

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

THE
STORY
AS IT'S
TOLD

DECEMBER 2014 | VOLUME 16 | NUMBER 12



THE SEASON FOR STORIES

Artwork Courtesy of Band Member Steve Premo

COMMUNITY
HELPS DELAY
PIPELINE

OPIATE
ADDICTION IN
NEWBORNS

MLCV
MAKES NEW
ACQUISITION

NATIVE AMERICAN
HERITAGE MONTH IS
CELEBRATED

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

MELANIE
BENJAMIN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Aaniin, Boozhoo! The month of *Manidoo-Giizisoons* (Little Spirit Moon), known as December, has already arrived. *Gashkadi-no-Giizis* (Freezing Over Moon), or November, seemed to fly by.

My month began with the swearing in of our new Commissioner of Community Development, Percy Benjamin. Percy had been serving as Deputy Assistant in the Office of the Chief Executive for the past year. He gained his knowledge of Community Development by working up the ranks, beginning many years ago as a laborer. I'm excited about the new initiatives he hopes to begin working on. Please congratulate Percy on this new post when you see him!

As Chief Executive, I am mandated by the Band Statutes with the responsibility of conducting external relations with all other governments and political subdivisions, which takes up a large amount of my time. Occasionally I'm given photos of these meetings and I try to share those with Band members on Facebook. This month, I'm including a photo with this column of an event I that I was honored to attend in late October with former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who will likely be a presidential candidate in 2016. Whether meeting with a local school board member or the President of the United States, I'm always so humbled and grateful to represent the Band and advance our issues.

Along with Speaker Carolyn Beaulieu, I attended the meeting of the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) on November 5-6 at Grand Portage. We also had good meetings of the Finance Subcommittee and the Natural Resources and Environment Subcommittee, both of which I sit on as a member.

On November 13th, I represented the Band at a meeting of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC). We discussed a multitude of issues critical to tribes in Minnesota, including improving high school graduation rates, MNSure, Indian housing, Elder abuse awareness and we heard a state legislative update on matters that will impact us in 2015. The University of Minnesota representatives also presented a proposal that I put forth to create a Tribal Sovereignty Institute that would be housed at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, with Board representation from each of the 11 tribes in Minnesota.

My staff from the Office of the Chief Executive and I held a strategic planning session in November to develop a blueprint for completing the many initiatives we have planned early in 2015, including an Elder Abuse Conference and a community



Chief Executive Benjamin meeting with former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, at a dinner event in St. Paul in late October.



District I Representative Sandra Blake, Secretary/Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu, Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin, and Commissioner of HHS Sam Moose attended a Summit on the Crisis of Indian Children in Tower, MN in September.

conference this winter about the crisis of Native newborn babies being born addicted to opiates. The opiate matter has become an epidemic for Native communities in Minnesota, and has hit the Mille Lacs Band community particularly hard. Please take time to carefully read the article in this month's newspaper written by Commissioner of Health and Human Services

Samuel Moose, and look for more information in the coming weeks. This is a crisis for tribes in Minnesota. We must begin a community dialogue to develop a Mille Lacs Band plan to protect our children and ensure their mothers are cared for. Look for information about a community conference on this topic in early 2015.

On a related note, a group of Mille Lacs Band women met on the evening of November 19th to make plans for our local chapter of Women Empower-

ing Women for Indian Nations (WEWIN). We discussed the opiate issue impacting newborn babies, and we decided as a group that we want WEWIN to partner with the Band to plan the community conference on this critical matter. I encourage all interested Band women to join WEWIN, and contact Shelly Diaz for more information about the next meeting.

The commissioners and I held a day-long Cabinet meeting in November. Each commissioner presented a summary of their departmental initiatives, including a review of how each department is doing meeting the goals of the Band's Strategic

Plan. One exciting development is that we've just completed renovation of the old hotel south of the Marathon Station on Highway 169, which we have re-opened as a low-cost alternative for transitional clients who are in need of temporary, immediate shelter. It is not connected to our Band housing program and has nothing to do with the Band's housing list, but is an extended stay program for Band members who need wrap-around services and part of our initiative to end homelessness. To learn more about this option, please call 320-532-3911.

I was also invited to present with Chairwoman Karen Diver before the Regional Economic Development meeting sponsored by the McKnight Foundation on November 25. This was a meeting for non-profits, foundations and agencies that focused on how to do business with Indian tribes. Chairwoman Diver and I answered questions from the audience about tribal governments. This was a great networking opportunity as far as educating funders about how they can better partner with tribes.

Finally, for Native people, the Thanksgiving holiday often produces mixed emotions, as in many ways it signifies the beginning of the most painful period from our history, marked by colonialism and genocide. But it is also a time to reflect on our survival, and to give thanks to our ancestors, Elders and the Creator for sustaining us. In reclaiming this day as Miigwech Day, we remind ourselves how important it is to value, love and cherish our loved ones and our community. As we enter into the December holiday season, I say Miigwech to all Band members for all you do to sustain our families and communities today. Have a safe and happy holiday season!

Melanie Benjamin

We must begin a community dialogue to develop a Mille Lacs Band plan to protect our children and ensure their mothers are cared for.

— Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin on the issue of newborn babies and opiates



On the Cover

The cover illustration was created by Band member artist Steve Premo. It represents the season of storytelling, which is traditionally done in the winter months. Ojibwe oral traditions are usually saved until after the first snowfall since, in the past, people were more likely to be gathered in one place.

Separation of Powers Provides Checks and Balances

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer



(L-R): Harry Davis Jr. (District III Representative), Sandra Blake (District I Representative), Carolyn Beaulieu (Secretary/Treasurer), and David "Niib" Aubid (District II Representative).

The Mille Lacs Band's separation of powers government was put in place in the 1980s to provide checks and balances so that no single person or group has too much authority.

Under separation of powers, each branch — executive, legislative, and judicial — has specific responsibilities.

The Legislative branch makes the laws and allocates revenue, which comes from the Band's enterprises, federal grants, and other sources.

The Band Assembly is composed of the Speaker (who is also Secretary/Treasurer of the Band) and the three District Representatives. The current Secretary/Treasurer and Speaker of the Assembly is Carolyn Beaulieu, who was elected in 2014.

Carolyn said, "The separation of powers is an important aspect of our government. Without it, one person or group of people would have too much power and no oversight."

The representatives for Districts I, II, and III, respectively, are Sandra Blake, David (Niib) Aubid, and Harry Davis, Jr.

The Band Assembly allocates money to the Band's programs, but the Speaker and Representatives don't have the legal authority to directly distribute funds to Band members. Those responsibilities are part of the Executive Branch.

Band members sometimes call their elected officials after hours and on weekends if they have emergency needs for food, shelter, or gas, but the people whose duty it is to respond to those needs are Kristian Theisz and Coleen Lueck, who are employees of the Health and Human Services Department, which is part of the Executive Branch. (See sidebar for contact information.)

