



CHEHALIS TRIBAL NEWSLETTER

The Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, 'People of the Sands'

INSIDE

Summer Youth Workers in action / 7
Tribe shows gratitude for employees / 10
In loving memory of Sylvia Cayenne / 11
Exciting Bingo Night Out / 12



Golf tournament
CTLF raises funds with friendly competition
page 4



Ready for a new year
Back to School event sets youth up for success
page 6

Powerful protocol

Canoe Journey finale shares traditional songs and dances

By Dyani Cayenne

The Chehalis Canoe Family took the floor on the final day of protocol to complete their part in the 2026 Paddle to Nisqually around 3:30 p.m. Aug. 5.

The group gathered on the side of the longhouse for inspirational and meaningful words before taking the floor for their final protocol ceremony. Members shared many words as well as songs and dances.

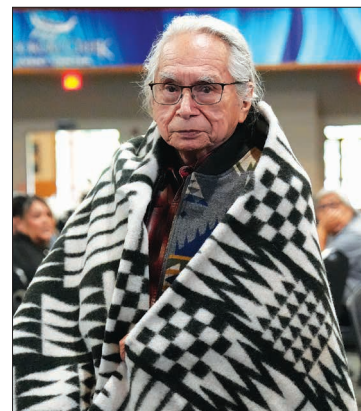
After an anticipating wait, the family first had the Elders find their seats on the longhouse floor. Leading the dancers in their entrance was Chehalis Tribe's Miss Chehalis Taryn Baker and Chairwoman Sheilah Bray. Canoe Family skippers, Shayden Baker and fellow drummers led as the family took the floor.

A handful of songs were performed. During their time on the protocol floor, the

See **PROTOCOL** / page 2



The Chehalis Tribe celebrates another successful Canoe Journey passage at the 2026 Paddle to Nisqually protocol on Aug. 5.



Chehalis Tribal Elder Dan "Bones" Gleason was honored for his work with SPIPA on Aug. 25.

1 vision, 5 tribes, 50 years

SPIPA marks decades of valuable support

By Frazier Myer

South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency (SPIPA) hosted its 50th Anniversary Celebration inside Little Creek Casino Resort's Skookum Creek Event Center on the afternoon of Aug. 25.

The event center was filled with people who have been involved with SPIPA in one way or another during the 50 years of the program. SPIPA is an intertribal agency consisting of five regional Tribes: Chehalis, Squaxin Island, Nisqually, Skokomish and Shoalwater Bay. The program was established in 1976 to provide services and resources to Tribal members within the five-Tribe consortium.

In 1976, Tribes lacked crucial resources. Leaders from the

See **SPIPA** / page 3

PROTOCOL

From page 1

family took time for 2026-27 Miss Chehalis Taryn Baker to speak to everyone in attendance and those watching the live stream at home. Next up was Chehalis Tribal member Tiera Garrety, who gave her speech first in the Chehalis language and then in English.

Taryn gave a thankful speech to the Nisqually Tribe as well for being great hosts. It was announced they would hand out gifts to representatives from tribes who assisted them on their journey.

Many Tribes host on their traditional lands along the way to the final stop in Nisqually. The pit stops are important to canoe families as places to rest, eat, meet other Tribal people and practice songs and dances that will be performed at the final protocol.

The Chehalis Canoe Family also gifted other specific canoe family members, including members of the host Tribe (Nisqually). They gifted a paddle and a Chehalis Tribe blanket. After those gifts were handed out, smaller but heartfelt gifts were given to audience members. There were gifts for Elders and children alike.

To conclude the family's protocol, they performed two last songs and dancers paddled out led by Taryn. When the Canoe Family exited, as a wholesome treat, some audience members joined in the paddling out song and dance.

This year's crossing and protocol was another successful one and a wonderful way to end the summer. Next year, the Chehalis Canoe Family will make its way toward Saxman, Alaska, which will be quite a voyage. With a great journey comes a great experience.



