222,062
Total Benefits Paid: $5,687,962
Taxes Withheld
Federal: $1,593,942
State: $230,571

BMCC Employs 148 individuals

• 50 Full Time Employees/15 Full Time Faculty
• 61 Adjunct Faculty
• 14 Part-Time Student Employees
• 8 Part Time Employees

57% of staff have a tribal affiliation
44 Employees are BMIC Tribal Citizens

Ellen Marshall Memorial Health Center

Ground was broken on the new medical center on Oct. 1, 2020, with a completion date of April 2022. The new facility will provide patients with state of the art technology and new services, such as chiropractic and vision care.

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Do your part: Celebrate Earth Day on April 22

Submitted by Jennifer Parks
Bay Mills Biological Services

Earth Day is celebrated every year on April 22nd. Why is it celebrated? In the decades leading to the first Earth Day in 1970, Americans were being exposed to pollution from countless sources and watching the environment around them deteriorate. Air and water resources were left vulnerable to contamination due to lack of regulations and little way to hold polluters accountable. The last straw for the creator of Earth Day, Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson, was the Santa Barbara oil spill in 1969. The first Earth Day was organized by politicians to teach and inspire college students about growing pollution concerns. They were successful in their efforts, causing massive protests and demonstrations from a variety of groups as Earth Day made headlines. They were even successful in achieving some political alignment. The first Earth Day led to the creation of the first environmental laws in the United States and the Environmental Protection Agency. There are still a plethora of environmental issues, but there would not have been this much awareness about the state of the environment without Earth Day.

Since the first Earth Day, the idea has gone global. As awareness grows, so can the efforts for improvement. Each Earth Day is themed, and this year’s theme is “Invest in our Planet”. The goal is to promote a sustainable future. Building sustainability into the economy is not only beneficial but necessary for human and environmental health now and in the future. For example, clean energy jobs in the United States pay upwards of 25% of the national median wage. While change needs to happen systemically, there are some things individuals can do at home. Plant native plants acclimated to our climate to promote biodiversity and resiliency within the ecosystem in which we live. Recycle and minimize waste going into the landfill. Use your dollar to advocate for change by buying products that are responsibly sourced and packaged and don’t buy from brands that are known to have poor practices for the environment. Eat local whenever possible and store food properly to cut down on food waste. Try natural DIY cleaners which reduce toxins in your home and have a lower impact than many store bought cleaners. The BMIC Home Owner’s Guide has recipes for DIY cleaners and is packed full of other ways to be a better neighbor to nature. This publication can be found in the Publications section of the Biological Services webpage on the Bay Mills website.

Bay Mills Biological Services will be hosting a Community Clean Up Event on Earth Day, April 22 at 1 p.m. Meet at the Tribal Administration building. Park in the parking lot just south of the building on the “Kings Club” side. More information is available on Bay Mills News Facebook page. A short webinar about improving air quality in your home is also available on the Bay Mills News Facebook page and Bay Mills

Test your home for radon exposure today

Radon is a naturally occurring odorless, tasteless, and invisible gas that can be harmful when present in homes. Even though radon occurs naturally, it can still pose a significant health risk as it may cause some cancers.

Exposure to radon can come from groundwater, soil, and rocks, but the most common exposure route for humans is from the soil under homes, schools and places of employment. This is because most people spend an extended amount of time indoors which can lead to increased exposure to radon. Radon is the biggest cause of lung cancer in non-smokers and the second largest cause of lung cancer in smokers.

Free radon test kits are available at the Tribal Administration building on a first come, first served basis. Hardware and home improvement stores often sell radon test kits as well. The best time to test for radon is during the winter and early spring months. Data indicates that 25% of homes in Michigan and 12% of homes in Chippewa County have radon levels that are high enough to adversely affect health.

If a home has unsafe radon levels, there are passive and active mitigations systems that can be installed. A passive system can include a PVC ventilation pipe that vents the radon outdoors. An active system uses an electric ventilation fan or sealing cracks in the foundation. Existing radon systems and meters should be checked periodically, as they can reach the end of their lifespan and lose effectiveness.

If radon test results are at or above the action level (4 pCi/L), additional resources include Chippewa County Environmental Health (906) 635-3620, Michigan EGLE at 800-RADON GAS (800) 723-6642 and Bay Mills Indian Community’s Environmental Coordinator (906) 248-8655. If you live in Tribal Housing and have a radon mitigation system nearing the end of its lifespan, contact Tribal housing (906) 248-5524.

Another clean up event will occur at the end of May. And save the date for a clean up event on Saturday, Aug 6 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Lunch and swag will be provided! Check Facebook for more information on these events closer to the date, or call the BMIC Environmental Coordinator at (906) 248-8655.

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In 2021, the Medical Clinic served 1,862 patients with 8,287 patient visits; staffed by 3.5 FTE medical providers (Medical Doctor, Nurse Practitioners). The Dental Clinic continued to focus on the build of the new Health Center. We have resumed service in all departments, continuing to engage in safety measures for our patients and employees.