The Executive Branch includes the departments run by Commissioners who are appointed by the Chief Executive and ratified by the Band Assembly. Under the Executive Branch are the Department of Administration, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Community Development Department.

The Solicitor General, who is appointed by the Chief Executive and ratified by the Band Assembly, oversees the Department of Justice, which includes the Tribal Police.

The Commissioner of Corporate Affairs operates the Band's casinos and other businesses that are part of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures. This Commissioner reports to both the Executive and Legislative branches.

Band members in need of services can call the departments that address their specific needs. For example, Band members in need of housing can call Community Development's Housing Department. Those needing help with health care or nutrition can go to Health and Human Services. A Band member seeking employment resources can go to the Department of Labor, which is part of the Department of Administration. For legal advice or assistance, they can go to Band Member Legal Aid.

History

The Mille Lacs Band's tripartite government was developed and put into place during the administration of Chief Executive Art Gahbow in 1981. The new government adapted the Reservation Business Committee created by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Constitution in 1936. The committee Chairman became the Chief Executive and leader of the Executive Branch; the Secretary/Treasurer took on a second title of Speaker of the Band Assembly; and the three committee members became District Representatives. Together, the Speaker and District Representatives became the Legislative Branch.

Tadd Johnson worked as a lawyer for the Band shortly after the separation of powers government was put in place. He pointed out several ways the Band's government model was ahead of its time.

First, separation of powers allowed for more effective governance. "They recognized that if they allowed the Executive Branch to implement laws that services would be delivered to the people in a more efficient manner because they would have Commissioners and staff specializing in areas," Tadd said.

Second, the Legislative Branch would be able to focus on representing the needs of the people and express their needs by writing laws and appropriating funds as needed.

Third, a Judicial branch would ensure that justice was provided in a court that reflected the values of the Band. "The court was able to take some ideas from American laws while keeping in mind the underlying concept of compassion, which came from the traditional notions of justice that emanate from the Band," Tadd said.

Fourth, the tribal leadership of the 1980s had the wisdom to separate out business decision making from political decision-making, Tadd said. "The idea of a Corporate Commission was also ahead of its time 30 years ago."

"Finally," Tadd concluded, "the Band in general started looking at itself more as a government. It held the State of the Band Address and wrote its laws in a book of statutes. Now

Contact Information for Band Members

Housing on call

320-630-2498

Emergency food, shelter, gas services after hours

Kristian Theisz or Coleen Lueck: 320-630-2687

Emergency Services office

320-532-7880

Elder Services office

320-532-7543

Food Distribution Program

320-532-7510

Legal Aid

320-532-7798 or 800-709-6445 (toll-free)

Department of Labor

800-922-4457 or 320-532-7407

Urban Area Office

866-746-4888 or 612-746-4800

Family Violence Prevention Program Advocates

24-hour crisis line at 866-867-4006

Family Violence Prevention Program Administrator

320-532-7793 or 320-630-2499 (cell)

Women's Shelter Office

320-495-3514

Criminal Justice Intervention Coordinator

320-630-6708 (cell)

Domestic Violence Community Advocates

District I

800-709-6445, ext. 4780, 320-630-2691 (cell)

District II

218-768-4412, 320-630-2678 (cell)

District III

320-384-7400, 320-630-2676 (cell)

Sexual Assault

320-630-2426

many tribes do an annual address; many are codifying their laws; and many have separate business entities. Mille Lacs was a regional and national leader on many of these ideas."

The specific duties of the Legislative Branch are spelled out in the Band's statutes, which are available online at millelacsband.com/tribal-government-home/band-statutesordinances.

NCAI Service Award for Marge Anderson Unveiled at Government Center

Andy McPartland Staff Writer/Photographer

In 2012, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) presented an Extraordinary Service Award to former Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive Marge Anderson.

The NCAI award was bestowed upon Marge "in appreciation for (her) many years of service to NCAI and to Indian Country in (her) pursuit of the betterment of tribes everywhere."

The plaque was unveiled at a dedication ceremony in the Government Center on November 19.

Speakers at the event included District I Representative

Sandra Blake, Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin, and former Secretary/Treasurer Herb Weyaus.

Marge — who passed away June 29, 2013 — served as Chief Executive from 1992-2000 and 2008-2012. She was the first woman to lead any Minnesota tribe. She also served as District I Representative and Secretary/Treasurer. Under her leadership, the Band created infrastructure such as ceremonial buildings, the Government Center, Ne-la-Shing Clinic, Assisted Living Units, and more.



Marge Anderson's family.

Election Results: Republicans Win Majority in MN House of Representatives

Democrats re-elected in Governor,
US Senate races

Brett Larson Staff Writer

The political landscape of the Mille Lacs region shifted slightly with the November elections as the Republicans took back the Minnesota House of Representatives and local communities chose new city councils, county officials, and school board members.

Two Mille Lacs Band employees were elected to local office. Shawn Willis, who works with Band youth in Isle, is the new mayor of Onamia. Angel Oehrlein, who works in the Department of Administration, was elected to the Onamia School Board.

Mille Lacs Tribal Police Chief Jared Rosati was unsuccessful in his bid to succeed Pine County Sheriff Robin Cole. Jeff Nelson defeated Rosati in the race. Mille Lacs County Sheriff Brent Lindgren and Aitkin County Sheriff Scott Turner ran unopposed and were reelected.

In other local races, Linda Dahlen was elected Mayor of Isle and Sandy Reichel was reelected Mayor of Wahkon. Three open seats on the Isle School Board will be filled by Karen McQuoid, Randall Christensen, and Richard Oberfeld. Along with Oehrlein, Amy Willis and William "Billie" Hill III were elected to the Onamia School Board. Heather Sorensen and Larry Doten will take seats on the McGregor School Board, and four open seats on the Aitkin School Board were won by Jeremy Janzen, Kevin Hoge, Cindi Hills and David Burgstaler.

Joe Walsh was elected to the office of Mille Lacs County Attorney, defeating Mark Herzing, who was an assistant under County Attorney Jan Jude. Jude came in third in the August primary, so she was not on the November ballot. In Pine County, Reese Frederickson was elected County Attorney with 60 percent of the vote. Aitkin County Attorney Jim Ratz was unopposed and won reelection with 99 percent of the vote.

Sondra Erickson won reelection to the House of Representatives in District 15A, which includes Mille Lacs County. Joe Radinovich, the Democratic House member from District 10B, which includes Aitkin and rural Crow Wing counties, was defeated by Republican Dale Lueck. In the Hinckley area, Republican Jason Rarick ousted Democrat Tim Faust.

While Republicans regained control of the Minnesota House with a good showing in rural areas, Democrats won all statewide races. Gov. Mark Dayton, Attorney General Lori Swanson, and State Auditor Rebecca Otto were reelected. Steve Simon defeated Dan Severson in the race to replace outgoing Secretary of State Mark Ritchie, who did not seek reelection.