The Chehalis Tribal Canoe Family participates in the final part of the 2026 Canoe Journey Paddle to Nisqually. Thank you to the host family.





Chehalis Tribal Elders Curtis DuPuis (above), Mel Youckton and Dan “Bones” Gleason all had a significant impact on the early success of SPIPA.

SPIPA

From page 1

Tribes banded together and gained strength through unity. This teamwork has created funding to support the ongoing mission of SPIPA.

Current available resources are vast and include:

- Assisting children with education, nutrition and safe placement
- Assisting Tribal Elders in caregiving, medical equipment and Medicare program education
- Workforce development program
- Native Entrepreneur Academy

The event began with a prayer song performed by a Squaxin Island Drum Group. This is a traditional welcome honoring the gathering of Tribal leaders, Elders, community members and guests.

After the song, representatives from the Squaxin Island Tribe spoke, welcoming everyone in attendance and giving thanks while highlighting the 50-year milestone. SPIPA Executive Director Kyle Rodgers and SPIPA Board Chairman Tom Strong provided welcoming remarks, details about how the program has developed throughout the years and the status of the thriving agency.

Strong also serves as chairman of the Skokomish Tribe. He gave thanks to Squaxin Island Tribe for hosting the event and providing lunch, which featured traditional salmon.

Strong explained how the organization has developed through the years as well as looking forward to the bright future of SPIPA and the Tribes that make up the organization.

“If we continue to put that



service front and center, there is no telling how far we will all go. There are no limits to our potential. The only limits are the ones we put on ourselves,” Strong said. “So, with that, let’s look at ourselves, let’s look at our clients, our community, our Tribes.”

Strong thanked everyone for their service and the Elders that helped SPIPA get to the point it is at today.

After the meal, the next part of the 50th Anniversary Celebration honored individuals who helped with the program from the early days in the 1970s and ‘80s. Many Chehalis Tribal members were highlighted, including Elders Mel Youckton, Dan “Bones” Gleason and Curtis DuPuis.

Each recognized individual received a blanket and shared stories about their time with SPIPA. They acknowledged the challenges and achievements through the past five decades. In 1976, they had no idea how the organization would advance through the next 50 years.

Diaper distribution



10:30 AM-
1:30 PM
SEPT. 25



You might qualify for diapers, wipes or pull-ups! Households on or near Tribal lands and enrolled in programs such as WIC, SNAP or TANF might be eligible

**CHEHALIS
TRIBAL
COMMUNITY
CENTER**

Call 360-426-3990

GOLF ENTHUSIASTS UNITE

CTLF tournament features community, camaraderie, mission

*Provided by
CTLF Board of Directors*

Chehalis Tribal Loan Fund's sixth annual Golf Tournament brought together community partners, sponsors, volunteers, staff and golfers for a day centered on fun, connection and a shared commitment to financial empowerment.

The event kicked off early on Aug. 21 at Oaksridge Golf Course in Elma as volunteers prepared the course and welcomed players with muffins, fruit, swag bags and plenty of smiles. Before play began, CTLF Chairperson Kevin Bray asked everyone to join in a moment of silence to honor the recent passing of respected Chehalis Tribal Elder Sylvia Cayenne, grounding the day in remembrance and community.

From there, energy picked up quickly. Golfers kicked off the morning with a putting contest and a chance to sink a 50-foot putt for a \$2,500 prize. No one made the winning putt this year, but there is always next year!

At 10 a.m., teams headed out across the course for the shotgun-start scramble. Throughout the day, golfers enjoyed contests, sponsored activities, prizes and good-natured competition.

Northwest Harley-Davidson brought out a beautiful new motorcycle valued around \$28,000 as the inspiration – and prize – for the Hole-in-One Contest. No golfer managed to take the Harley home this year, but it definitely gave everyone something to aim for.