During the CY 2021, there was about approximately a 9% staff turnover including key positions such as Nurse, Case Manager, EMT, TOR Director, Dental Hygienist, Family Health Educator, and Community Health Representative. The Bay Mills Executive Council amended the Pandemic Response Plan that was initially implemented in early 2020, removing the “leveled” restrictions, and provided general masking guidance. In line with this direction, The Tribe and the Health Center had masking restrictions in place for much of 2021, with a brief reprieve of masking during the summer months.

Our Tribal President and Executive Council worked closely with the Health Center to closely monitor Covid statistics, and to share the information in digestible formats for our community. This attention to data also played a large role in the Tribe’s response to Covid.

Overall, we had no call/no show rate of 9%, and a 14% rate of canceled appointments throughout 2021. Despite the pandemic consuming much of our attention, BMHC also continued to focus on the build of the new Health Center. We have resumed service in all departments, continuing to engage in safety measures for our patients and employees.

B. Primary Medical and Dental Services: Bay Mills Health Center was a leader in Covid-19 Vaccinations throughout the Eastern Upper Peninsula. Throughout 2021, we continued to offer Covid-19 testing to the public, with 138 positive tests, 2,912 negative tests, totaling 3,050 Covid-19 tests administered by Bay Mills Health Center. For Covid-19 vaccinations, 7,292 vaccine doses were administered at 67 vaccine clinics during the year – of particular note, there were 15 weeks where more than one vaccination clinic was held.

In 2021, the Medical Clinic served 1,862 patients with 8,287 patient visits; staffed by 3.5 FTE medical providers (Medical Doctor, Nurse Practitioners). The Dental Clinic served 1,404 patients with 4,303 patient visits; staffed by 2.76 FTE dental providers (Dentists, Dental Hygienists). The Medical and Dental Services were staffed in accordance with tribal priorities, availability of funds, and demand for services.

The Health Center maintains accreditation through the Joint Commission in Ambulatory Health Care, Behavioral Health Care and Primary Care Medical Home. The Primary Medical Home is both a designation through the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and The Joint Commission. Approximately 2 million dollars were generated for medical, dental, pharmacy and behavioral health services through third party billing.

Services were also available to non-Native Americans, and services continued to be provided on Fee for Service and Value Based Care. Efforts are made to capture all possible third-party revenue through insurance companies and other reimbursement parties. Revenue generated by clinic services is reprogrammed into operating expenses, service expansion, employee retention efforts, and appropriated towards our New Health Facility.

C. Purchased/Referred Care (PRC): In order to provide comprehensive health services to eligible individuals, a Purchased/Referred Care Program was maintained. Health services as defined in this section may be purchased through other health providers when the Bay Mills Health Clinic cannot provide such services. Purchased health services may include hospitalization, specialized physician and dental care, pharmacy, optometry, and patient transportation. The BMHC does not pay for any service that can be provided on site for Tribal Members, unless reviewed by the Health Board. Services procured will be in accordance with IHS regulations and tribal priorities, which will be determined by the Health Board annually on the basis of need and availability of funds. Approximately $602,905 was expended for PRC purchased services, including $290,173 in prescription purchases for tribal members at the Health Center Pharmacy, and $12,216.72 reimbursed to Tribal Members for prescription refills through specialty pharmacies (as required by some insurance plans).

D. Substance Abuses Services: Substance abuse services were provided to eligible individuals and consists of intensive outpatient, outpatient counseling, relapse prevention, youth prevention, crisis and referral services and medication assisted treatment. The Substance Abuse Program served 116 clients, totaling 1,304 visits in 2021. Sessions were conducted through in person service and/or telehealth service.

E. Mental Health Services: Mental health services consisted of outpatient therapy, psychological testing, psychiatry, counseling, family therapy, play therapy, prevention. The full time Behavioral Health Coordinator works closely with our medical clinic staff to integrate behavioral health and primary care. This program served 393 patients and had 3,658 visits. Sessions were conducted through in person service or telehealth service.

F. Community Health Services: Community Health Services were scaled back much of 2021, due to Covid-19 precautions, but patient transportation for medical appointments and medication delivery were active services all throughout the year. Our Community Health team also were invaluable volunteers at our many Covid-19 vaccine clinics, as well.

G. Pharmacy: On-site pharmacy services are provided to the Native American and non-Native American patients of the Health Center. Purchase Referred Care funding was used to pay for pharmaceuticals for Native American patients. Bay Mills Health Center Pharmacy offers 340 B, and discounted prescriptions. Curbside Pharmacy was offered until March 30th, 2021 – until that funding stream ended.

H. Environmental Health Program (Sanitarian): Field Environmental Health Sanitarian Services are provided in accordance with IHS criteria through a subcontract arrangement with Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan. These services provide for various inspections/surveys of tribal facilities and training. Copies of these inspections may be viewed in health Human Resource Department. The total of this contract is $38,000 annually.