Democrat Al Franken was reelected to the U.S. Senate, defeating Mike McFadden, and incumbent Rep. Rick Nolan defeated Stewart Mills III and will represent Minnesota's 8th District in Washington.



DISTRICT 1

Rep. Blake Invites Commissioners to Discuss Housing and Wraparound

Brett Larson Staff Writer

Over 50 people attended the District I community meeting on Nov. 12 at the community center. District Representative Sandi Blake, Health and Human Services Commissioner Sam Moose and Community Development Commissioner Percy Benjamin addressed those in attendance.

Sandi focused her comments on economic development and community health. She talked about the revenues from the casinos and the need to diversify the Band's economy, and she praised Commissioner of Corporate Affairs Joe Nayquonabe for advancing that agenda. "It's good to have a corporate commissioner who shares our vision," she said, noting the Band's recent purchase of a hotel in Oklahoma City.

Sandi also gave an update about a forum she had attended at Fortune Bay Casino about children in crisis on the reservation, especially regarding what she called an "epidemic of drug abuse... causing chaos in our communities."



**Percy Benjamin being sworn in as Commissioner of
Community Development.**

"Babies are being born addicted to drugs. We need to acknowledge that we have these problems and come up ways to help our people to get well," she said. "Starting to talk about it is the first step."

Commissioner Moose informed the community about a new "wraparound" model to bring the Band's various services to members. Five new case manager positions will be created to coordinate wraparound services. The plan grew out of meetings of the Band's various departments to try to determine what government is doing well and what could be improved to keep people from "slipping through the cracks."

Wraparound service providing intensive case management was proposed as an improvement. Sam said the service would help members find out what is holding them back and address those needs. He said wraparound services are individualized, community-based, culturally competent, outcome-oriented, and based on individuals' strengths and obtainable goals. The program attempts to build on successes rather than focus on failures.

"Case managers are there to help people see the light at the end of the tunnel and keep moving in that direction," he said.

Percy Benjamin, who was sworn in as Commissioner of Community Development on Nov. 4, introduced himself as a lifelong resident of Mille Lacs. "I've been around the reservation all my life, and I'm not going anywhere," he said. "I was really surprised that they confirmed me to be commissioner. I'm just a normal person, not above anybody else. I'm here to work for you and with you." He said his door will always be open and that he's looking forward to finding ways to make life better for Band members. He focused in particular on the problem of homelessness, which he experienced firsthand when he was growing up. "Our youth, when they're kicked out of their home, that's something that stays in their head forever," he said. "If there's anything I can do to prevent that, I will."

The District I community meeting normally takes place on the second Wednesday of the month. The December meeting will be the annual Christmas dinner and will be held at the Grand Casino Mille Lacs Events Center on Dec. 10 with registration for prizes beginning at 4:30 and doors opening at 5:15 for dinner.

Family Services Department Focuses on Improving Process

Health and Human Services

Samuel Moose, Commissioner of Health and Human Services, has begun a process to engage consultants from Center for Court Innovation to do an analysis and thorough review of the Family Services department with a focus on process improvement. The process will be facilitated by Adelle Fontanet, Brett Taylor, Katherine Ford, and Rose Robinson. They will be conducting confidential focus groups and one-on-one interviews with people who have had experiences with the child protection system within the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and also with

the foster care system. They will be seeking people who have a willingness to discuss their experience in a respectful and confidential way, with a goal of improving the services provided to Mille Lacs Band children and families.

The work will be done in early January. People can contact Michelle Beaulieu at Mille Lacs Band Health and Human Services, 320-532-4163, ext. 2564, if they want to be involved in the process.

Opiate Addiction in Newborns Affecting Community

Brett Larson Staff Writer

A nationwide epidemic is claiming new victims in the Mille Lacs area: babies born addicted to opiates, both prescription painkillers and illegal drugs like heroin.

Hundreds of babies in communities across the state have been born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). As with other health problems, the impact is greater in reservation communities than in the general population due to historical trauma and inequities in income and access to social and health-related services.

According to Sam Moose, Commissioner of Health and Human Services for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, the reservation is one of the hardest hit communities in Minnesota.

"These babies are sacred!" Sam said. "They are spirits that come directly from the Creator. We all need to make sure that their mothers and fathers are supportive in their care."

Twenty-eight percent of babies with NAS in Minnesota are born to Native Americans, even though Native Americans make up only about two percent of the state's population. In other words, American Indian newborns are 8.7 times **more likely** than white babies to be born with NAS. Babies of other ethnic groups in Minnesota are **less likely** than white babies to be born with NAS. The first thing a woman should do if she is pregnant and struggling with dependency is to see a health care provider, Sam said, either a public health nurse or a doctor. He said there is medical care available that can help the mother and her baby. Those who don't know where to turn can also call the 24-hour crisis hotline at 866-867-4006.

Family members and friends also need to step in to ensure that pregnant women are receiving prenatal care.

"If you know a woman is pregnant and struggling with dependency, please reach out and offer support," Sam said. "It's critical for the community — mothers, grandmothers, grandfathers — to look out for our next generation. And if you find yourself chemically dependent and pregnant, you're not alone. We want to be there for you."

Long-term effects of opiate addiction on babies are not known, but the short-term effects are terrible in themselves.

According to the National Institutes of Health, symptoms depend on the type and amount of drugs the mother used but may include high-pitched or excessive crying, fever, hyperactive reflexes, irritability, poor feeding, rapid breathing, seizures, sleep problems, sweating, trembling, vomiting, diarrhea, and

slow weight gain.

Drug use also increases the likelihood of birth defects, low birth weight, premature birth, small head circumference, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and problems with development and behavior.

Treatment may include prescribing a drug similar to the one the mother used and slowly decreasing the dose over time to help wean the baby and relieve the symptoms. Breast-feeding, reducing noise and lights, gentle rocking, and swaddling can also help.

There is also a great deal of expense associated with NAS. In addition to medical costs, babies may need to be placed in foster care — which is costly both for the tribe and the wider community. If drug use and addiction in the family continue, the risks to the child also continue.

For more than a decade, communities across the country have been trying to stem the tide of opiate addiction, which has surged with the increased use of prescription painkillers like Vicodin, Percocet, and Oxycontin.

"This continues to be one our greatest threats to who we are as a people," Sam said. "How we prepare our next generation to carry us into the future is paramount. We have to take the necessary steps to address this issue."

The Mille Lacs Band has been collaborating with tribes and the state of Minnesota to combat the

problem, but more needs to be done — and soon — to prevent children from being born addicted.

Unfortunately, the people most in need often avoid the systems of support that are available, from prenatal care to social services that can provide nutrition, housing, and financial assistance. Everyone in the community can help by making sure all pregnant women are receiving the health services they and their babies need.