Several sponsors helped make the experience especially memorable. Sticklin-Brown Funeral Chapel hosted games and prizes at their tee box with humor and grace. Elite Mechanical Services kept everyone refreshed at its hydration station with iced coffees, juice and other drinks



Golfers enjoyed an afternoon of friendly competition as part of the sixth annual CTLF tournament on Aug. 21.



throughout the day. Every golfer utilized a cart during play thanks to Chehalis Tribal Enterprises, the tournament's golf cart sponsor.

After the final holes were played, everyone gathered for lunch provided by Great Wolf Lodge featuring a taco bar and brownies. Prize drawings and awards

followed. One lucky participant took home \$382.50 from the 50/50 drawing!

The men's and women's Longest Drive winners each received a new golf driver while the men's and women's Closest-to-the-

Pin winners each received a new rangefinder.

One of the most memorable moments of the day came when a player won the Women's Longest Drive competition and a new driver! Her excitement and pride in the moment captured exactly what makes the tournament special – people coming together, having fun and celebrating one another.

The tournament ended in a tie between the Ted Gleason team and the Bunch of Hacks team. Every member of both teams received a new magnetic GPS golf speaker to help them enjoy their next round.

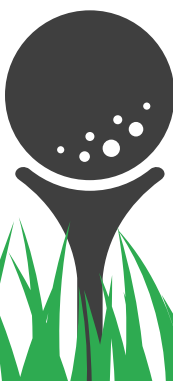
The successful day would not have been possible without the organizations and businesses that continue to believe in CTLF's work.

The Chehalis Tribe served as the tournament's premier sponsor and remains CTLF's founder, greatest supporter and an essential partner in the organization's continued growth.

Lucky Eagle Casino & Hotel returned as a title sponsor this year, joined by new title sponsor Andersen Construction Company.

Sysco returned as the Putting

See **GOLF** / page 5



GOLF

From page 4

Contest sponsor, Chehalis Tribal Enterprises served as the Golf Cart sponsor, Great Wolf Lodge provided lunch, Northwest Harley-Davidson sponsored the Hole-in-One Contest and tee-box sponsors included Sticklin Brown Funeral Chapel, Elite Mechanical Services and TAALA Fund.

For CTLF, the tournament is about far more than a day on the golf course. It is an opportunity to celebrate the organization's mission: "Brick by brick, paving the way to financial empowerment through education, coaching and fair lending."

Every day, CTLF works alongside Chehalis Tribal members, Native families, rural residents, entrepreneurs, small businesses and community members to create greater access to fair financing, financial education and one-on-one support. That work can mean assisting a family in preparing for homeownership, helping someone understand and rebuild their credit, supporting an entrepreneur working to grow a business, or offering a fair lending alternative when other financial options



might be limited or predatory.

The golf tournament supports something equally important: relationships. It gives CTLF staff and volunteers an opportunity to work side by side outside of the normal office environment. It brings together organizations with shared goals. It allows longtime supporters to reconnect and gives new partners and players a chance to learn more about CTLF and the people behind it.

Sometimes, strengthening a community looks exactly like this – a sunny day, a golf course full of friends and partners, fun competition, laughter and people coming together for a shared a mission. CTLF extends its sincere thanks to every sponsor, golfer, volunteer, staff member and community partner who helped make the tournament a success.

Early Learning registration

2026-27
school year

- Safe and secure learning environment
- All children welcome
- Bus transportation for ages 3-5
- Expectant Mothers Program with prenatal and postpartum guidance
- Free, full-time classes with qualified, friendly staff

Ready to sign up?

Chehalis Tribal Early Learning is at 420 Howanut Road, Oakville. Call 360-273-5514 or fax 360-273-0510.

Chehalis Tribal Member Financial Needs Survey

WHEN: Nov. 7 at the Annual General Council Meeting

ABOUT: The Financial Needs Survey is meant to help design GWE programs/benefits and allow the Tribe to determine the basic living costs of Chehalis Tribal member adults. The data can help determine qualifying benefits under programs administered under the Tribe's General Welfare Exclusion (GWE) Ordinance.



Raffle prizes 10 people \$500
are paid by 30 people \$100
check 40 people \$50

USDA FOOD PICKUP

Save the
DATE!

