



Natasha House shared addiction story during FAN Recovery forum

NATALIE SHATTUCK

Editor

Willing to publicly reveal their recovery stories, four speakers shared their words during the Saginaw Chippewa/Isabella County Families Against Narcotics Celebration of Recovery on Thursday, Sept. 21.

In the Eagles Nest Tribal Gym, Natasha House, John Gerhard, Mason Jackson and Janis Ash bravely shared their recovery stories and struggles.

Unfortunately and unexpectedly, Natasha House, 36, passed away the following evening, Sept. 22, 2017.

The Tribal Observer honors House's bravery and memory and is publishing the speech she courageously shared during the FAN monthly forum.

"Hello. I would like to share a little about myself and the struggles I've went through with my own drug addiction.

Growing up, never did I ever think I would become addicted to drugs. I graduated from high school, started my family and have five wonderful kids, ages 16, 15, 12, 11 and 6.

I decided, before I had my 6-year-old, that it was time to



Observer photo by Natalie Shattuck

On the eve before she unfortunately and unexpectedly passed away, Natasha House shared her recovery story during the Families Against Narcotics Sept. 21 event in the Tribal Gym.

finish up college. So after 10 years of being out of school, I went back and graduated from Mid-Michigan (Community College) with my associate degree in accounting and then transferred to Northwood University, finishing my bachelor's degree in business administration, specializing in accounting.

I had the life I had always dreamed of having. I had my family, house, car, owned my own business; just living the

life. Little did I know I would lose it all!

What started out as a prescription of Tylenol 3 for migraines turned into an addiction of Vicodin and whatever else I could get my hands on to feel normal.

Four and a half years of my life battling addiction, I lost everything I had worked so hard to get in life, including custody of my children. Everything that mattered so much to me (was) gone because I needed to have drugs to survive. Or so I thought.

After a couple attempts to overdose and end my life, I finally had enough!

On March 4, 2016, the birthday of my best friend of 20 years who also had an addiction – but her story ended in losing her life – I decided it's time to get my life back.

I went into a detox facility and have been clean and sober ever since.

Christmas Eve, this past year, I lost my other half in life. My younger sister had lost her battle with life and the multiple side effects addiction had caused in her life. She did not pass away from narcotics or street drugs, it was from a medication she had to take for

bipolar (disorder, which) addiction brought out in her.

Addiction causes multiple other issues with your health; it's not the only drug you have to battle.

From my drug addiction, I started having seizures and am still on seizure medication until my brain was healed enough to stop taking it.

Like I said, addiction isn't the only thing a person battles. Addiction causes a spiral effect of health issues.

I am one of the lucky ones that have beat the devil. Some days are still a struggle, but, as the days go by, it is easier to deal with.

It has been 18 months – or 566 days – clean as of today!

Although I had chosen the beaten-up path in life, it has directed me in a path I have a passion for: helping addicts. I've been through the good, the bad and the ugly.

Since the death of my sister almost nine months ago, I have made a promise to her that I will stay clean and do the best that I can do help others. I have joined FAN as a board member.

I would like to also give a very big thank you to my mother and my family for helping me overcome this addiction. Without the

support and love from them, this process would have been a lot harder for me.

I do also want to say that in the beginning of my addiction, my mom would always tell me to just quit the drugs, which is really hard to do.

She then became educated on addiction and understood it a lot more and became more understanding of the way the body works in addicts. So, she became more supportive and learned a lot to be there and give support in my recovery! So, thank you, Mom.

If anyone would like someone to talk to or anything at all, I would be happy to help or gather resources you may need. I am not the person that judges anyone. I have been through it and understand how an addict feels. I want to be able to help. I have a couple business cards here if anyone would like one, so you can get in contact with me.

Miigwetch."

(Editor's note: In memory of Tasha sharing her story and bravery, we honor her. I will not forget conversing with her and hearing her speech. I am hopeful Tasha's journey and struggles shared will help others facing addiction. –NS)

This is a PAID Political Advertisement · This is a PAID Political Advertisement

Brent D. Jackson District One

Hello, my name is Brent D. Jackson. I am honored and humbled to make the top twenty. I want to thank those who supported and voted for me in the primary. I am asking for your continued support on November 7th. I believe I am an excellent candidate for Council because of my experience working for our Tribe including three terms on Tribal Council, various positions in Table Games and as a Gaming Commissioner over the past 27 years.

I was hired into Table Games in 1989 as a dealer and worked my way up to Director. My duties as director include creating and working within budgets, forecasting revenue, creating policies and procedures and working with a staffing of over three hundred. This experience has taught me how to work with people of different backgrounds, with different beliefs and goals and that as a leader, it is imperative to listen to all sides before making a decision, not just dictating based on my beliefs. I also served as a Gaming Commissioner for four years which allowed me to gain insight in the regulatory aspect of casino operations.