Sam emphasized that opiate addiction and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome are part of a larger problem with chemical dependency that is the result of historical trauma and decades of unequal access to healthcare and social services.

"It's against everything we are taught as Aninshinaabe, however the effects of historical trauma and self-destructive behaviors continue to impact our most vulnerable: children," Sam said. "Our children, as with many other minority communities, continue to pay the price."



"These babies are sacred! They are spirits that come directly from the Creator. We all need to make sure that their mothers and fathers are supportive in their care."

— Sam Moose, Commissioner of Health and Human Services

Birch Bark Ornament Workshop

The Mille Lacs Indian Museum on Saturday, December 13

Time: Noon–4 p.m.

Fee: \$25/\$20 for MNHS members and \$15 supply fee

Reservations: required three days prior to workshop, call 320-532-3632

Create miniature ornaments from birch bark that can be used to decorate for the holidays or to give as gifts. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided. A minimum of five participants is required. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Get Prepared for Flu Season

Flu season has arrived, but many of us still have questions. The Influenza (the flu) is a virus that affects your respiratory system, including your nose, throat, and lungs. Symptoms of the flu include fever, cough, headaches, and body aches.

You can protect yourself and your family by getting vaccinated, avoiding others that are sick, washing your hands often, covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue or a sleeve, and not sharing drinking cups. If you think that you have the flu you should stay home, avoid contact with others, drink fluids, and rest.

You should seek medical help if you have any of the following symptoms:

- difficulty breathing
- pain in your chest
- dizziness
- confusion
- severe vomiting
- flu-like symptoms that improve, but return with worse fever and cough.

You cannot get the flu if you get vaccinated. Some people may experience a fever and a runny nose after the vaccine. This is a sign that your body is responding to the vaccine, not the flu.

Everyone 6 months of age and older should be vaccinated. Ne-la-Shing, East Lake, and Aazhoomog Clinics all welcome walk-in patients wanting to get their flu shot. All three clinics have Flumist (nasal spray) for kids age 2-18 and the quadrivalent vaccine in the form of a shot.

Any questions? Please call:

- **Ne-la-Shing Clinic:** 320-532-4163
- **East Lake Clinic:** 218-768-3311
- **Aazhoomog Clinic:** 320-384-0149

Flu Shots Available at Na la Shing Clinic

Monday–Friday

8:30 a.m.–12 p.m. and 1 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

Mille Lacs Band members and Band employees are welcome. You must be registered at the clinic to receive the flu vaccine.

Interested in submitting to the *Inaajimowin*?

Send your submissions and birthday announcements to Andy McPartland at andy@redcircleagency.com or call 612-248-2051.

The January issue deadline is December 16.

Holiday Parties

District I Holiday Party (and Community Meeting)

- Wednesday, December 10
- Enter for prizes at 4:30 p.m.
- Dinner at 5:15 p.m.
- Grand Casino Mille Lacs Events Center

Urban Area Holiday Party

- Saturday, December 13
- 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Minneapolis American Indian Center

District II-A Holiday Party

- Tuesday, December 16
- 5:30 p.m.
- Chiminising Community Center

District II Holiday Party

- Wednesday, December 17
- 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- East Lake Community Center

District III/Aazhoomog Holiday Party (and Community Meeting)

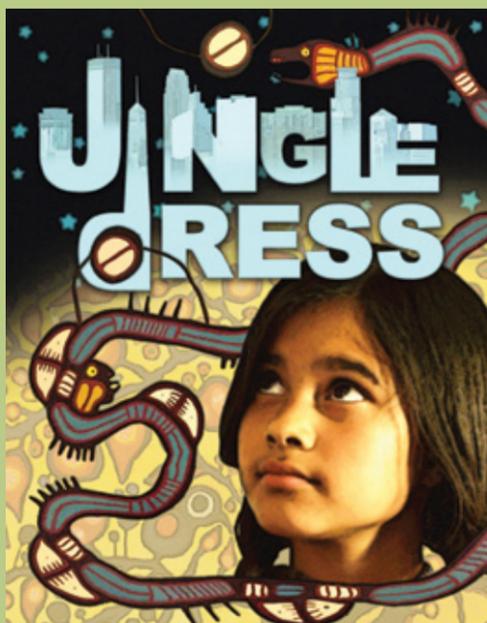
- Wednesday, December 17, 5 p.m.
- Grand Casino Hinckley
- Contact Monica Benjamin for more information:
320-384-6240, ext. 224

Elder Holiday Party

- Saturday, December 20
- Doors open at 5:30 p.m.
- Dinner at 6 p.m.
- Grand Casino Mille Lacs Convention Center

Jingle Dress Movie Premier Attracts Crowds

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures



Miigwech to all who came to the Jingle Dress premiere at the Grand Makwa Cinema.

More than 600 people attended the screenings!

As a thank you to those who attended, MLCV held a drawing for a Pendleton blanket. Bobby Eagle was the lucky winner. Congratulations!

Band Youth Attend National Conference in Atlanta

Brett Larson Staff Writer

Twelve Mille Lacs Band youth flew to Atlanta in late October to attend the Youth Summit at the National Congress of American Indians conference.

Darrell Shingobe, the Niigaanidaa Coordinator for District II in East Lake, was one of the chaperones. He enjoyed seeing his group networking with other youth as well as adult leaders like Ernie Stevens, chair of the National Indian Gaming Association, and William Mendoza, Executive Director of the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education.

"I encouraged the kids to go up and speak to them," Darrell said, "to look for what makes a leader a leader, and to think about the perseverance they had to get where they are now."

The youth who attended the summit were George Crazy Thunder, Keenan Gonzalez, Candace Killspotted, Brandi Skinaway, Algin GoodSky, Sherraine White, Cassandra Merrill, Meghan Merrill, Noel Kegg, Samantha Mitchell, Andrea Sayers, and Amber Benjamin.

Among the themes of the five-day event were sovereignty and self-governance, treaty rights, and taking care of the earth for future generations. Attendees participated in breakout sessions to learn about a variety of topics.

Darrell was impressed with the students' willingness to participate. Two members of the District II group — Candace Killspotted and Algin GoodSky — sang in front of a crowd of 250 people. "I was really amazed with their ability to throw themselves out there in front of all those people and not be afraid," Darrell said.

Another District II student, Keenan Gonzalez of East Lake, a senior at McGregor High School, made an impact when he spoke at the conference. A microphone was passed around, and when it came to Keenan, he asked the audience how many of them knew their medicine men and participated in ceremonies, and he said he was disturbed by how few people in the audience raised their hands.

Keenan took some heat for speaking out. One person accused him of forcing his spirituality on people, but Keenan said he thought it was important and didn't want to "beat around the bush." He became a helper at a Sun Dance ceremony, and

he takes his culture and traditions seriously and encourages others to do the same.