10:30 AM-1:30PM SEPT. 25

AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER

If you or a member of your household are enrolled in a federally recognized Tribe or you live within reservation boundaries, you might be eligible for SPIPA's program. The USDA food pickup offers food to fill up your freezer, refrigerator and cupboards. Items are first-come, first-served. Must show Tribal ID at the time of pickup.

LEARN MORE:
Please call
360-426-3990



YOUTH

Back to School

in style *Tribe gives youth a strong start to 2026-27 year*

By Dyani Cayenne

Each year, the Chehalis Tribe's Education department makes the return to school a little easier with its highly anticipated Back to School event. Youth and their parents joined the celebration from 11a.m.-3 p.m. Aug. 19 at the Community Center.

The event was brimming with activities for kids to enjoy. Inside was a table for face and body art and vendors. Outside, students enjoyed the covered park, skate park, three exciting water bounce houses and free shaved ice courtesy of the Kona Ice Truck.

Joyous energy was in the air as parents relaxed watching their children play safely together. They enjoyed shaved ice as well!

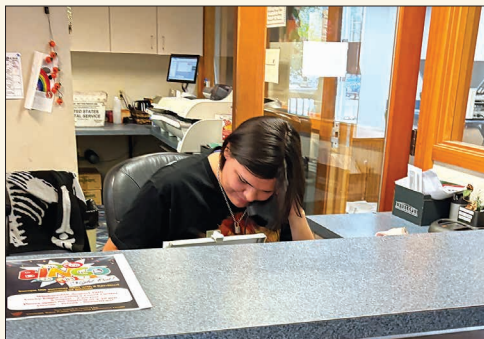
K-12 sign-ups, along with free backpacks and school supplies set youth up for success.

The supportive event has been around and enjoyed by the community for such a long time now and is a great way to start the transition back to school.



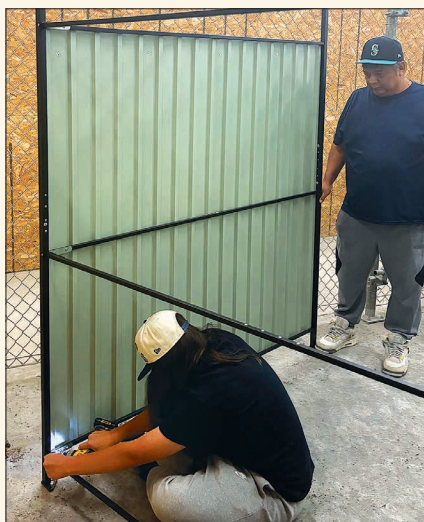
The Chehalis Tribe's annual Back to School extravaganza ensures youth are ready to get back into the swing of things.





Summer jobs prep youth

Chehalis Tribal youth workers learned professional skills and assisted Tribal departments while earning spending cash this summer. Two of our youth workers helped Fisheries take samples from freshwater mussel beds at Rainbow Falls. From construction to food prep to administrative work, youth gained experience that will prove valuable in the future.



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Cori Abell
 Sean Adams
 Alyssa Albert
 Skyler Baker
 Autum Beckwith
 Kaysen Bray-Sanchez
 Kairi Burnett
 Jimmy Burnett
 James Bushnell
 Angelica Canalas
 Dennis Cayenne
 Minetta Cayenne
 James Cayenne II
 Debra Cayenne
 Ophelia Cayenne
 Gerald Cayenne
 Darrel Cayenne
 Mason Combs
 Norita Comeaux
 Joaquina Coty
 Gertrude Dupuis Marcellay
 Shanin Falk
 Jason Gillie
 Nathen Gomez
 Garry Gunnels
 David Gunnels
 Dashawn Hernandez
 Julia Higheagle
 Billie Higheagle
 Tonia Higheagle
 George Jack
 Legend Jespersen
 Allen Jones
 Eugene Klatush
 Eddie Klatush
 Dustin Klatush
 Charles Latch III