I believe in giving back to society and those less fortunate. I founded Middle of the Mitt Music Festival, which over the years has raised funds and awareness for charities like the Fallen and Wounded Soldiers Fund, Toys for Tots, Isabella Community Soup Kitchen, and American Cancer Society.

Council's decisions require diligent thought out solutions. Great care must always be given throughout the decision making process. It's more than a popularity contest; the consideration should be about the well-being and future of the Tribe, not to garner votes, for personal gain or to benefit friends or relatives. Council must abstain from the process whenever it involves them. When creating and administering policy, it must be for the betterment of the Tribe and applied on a consistent basis.

Our Tribal Sovereignty is consistently under attack from the government, corporations, and other tribes. We must assert our inherent rights and ensure the protection of our members. It's our responsibility to honor and rigorously defend our Grandfathers' and Grandmothers' hard work and perseverance in making us what we are today by ensuring the generations to come have a strong future.

We need to actively pursue political and economic dominance and put the Tribe at the forefront. We as a people must continue to seize the opportunities for positive change and growth. These things will happen if we make them our priority. I've been fortunate enough to be a part of the positive progress that is currently underway with the expansion of Saganing and the renovation of the Soaring Eagle Casino. If reelected I will continue to do my part to ensure positive change and growth for the Tribe and membership for generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration

This is a PAID Political Advertisement · This is a PAID Political Advertisement

This is a PAID Political Advertisement · This is a PAID Political Advertisement

Vote Summer Peters District 3 Representative

Boozhoo! I am Summer Peters, a proud descendent of Saginaw Chippewa Chiefs Nottoway & Cobmosay. I am the proud descendent of Thomas Yahbay and Frank Peters, who served on the 1934 Tribal Council. My roots run deep and my family tree is well verified for seven generations before me. I was born in Alma, Michigan and raised from birth until age 22 on the Isabella Indian Reservation. I was one of several children who lived their formative years on the reservation along Anishnabeanon Road & Ojibway Drive. We would play for hours out in the woods, the "stumps" and Horseshoe Hill. As an adult, I look back on this experience as highly treasured. I am a home grown Rez Girl who walks in two worlds; the world of my culture & heritage of being a Saginaw Chippewa woman and also out into the unfamiliar lands of the world.

I began working for our Tribe at the age of 13 with afterschool jobs before transitioning to our gaming & Tribal Operations at age 18. I have worked in several departments of our Tribe & credit this experience to my further attained experience and success outside of Michigan. My public servant experience started when I was a teenager as the first Miss Saginaw Ojibwe in 1994-1995. I have years of higher education on my resume, in addition to being a well established artist and licensed Financial Advisor who has a keen knowledge of financial literacy.

I offer zero breakable promises in this election because I am one voice. However, I can promise undoubtedly that I bring honesty, humility, empathy, compassion, values and morals in alignment with my lifestyle. I bring strong, drug & alcohol free leadership in order to make clear, well thought out decisions for our membership. I bring an unjudging and open ear to our membership along with an energetic work ethic. I bring resiliency &

a thick skin in order to prevail through stressful situations. I bring respect for our elders, our military veterans and respect for both our church going & Traditional members. I believe in TRANSPARENCY between our elected officials & the membership. Transparency promotes trust & accountability and should be a strong value within our Tribe. I believe it's time to move beyond the quiet censorship and let members talk at Community Meetings once again. As a business owner, my main focus for our Tribe is promoting business diversification as a supplement to gaming in order to benefit members of all Districts through boosted profitability and added employment opportunities. My dream for District Three is to boost communication, advocate for additional meetings that have been lost due to budget cuts & bring back a lost sense of importance. I hope to be a voice for those who feel disenfranchised & forgotten.

I have devoted my life to the advancement & empowerment of all Native American people and am ready to bring my work back to our Tribe. I clearly remember what life was like before our gaming operations flourished into prosperity. We were happy even though we were poor in the socioeconomic sense but rich in love, family, and friendship. Vote for me to bring a deep understanding of the past in harmony with the present and an eye on the future.

I have devoted my life to the advancement & empowerment of all Native American people and am ready to bring my work back to our Tribe. I clearly remember what life was like before our gaming operations flourished into prosperity. We were happy even though we were poor in the socioeconomic sense but rich in love, family, and friendship. Vote for me to bring a deep understanding of the past in harmony with the present and an eye on the future.

Miigwetch!
Summer Peters
sfairchild44@gmail.com



This is a PAID Political Advertisement · This is a PAID Political Advertisement