Both Meghan Merrill and Samantha Mitchell of District I said Gonzalez's speech was one of the most significant moments of their week in Atlanta. Mitchell said she was impressed with Keenan's courage.

At the Youth Cabinet meeting, the students heard from tribal leaders who talked about how tribes are working together. "They talked about what we need to do to prosper and make our nations stronger," Meghan said. "All the nations are coming together to be stronger."

Meghan also enjoyed side trips to the Georgia Aquarium and a dinner with her mom, Commissioner of Education Suzanne Wise, at a rotating restaurant atop a downtown skyscraper.

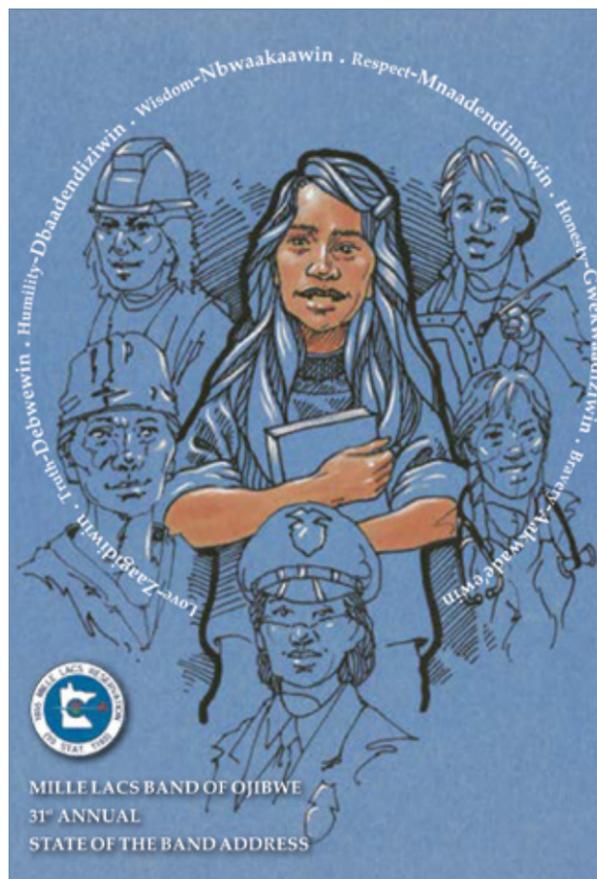
She also enjoyed seeing Miss Indian World, Taylor Thomas of Idaho, and a player on the Atlanta Dream, a women's professional basketball team.

Another highlight for the group was the Youth Honor Dinner, which recognized members of the NCAI Youth Council. Darrell said he is hoping to create a local Youth Council based on the national model.

Samantha Mitchell is participating in the formation of the new group. She's a senior at Onamia High School with a plan to major in business management and American Indian studies at the University of Minnesota. She also plans to become fluent in Ojibwe.

She has also attended national UNITY conferences (United National Indian Tribal Youth) and another NCAI conference in Alaska, where she met three girls who saw the problems in their community and tried to address them. She hopes a Mille Lacs youth council can have a similar positive impact.

Samantha said she's appreciated the opportunity to attend the conferences. "These are great experiences for us," Samantha said. "They open our eyes to see what's going on in the world, and how we can help to make a difference."



The 31st Annual State of the Band Address

*10:00 a.m.
Tuesday, January 13, 2015*

*Grand Casino Mille Lacs
Events & Convention Center*

*Dignitaries and Non-Band Member
Guests are Warmly Welcome &
Encouraged to R.S.V.P. to 320-532-
7486*

Band Members need not R.S.V.P.

Onamia Public School Celebrates Native American Heritage Month

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer



Last month, Mille Lacs Band Commissioner of Corporate Affairs Joe Nayquonabe spoke to ninth and tenth graders about his career path from Onamia High School to his current position as head of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures.



Students learn about the Ojibwe language.



Native Pride dancers entertain students.



Onamia students learn how to play lacrosse.



Mother Day's Fry Bread teach students culinary arts.

The month of November brought a series of events to Onamia Public School recognizing Native American Heritage Month.

- The Native Pride dancers entertained K-12 students and informed them about Native American music and dance. They even taught some of the teachers to dance.
- Byron Ninham, Niigaan Youth Program Director for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, taught the game of lacrosse to Onamia students.
- On November 14th, Mixed Blood theater presented "According to Coyote," a dramatization of Native American legends.
- Language teacher/Curriculum Developer for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Adrienne Benjamin, taught an after-school Ojibwe course, assisted by Onamia Indian Education Paraprofessional Tracy Opager. Ms. Benjamin has also been teaching ALC students Ojibwe.
- On November 19th, Dawn Day came to the culinary arts class to teach students how to make her famous Mother

Day's fry bread.

- On November 19th, Mille Lacs Band Commissioner of Corporate Affairs Joe Nayquonabe spoke to ninth and tenth graders about his career path from Onamia High School to his current position as head of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures.

Indian Education Coordinator Chris Clitso-Nayquonabe said, "One of the goals of the Onamia Indian Education Department is to increase knowledge and appreciation of American Indian history, language, and culture for all Onamia students and staff. Native American Heritage month was a perfect opportunity to do so. I had very positive feedback from all students. The Indian Education Department is looking forward to bringing more Native American culture into the school."

The month of November was designated Native American Heritage Month in 1990 by President George H.W. Bush.

Celebrate with Safe Toys and Gifts

Tammy Moreland

Performance Improvement Manager



If a toy is labeled "supervision required," make sure an adult is present at all times when that toy is in use.

Here are some tips for selecting safe toys for children:

- Consider the child's age, interests and skill level. Look for quality design and construction, and follow age and safety recommendations on labels.
- Children under three years old tend to put everything in their mouths, so avoid buying toys that have small parts and may pose a choking danger.
- Use a small parts tester to determine whether small toys may present a choking hazard to children under age 3.
- You can use the cardboard core of a toilet paper roll — if a toy can pass through, it is too small for young children and may cause them to choke if swallowed.
- Avoid toys with strings, straps or cords longer than 7 inches that may pose a risk for strangulation for young children.
- If a toy is labeled "supervision required," make sure an adult is present at all times when that toy is in use.
- Avoid electrical toys with heating elements for children under age 8.

After you've bought safe toys, it's also important to make sure kids know how to use them. The best way to do this is by supervising play. Playing with your kids teaches them how to play safely while having fun.

Parents should:

- Teach kids to put toys away.
- Check toys regularly; broken or unusable then fix or toss.
- Wooden toys shouldn't have splinters.
- Bikes and outdoor toys shouldn't have rust; store inside when not in use to prevent.
- Check stuffed toys for broken seams or exposed removable parts.
- Keep toys clean.

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures Hosts 15th Annual Fall Feast, Makes Exciting Announcement

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures

On Thursday, November 20, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures held the 15th annual Fall Feast for Mille Lacs Band members. Joe Nayquonabe, CEO of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, shared the company's year "by the numbers" and made an exciting new announcement.