Whitney Lewis
 Malikah McNair-Comenout
 Julie Miller
 Kayla Nyreen
 Christine Ortiz
 Jude Ortiz
 Aniyah Ortiz-Hicks
 Ethan Owens
 William Palmer
 James Pickernell
 Walter Pickernell-Daniels
 Timothy Poling
 Nicholas Purcell
 Dante Quilt
 Elijah Quilt
 Cody Revay
 Ruth Rogers
 Michael Romero
 Richard Romo Jr.
 George Sanchez Jr.
 Freddie Sanchez Jr.
 Destiny Sanchez-Allenbach
 Kaelyn Secena
 John Secena
 Bryan Secena- Sanders
 Tamzin Secena-Ferguson
 James Secena-Ferguson
 Roger Shortman
 Sean Shortman
 Eli Snell
 Sasha Starr
 Andrew Starr
 Jay Starr
 Kelsey Swanson

Betty (Sheena) Tanner
 Jake Tanner
 Roxanne Thompson
 Karen Trailkill
 Robert Vigil Jr.
 Ethan Wittwer
 Samuel Wright
 Theresa Youckton
 Karlea Youckton
 Vanessa Youckton



By Shelby McCrory

BLUEBERRY FARM

As another fruitful blueberry season comes to a close, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who came out to support us this year! It was another warm and beautiful season and we enjoyed seeing so many familiar and new faces spending time on the farm, filling their buckets and making memories.



One of the highlights was welcoming Elders from the Chehalis,

Skokomish and Quinault Tribes for their own days of blueberry picking. It was a pleasure having them at the farm. Everyone enjoyed time together and took home plenty of fresh blueberries.

Your continued support means so much to us. We are grateful and look forward to welcoming you back to the farm next year!



END OF THE TRAIL STORES

EOT's Customer Appreciation Day was a huge success! Our End of the Trail stores were proud to welcome customers for a day filled with great savings, good food, giveaways and community.

As part of the celebration, customers enjoyed an incredible 70 cents off per gallon of fuel along with complimentary hamburgers and hot dogs. Several vendors also joined us for the event, providing free drinks, giveaways and other fun freebies for customers to enjoy.

More than anything,

Customer Appreciation Day was an opportunity for us to say thank you. We are incredibly grateful for the continued support of our Tribal community and customers from the surrounding communities. Your loyalty and support of EOT stores help make events like this possible and allow us to continue serving the communities around us.

Thank you to everyone who stopped by, participated and helped make the day such a success! We appreciate you and look forward to serving you for many years to come.



OAKSRIDGE GOLF COURSE

We're excited to announce that our new driving range net is officially up and ready to catch some golf balls! Come on out, take a few swings and give it a try. With summer winding down, now is the perfect time to get on the course and enjoy the beautiful weather while it lasts. Whether you're looking to play a round, practice your swing or spend time outdoors with friends and family, we'd love to see you.

Clubhouse hours: 8 a.m.-8 p.m. daily. Last golf cart must be returned by 7:45 p.m.

Cost: \$24 for 18 holes (Elders \$20) and \$13 for 9 holes (Elders \$12)



APPLY NOW !!

To find career opportunities, go to chehalistribalenterprises.com



The Chehalis Tribe's annual Employee Picnic on Aug. 14 at Columbus Park offered all kinds of fun activities, honors and goodies!

Thanks to our skilled employees

Community and Tribal members celebrate at Employee Picnic

By Dyani Cayenne

Chehalis Tribal employees gathered for the annual Employee Picnic on Aug. 14 at Columbus Park in Olympia.

The event kicked off at 11 a.m. Before lunch was served, Cheryl Starr announced some of the employee recognition awards. Announcements were spread out through the ceremony. Many workers were celebrating up to 10 or more years of working with the Tribe. Employees who were recognized included Charlotte Lopez, Sheilah Bray, Shawn Ortivez, Theresa Youckton, Racheal Mendez, Diane Pickernell, Trudy Marcellay, Gina Cayenne and many others!