I. Emergency Medical Services: Twenty-Four-Hour emergency medical services are available, including advanced life support. The Health Center has had EMS as a part of our scope of services since January 2020.

Base funding amounts available in Calendar Year 2021 was $2,763,727 with $194,196 budgeted to indirect cost.

Submitted by:
Audrey Breakie, MA
Health & Human Services Director
Bay Mills Indian Community
Announcements

Changes made to camping at Gumshoes
Gumshoes Campground Policies & Procedures
1. Reservations for campsites may begin on April 1st each year. Reservations for campsites can be made for up to 30 days in advance. For example, if you want to camp on May 30th, you cannot make that reservation until May 1st.
2. Reservations will be made through AOT, and a permit will be issued to the reservation holder. This permit is to be displayed at the site at all times. Each site will be designated with split rail fencing, including a site number and a clip to display the permit.
3. There will continue to be no charge for the use of campsites.
4. Only enrolled adult Bay Mills Indian Community tribal citizens are able to reserve Gumshoes campsites. One site per citizen is allowable. Non-citizens are able to use the sites; however, the individual Tribal citizen making the reservation must be present for the duration of the reservation.
5. Use of campsites will be limited to a maximum of 2-week increments. For the amount of time an individual reserves a site, they must then refrain from using all sites for an equal amount of time. For example, if someone camps for 5 days, they cannot camp for a period of 5 days following that reservation.
6. Each site is limited to one camper and as many tents as can fit within a designated site.
7. Campfires are permitted in designated fire rings only.
8. Check-In will be 3 p.m., Check-Out is Noon.
9. Sites must be cleaned of all refuse when checking out.
10. All campers must be respectful of others using the area. Quiet hours should be adhered to from 12 a.m. - 7 a.m.
11. Should any reservation holder abuse the rules, their ability to reserve a campsite in the future will be suspended; the length of time for such suspension will be determined by Tribal Administration and will be based on the circumstances surrounding the violation.

BMIC App Available
You can now head to your Google Play or Apple App Store and search Bay Mills Indian Community to download. This mobile app is just another example of various ways our Tribal Nation seeks to improve communication with our tribal citizens, employees, and community members. It will serve as a central source of information, services, websites, recreation, and food throughout Bay Mills Indian Community. Furthermore, the mobile app will also allow for push notifications for important and/or emergency events, which will alert all individuals who install the app. This may include inclement weather, power outages, etc.

Vegetable Plant Sale
The Brimley-Bay Mills Farmer’s Market will hold their annual vegetable and flower plant sale on Thursday, May 26 and Thursday, June 2, from 4-7 p.m. at 11644 Plantation Road at the Pavilion. For more information or to become a market vendor contact Connie Watson at 906-248-8363.

Have you moved? Update your address!
Bay Mills Tribal Enrollment office asks all tribal citizens to maintain a current address with their office. An online form can be found at www.baymills.org.

AOT changes hours
Due to staffing shortages, AOT is closed on Saturday until further notice.

Walking path is closed to motorized vehicles
BMIC has developed a pedestrian/bicycle path connecting both sides of the Reservation. This path is for pedestrians and bicyclists only, and our existing tribal ordinances prohibit motorized vehicles from using this path. Signs have been posted. Please be aware that BMPD has been directed to strictly enforce this rule along that pathway to protect walkers, runners, cyclists, and the path itself. If you ride an ATV, ORV, dirt bike, motorcycle, golf cart, etc on this path, you should expect to receive a ticket and pay a fine.

Pow Wow scheduled
The 31st annual Bay Mills Honoring Our Veterans Pow Wow will take place at the Ball Diamond from June 24 to June 26. Updates and vendor forms can be found via their Facebook page “Bay Mills Pow Wow.”

Looking for events?
Please check out the community calendar on www.baymills.org for the most up to date listings of events and cultural workshops. You can send your events to newspaper@baymills.org as well to be posted on the calendar.

Bay Mills Health Center
Open to the Public at our new location!
12455 W Lakeshore Dr. Brimley, MI 49715

Services Provided: Medical, Dental, Behavioral Health, Community Health, Pharmacy, Laboratory, Radiology.

We now have Optical and a Pharmacy Drive-Thru Window!

To schedule an appointment call 906-248-5527

Hours of operation: 7:30am – 6pm, Monday – Friday

Closed during all major holidays

Most insurances accepted. Sliding Fee, Fee-For-Service, and Insurance Assistance are available for patients on-site.

After-hours Services for Patients:

Medical: Call 911 for medical emergencies; after hours medical provider access: 906-203-4074.

Behavioral Health: Call 911 for emergencies; Hiawatha Behavioral Health crisis line: 906-632-2805.
Come and Play on the Bay!

18-Hole Championship Course
Rated ★★★★★ by Golf Digest
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RV Park • Conference Center

Reservations: 1-888-422-9645
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