The evening started out discussing memorable numbers. Can you believe Subway made more than 50,000 subs last year? Or that Grand Makwa Cinema sold more than 29,000 movie tickets? Or how about the amount of fuel we sold at our Marathon convenience stores? Enough to drive around the world in a Prius over 2,000 times! The numbers at the Grand Market increased to more than 210,000 customers and the hotel rooms sold between Grand Casino and the St. Paul hotels reached nearly 460,000 rooms! But, the most important number of the night Joe said was 4,525. "This is the number of Band members we think about each time we make a business decision. We are thankful for your support and high expectations of our company."

A short video played highlighting MLCV's year as well as sharing exciting news. "The team has been very busy evaluating opportunities and looking for the next potential deal," said Joe. "Finding the right deal can take some time because we are very particular about the little things." Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures knows that will lead to a very strong portfolio that will bring a significant return on investment for generations to come.

The right deal he is referring to is the Oklahoma City Embassy Suites. The Mille Lacs Band is now proud owners of this 236-room hotel! Located only six miles from downtown and less than four miles from Will Rogers World Airport, the recently renovated property boasts an atrium, 9,968 square feet of meeting space, a business center, fitness room, indoor heated pool and gift shop.

"We are excited to enter the Oklahoma City market with one of the strongest performing hospitality assets," said Joe. "The quality of the suites and the proximity to key attractions around the city position this hotel for exceptional performance."

In 2013, Melanie Benjamin, Chief Executive of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, issued a directive to diversify the Band's corporate holdings and strengthen the tribal economy.

This continues to be an exciting time for Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures and the Mille Lacs Band. MLCV began its long-term strategy to diversify the Mille Lacs Band's investments beyond gaming with the purchase of the Crowne Plaza St. Paul Riverfront hotel and the DoubleTree by Hilton in St. Paul, Minn. Since then, they have further diversified by opening Sweetgrass Media and acquiring 2020 Brand Solutions. Several other planned investments are in the works as well, including the rebuild of Eddy's Resort on Mille Lacs Lake and the development of a commercial laundry facility and a medical office building in Hinckley, Minn.

"Economic diversification is critical to building a strong future for the Mille Lacs Band and I am pleased to see our corporate arm, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, acquiring assets that will benefit Band members for many generations to come," said Melanie.

Joe said MLCV is continually analyzing deals in search of opportunities that meet its stringent investment criteria and will position the company for long-term success. "We're very pleased to add the Embassy Suites Oklahoma City to our growing portfolio and we look forward to discovering our next great opportunity."



Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures acquired the Oklahoma City Embassy Suites.



The Embassy Suites hotel lobby.



A look inside one of the hotel's King Bed Suites.

MLCV Coloring Contest Winners!

Ages 1 – 5: Mileena Weous



Ages 6 – 10: Alex Merrill



A Student of Culture, Canoeing His Own Path

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission and Mary Sam Photographers

Ben Sam is one of those young people who has a certain wisdom about life that seems beyond his years. The 20-year-old college junior has grown up learning and practicing the Ojibwe culture and traditions and says that it's the rich culture and history of the Anishinaabe that is innately part of who he is.

"Although I do not participate in many activities that most consider traditional today, I live my life through the teachings of our people," said Ben. "I do not speak Ojibwe, but can funnel my way through any ceremonies and conversations from hearing it around my whole life."

"The culture that I carry on is in these teachings and in the value of taking care of Mother Earth, in conserving the resources I have the ability to affect," he added. "Deer hunting, fishing, maple syruping, ricing, picking birch bark and basswood, basket making, quilting, bead work, and now canoe-making are some of the things I do to keep myself grounded and keep the ways of our people alive to the best of my ability."

This past summer Ben, with the help of his uncle, Don Wedll, a former MLB employee, built a six-foot long traditional birch bark canoe. It was big enough to fit a small child and was more of a replica than an actual usable canoe. Ben said his first canoe will likely never see water, but he plans to make a full-size one sometime in his future.

"My goal is to make one canoe each summer, because without repetition, we sometimes forget how these things work. Making a canoe the old way is something that I hope to become truly great at in the future and I foresee myself someday teaching others, the way I have been taught," Ben said.

"This type of knowledge is not mine alone. There are many things in our culture that we are taught that we do not own — our language, basket making, many ceremonies, eagle feathers — but rather we are carriers of knowledge and have been given responsibility of taking care of these things until the time to share it with someone else comes along."

"We are taught that we will know when this time comes and it is our duty to share with others in need, even if it is practical knowledge like building a canoe."

Ben explained that it took so many hours to build the single canoe that he only made one. It had long been his desire to learn how to make a traditional canoe, but until this summer he hadn't seen his dream realized.

Ben relied on his uncle Don's help and knowledge of traditional canoe-making to get his project done. Don, who lives in Alaska, came for a week-long visit and was able to share his wisdom with Ben and provide a bit of help with the canoe.

"Everything put into the canoe was made the old way, using Watubb (specific roots) to stitch the bark with the gunwales and bows, and the rest was made of cedar or birch bark," said Ben.



A young Ben Sam fishing. This photo was a part of a traveling exhibit on why treaties matter.

"We had to make all of this from scratch. We even made the pitch, the black sealant on the ends of the canoe, from natural things. Even professional birch bark canoe makers often do not make their own pitch, rather they buy spray rubber sealant."

This summer Ben also made muskie lures from scratch for the first time ever. He thought they went well and says he plans to continue making the lures to use when fishing.

Ben's mom, Mary Sam, said she and Ben's dad, Dave, encouraged their son to follow the Ojibwe culture and traditional ways because it's "who we are and what we know."

She added that Ben grew up in a home that was strong in sobriety and with permission to learn and grow from all he could in the world around him.

"Reclaiming or strengthening traditional practices and culture is new to many Band members living today, said Mary. "Ben grew up on the lake and on the land, surrounded by Elders and teachers who loved him to pieces and then some."

"We guess it really wasn't about encouragement but because this is his life, and all that he knew; balancing living in multiple communities and striving to be a contributing person," Mary added.

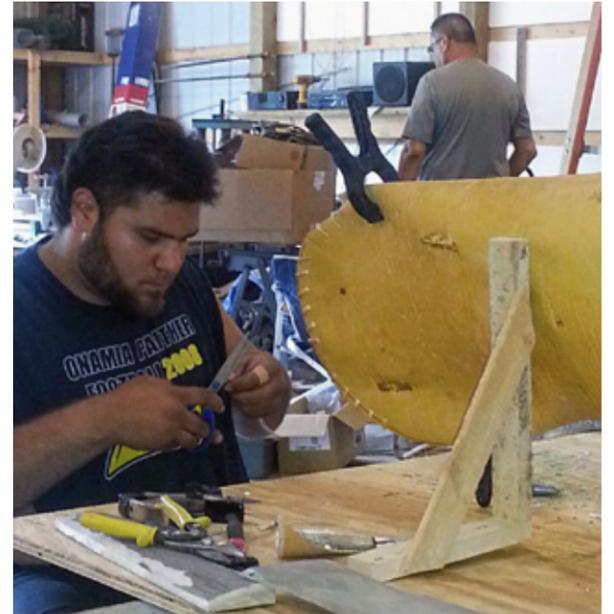
Dave mentioned that he and Mary are grateful, excited and nervous about Ben's continued embrace of the culture and traditions of Anishinaabe.