Lunch featured a delicious, fresh barbecue, mac and cheese and corn along with plenty of desserts brought by attendees.

Raffles were announced with a variety of prizes such as home and electronic devices, amenities and rewards for utility bills. Volleyball and horseshoes were available to play. Youth had a blast at the park and in the water while adults caught up.

The joyous, highly anticipated event had a great turnout this year and wrapped up around 1:30 p.m. Refreshing energy infused the air as everyone savored the feeling of community with many fun conversations and jokes to go around. Until next year!



IN LOVING MEMORY

SYLVIA CAYENNE

1949-2026

On Aug. 20, 2026, Sylvia Jean Klatush Cayenne began her transition into her next adventure, surrounded by the family she loved so deeply.

Sylvia was born Sept. 24, 1949, in Seattle, Washington, to Jane Klatush Cayenne and Frank Cayenne Sr. She made her home on the Chehalis Indian Reservation in Oakville, Washington, where her life became deeply woven into her family, community and culture.

Sylvia attended Chilocco Indian School in Oklahoma, where her personality was already impossible to contain. She participated on the drill team and marching band and proudly earned the title of Chilocco High School's twisting champion – a story that captures the fun, spirited woman her family and friends would know throughout her life.

That competitive spirit stayed with Sylvia. She was also an expert pool player, becoming a pool champion throughout the Thurston and Grays Harbor areas. Whether she was dancing, competing around a pool table or simply enjoying the people around her, Sylvia brought her unmistakable personality wherever she went.

In her early years, Sylvia worked as a housekeeper in the hospitality industry and later tended bar at the Rainbow Tavern and Broken Wheel.

Her commitment to her community also led her to serve on the Chehalis Tribal Business Committee, where she took part in pioneering the opening of Lucky Eagle Casino all while serving the community she loved.

She eventually began working in Human Resources for the Chehalis Tribe, where she remained until her retirement. No matter the job or title, Sylvia's greatest work was always caring for people.

Sylvia was a natural caregiver, opening her heart, home and arms to those who needed her. To many, she was simply "Gram." She created a safe space where people felt welcomed, accepted, understood and cared for. Whether someone needed a meal,

a place to land, someone to listen or someone to tell them to "Get 'er done," Sylvia was there.

Her commitment to learning and living her culture became an important part of her life's journey. Sylvia was instrumental in creating and establishing the Chehalis Tribal Canoe Family alongside the many people who participated and helped build its foundation. Through that work, she became affectionately known as "Canoe Mamma."

She helped establish traditional expectations for the Canoe Family and found a deep love for ceremony and dancing. She also participated in the Siyaya Drum Group.

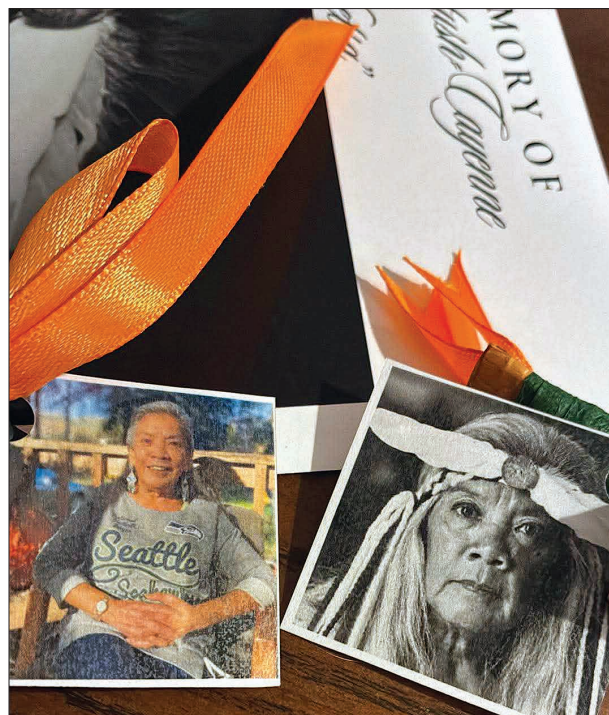
Sylvia gave freely of herself across cultural and spiritual spaces. She respected and supported many religious traditions and was often found helping wherever she was needed – cooking, making frybread, participating in ceremony or simply giving her time. Her way of caring for people was not limited by blood, belief or circumstance.