"We are grateful that through our values, modeling and participating in sugar bush, star quilt blanket making, netting, spearing, picking bark and basswood, making baskets, grass dolls and spearing decoys, ricing, hunting, participating in ceremonies, serving as niyawen'enh (namesake) and learning language, he is building on each of these."

"He is a talented artist, writer, facilitator and coach," his dad added. "Ben knows that he is a part of this lake and this land."

"We are excited to watch as he learns more about himself, his gifts, our ways and balancing this with modern day expectations and opportunities to be a leader and change agent."

"We are nervous because walking the path he is walking is not easy. We are well aware of that everyday. It is sometimes a lonely path," Dave continued. "Even our own people can be



Ben works on building a canoe.

pretty harsh judges of how one lives their life, expresses their identity and traditional way of live, defined by themselves."

Dave said that Ben defines his own path, and that he always has and always will. He does not succumb to others' definition of "Native Pride," or who or what is traditional enough.

"He was not raised this way by us, Papa (Frank) Sam, Grandma Batiste, Grandma Betty Kegg, Niiawen'enh-ag (namesakes) Leonard Sam, Rose Noonday and Amy Day (Sam) and those Elders that have led his ceremonies from childhood to being a young adult; Jim Clark, Ole Nickaboine, Henry Sam and Herb Sam. We are proud of Ben; beyond words," Dave added.

Ben says his reward from learning and practicing the Ojibwe culture is simply to experience it and to further his personal growth.

"The reward is being able to become a teacher because I am a student of our culture."

Ben says the most important thing he has learned in his life from anyone is simply about love.

"My grandmother taught me that love is the most important thing out there because if you can love yourself, your culture, and others around you, then you have it all, even if you really have nothing at all."

Ben attends the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth and is pursuing a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology and physical therapy. When he's not working, studying or doing any of his other hobbies, he is learning to play golf and plays slow pitch softball around the state in three different leagues a week — in Duluth, Hibbing and Genola.

A key message he has for other young people is that getting an education matters. Education, he says, is a tool that allows people to become more adaptable and helps people learn how to use their voices.

"One of the most important things we young people seemingly don't understand nor have the support from our families and community is the power of education and empowering ourselves with the book," said Ben. "Success is not always measured in degrees, rather in understanding and adapting. Too often is the word of Native Americans lost in the wind. Education at even the high school level can help us be heard."

Minneapolis Mayor Betsy Hodges Visits Urban Area Office

City of Minneapolis Mayor Betsy Hodges and staff member Erick Garcia Luna visited the Urban Area office on Thursday, November 6. During a tour, Urban Area staff shared information about the services and programming their office provided the community — as well as history of the Mille Lacs Band. Mayor Hodges presented a plaque during the visit.

Pictured (L-R): Jamie Edwards, Mille Lacs Band Director of Government Affairs; Barb Benjamin-Robertson, Urban Program Administrator; Al Olson, Special Projects Coordinator; Mayor Betsy Hodges; Katie Draper, Mille Lacs Band Government Affairs Specialist; Erick Garcia Luna, Economic Development Policy Aide for Mayor Hodges.





Dabwaa-Ondaadizid Before Birth

Lee Staples Gaa-Anishinaabemod Obizaan **Chato Gonzalez** Gaa-Anishinaabewibii'ang Ombishkebines

Dabwaa-ondaadizid a'aw Anishinaabe, mii omaa apii giizhaa wii-ni-dazhindamaan i'iw bimaadiziwin. Geget gii-chi-ina'oonwewizi gii-miinigoowizid i'iw bimaadiziwin a'aw Anishinaabe.

It is here ahead of time I want to talk about life before Anishinaabe is born. It was a great gift when Anishinaabe was given life.

Ishke aabiding nizezikwendaan owapii gii-wii'ayaawag a'aw mindimooyenyiban, nizigosiban. Namanj gaa-izhiwebiziwaanen gaa-izhi-wiindamawag a'aw mindimooyenyiban, "Geget nindinigaaz", nigii-inaa. Mii i'iw gaa-izhi-naniibikimid, "Gaawiin gidinigaazisiin. Gibimaadiziwin gidayaan," nigii-ig.

I recall this one time when I lived with my aunt. I do not know what happened to me when I told that old lady "I am really pitiful," I said to her. And then she scolded me. "You are not pitiful. You have your life," she said to me.

Mii inow Manidoon ena'oonigojin a'aw Anishinaabe i'iw bimaadiziwin, mii iwidi wenjikaamagadinig. Mii dash i'iw weweni ge-onji-ganawendang obimaadiziwin a'aw Anishinaabe, da-ni-minochiged megwaa imaa bibizhaagiid omaa akiing. Gakina a'aw bemaadizid odayaawaan inow Manidoon zhewenimigojin, genawenimigojin igaye megwaa omaa ayaad omaa akiing. Mii ow gaa-onji-wiindamaagoowiziyang weweni da-ni-doodawang a'aw giwiiji-bimaadiziiminaan. Giishpin maazhi-doodawang giwiiji-bimaadiziiminaan, mii inow mayaazhi-doodawimangin inow Manidoon zhewenimigojin, miinawaa gaa-miinigojin i'iw bimaadiziwin.

The Manidoog gives Anishinaabe life that is where it comes from. That is why Anishinaabe should take care of his life and to live good while he or she is here on Earth. Everyone living has Manidoog that watch over them, and takes care of them while they are here on Earth. That is why we are told to respect our fellow Anishinaabe. If we treat our fellow man with disrespect, we are disrespecting those Manidoog that have compassion for him, and also the ones that gave him life.

Anishinaabewi a'aw biinjina eyaawang a'aw gijichaagwanaan. Mii ingiw Manidoog gaa-inaakonigejig i'iw akeyaa Anishinaabeng da-ni-izhi-bimaadiziyang. Ishke ingiw Manidoog geget ogii-zhawenimaawaan inow odanishinaabemiwaan gii-miinigoowiziyang ge-ni-inweyang da-objibwemoyang, naa gaye gii-miinigoowiziyang i'iw akeyaa ge-ni-izhichigeyang ani-biindaakoogigeyang miinawaa i'iw ge-izhi-bimiwidooyang i'iw bimaadiziyang. Mii iw ge-ni-ayaangwamitooyangiban miinawaa ge-ni-apiitendamangiban. Ggii-miinigonaaing ingiw Manidoog i'iw akeyaa ge-izhi-bimaadiziyang. Mii i'iw ge-minokaagoyang imaa biinjina gijichaagwanaaning.