Those who knew Sylvia describe her in ways that seem almost contradictory until you knew her: beautiful and feisty, calming and strict, hilarious and strong. She was loving, compassionate, resilient, passionate, accepting and sometimes just a little crazy – in the very best way. She carried herself with integrity and strength, but underneath it all was an enormous capacity to love.

And if something caught her eye, there was always the possibility you would hear: "Is that mine?"

Sylvia leaves behind children Gail White Eagle, Walter Lewis and Andrew Flores; grandchildren Sylvanna, Ryan, Skylar, Marcus, Cheyene, Whitney, Andrew Jr., Bo and Cole; and great-grandchildren RJ, Tearnny, Journey, Lykaia, Siprianna, Syvina, Tonia, Melanie and Levi.

She is also survived by siblings Gerald Cayenne, Frank Cayenne Jr., Sheena Tanner, Debbie Cayenne, Darrell Jack Cayenne and Dennis Cayenne, along with many relatives, extended family



Sylvia Cayenne was a treasured member of the Chehalis Tribe who was deeply committed to the community she loved. Sylvia worked for the Human Resources department and was instrumental in establishing the Chehalis Canoe Family and keeping traditions and ceremonies going strong.



members, Canoe Family members, community members and people who simply came to know her as Gram.

Sylvia was preceded in death by parents Jane Klatush Cayenne and Frank Cayenne Sr.; twin sister "Baby Klatush"; James "Jumbo" Cayenne; and Cheryle "Mimi" Cayenne.

Sylvia's legacy cannot be measured only by the family tree she leaves behind or the positions she held. It lives in the people she cared for, children she helped

raise, meals she prepared, culture she helped strengthen, Canoe Family she helped build, laughter she created and countless people who knew they had a safe place with her.

And when something needed to be done, Sylvia's answer was simple: "Get 'er done."

A celebration of life ceremony honoring Sylvia was held at 10 a.m. Aug. 25, 2026, at the Chehalis Tribal Community Center.

(Chronicle obituary)

CHEHALIS TRIBAL NEWSLETTER

The Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, 'People of the Sands'

Articles and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of this publication or the Chehalis Tribal Business Committee.

SUBMISSIONS

Tribal members are encouraged to submit birthday and anniversary wishes, letters, articles, photos and drawings to be considered for publication in the newsletter (materials are subject to editing). Contributing writers, artists and photographers include Chehalis Tribal community members/staff.

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VISION STATEMENT

To be a thriving, self-sufficient,
sovereign people, honoring our
past and serving current and future generations.



BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Chairwoman: Sheilah Bray
Vice Chairman: Don Secena
Treasurer: Farley Youckton
Secretary: Cheryle Starr
Fifth Council Member:
Thomas Trott

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The Chehalis Tribal
Newsletter is a
publication of the
Confederated Tribes
of the Chehalis
Reservation

12

Bingo! Game night builds community

By Dyani Cayenne

Community members gathered in the Bingo Hall of Lucky Eagle Casino from 5-7 p.m. on Aug. 19 to try their luck at Bingo Night Out hosted by Public Safety and Behavioral Health departments.

Before the games started, attendees enjoyed food from a well-stocked and flavorful taco and nacho bar. The meal provided energy for game time!

Police Chief Kelly Edwards gave everyone a warm welcome and announced the start of the action around 5:30 p.m.

A total of 12 games were played with a little stretch break after the sixth.

Prizes were available for kids and adults, including a variety



of family and board games and household items such as knives and kitchen utensils.

Many bingos were shouted and attendees enjoyed playing fun games with their families.



Public Safety and Behavioral Health joined forces for Bingo Night Out.