That spirit we have inside of us is Anishinaabe. It was the Manidoog that made the decision that we should live an Anishinaabe life. The Manidoog really had a lot of compassion for their Anishinaabe; they gave us a way to sound, to speak Ojibwe, and also we were given specific ways to offer our tobacco, and live our lives. It is that life that we should take special care of and think highly of. It was the Manidoog that gave us the way to live our lives that is what will make our spirit inside of us feel really good.

Gaawiin gidaa-aanawendanziimin ingiw Manidoog gaa-izhi-ina'onaawaad inow odanishinaabemiwaan. Gaawiin gidaa-debwetawaasiwaanaan a'aw wayaabishkiiwed. Geget aanoodizi wii-wayezhimaad inow Anishinaaben. Gaawiin gidaa-mamoosiimin a'aw wayaabishkiiwed ezhitwaad. Ggii-miinigonaaing ingiw Manidoog ge-izhitwaayang Anishinaabewiyang. Ishke mamooyang i'iw wayaabishkiiwed ezhitwaad, gaawiin imaa biinjina gijichaagwanaaning zakab giga-izhi-ayaasiimin. Gidaa-migwanaadizimin imaa biinjina. Mii o'ow apane gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amawiwaad gaa-nitaawigi'ijig; gii-ikidowag, "Ani-mamood a'aw Anishinaabe i'iw akeyaa ezhitwaanid inow wayaabishkiuwen, gaawiin da-izhaasiin iwidi eni-izhaanid inow gidinawemaaganinaanan gaa-gwiinawaabiminaagozinid omaa akiing."

We should not view what Anishinaabe was given by the Manidoog to be inadequate. We should not believe what the white man says as being the truth. They have a strong desire to deceive the Anishinaabe. We should not take the white man's way of life. The Manidoog gave us our own way of life as Anishinaabe. If we were to take the white man's way of life, the spirit inside of us

would not be at peace. We would be unsettled within. This is what my parents always taught me; they said, "If Anishinaabe takes the white man's way of life, he will not go where our relatives go when they are no longer seen on Earth."

Ishke i'iw maajaa'iweyaan, moozhag nibi-noondaan a'aw Anishinaabe i'iw bakaan izhi-maajaa'ind. Gaawiin izhaasiin iwidi gidinawemaaganinaanan ezhaanid gegoo izhiwebizinid. Mii-go omaa izhi-waabanjigaazonid inow ojichaagwan omaa endaad a'aw bakaan gaa-izhi-maajaa'ind. Gaawiin ingoji izhaasiin inow ojichaagwan.

When I do a funeral, I often hear Anishinaabe getting sent off a different way. They do not go where our relatives go when something happens to them. His spirit is seen in his home after he has been sent off a different way. His spirit does not go anywhere.

A'aw mindimooyenyiban, gaa-nitaawigi'id, mii i'iw gaa-izhichiged azhigwa besho enendaagwadinig inow ikwewan wii-ayaawaad inow oniijaanisan, mii imaa gii-naadamaaged a'aw mindimooyenyiban. Nimikwendaan mii eta-go a'aw akiwenziyiban naa gaye niin imaa gii-ayaayaang niibaa-dibik imaa endaayaang, gaawiin a'aw mindimooyenyiban gii-ayaasiin. Mii iwidi gii-paa-naadamawaad inow ikwewan oniijaanisan waa-ayaawaajin, mii dash a'aw mindimooyenyiban gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amawaad inow ikwewan gegishkawaanijin oniijaansiwaan ogii-kakaanzomaan inow ikwewan moozhag da-mamaajiinid da-anokiinid imaa endazhi-ayaanid. Gego da-wii-pizaanishinziwag ingiw ikwewag. Anooj igo omaa da-anokiwaad imaa ayaawaad. Giishpin apane bizaanishing a'aw ikwe megwaa bimiwinaad inow oniijaanisan, da-gagwaadagizi azhigwa iwapii ayaawaad inow oniijaanisan. Miinawaa nizigosiban ogii-izhi-gikinoo'amawaan inow ikwewan, "Azhigwa ayaawad a'aw giniijaanis, gego aazhikweken, gaawiin ggii-aazhikwesiin iwapii gii-ozhi'eg giniijaanisiwaa."

When it was close to the time that a woman was going to have her baby this is what that old lady did that raised me; it was during that time that she helped out. I remember that it was only that old man and I who were home at night, and that old lady was not there. She would be out helping the women who were about to give birth, and then she would also teach the women who were pregnant; she would encourage these women to move often and to work during their pregnancy, and to not lie around. They should work on different things while they are pregnant. If a woman is always lying around while she is pregnant, she will have a difficult time during her delivery. And then my aunt would teach the women, "When you are delivering your baby, you should not scream; because you did not scream when you and your old man were making your baby."

Nigii-pi-noodaan igaye aanind ingiw ikwewag ogii-nagamotawaawaan inow oniijaanisiwaan megwaa imaa biinjina gii-pimiwinaawaad.

I also heard that some women sing to their babies while they are pregnant.

Miinawaa gaye imaa maajaa'iweng, mii imaa gii-gikina'amawindwaa, gaawiin odaabi-waabamaasiwaawaan gaa-ishkwaa-ayaaniin. Gegoo daa-izhiwebiziwaan inow abinoojiinyan bemiwinaawaajin.

And also at the funerals, the women that were pregnant were warned not to view the deceased. They were told if they did, something could happen to the baby that they are carrying.

Ayaapii iko gaye ingiw ikwewag gegishkawaajig inow oniijaanisiwaan ninandomigoog da-gaagiigidotamawagwaa inow asemaan miinawaa wiisiniwin ininamawaawaad inow Manidoon weweni da-naadamaagoowiziwaad weweni da-bi-dagoshininid oniijaanisiwaan.

Sometimes pregnant women will ask me to talk for their tobacco and food that they are offering to the Manidoog to help them and so their baby to arrive safely.

Miinawaa gaye nizezikwendaan gii-wiindamaagoowiziyaan; gego gidaa-wii-panaajitoosiinan ingiw bineshiinyag owadiswaniwaan miinawaa inow owaawanoomiwaan. Ingii-igoo "Ishke ingoding abinoojiinyag gaye giin gidaa-ni-ayaawaag, mii imaa da-bi-azheshkaagoyamban."

I also recall when I was told not to destroy the bird's nests or their eggs. I was told, "Someday you too could have babies; and it is at that time it could come back on you."

Community Efforts Delay Sandpiper Deadline

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer **Honor the Earth** Photographer

The Minisinaakwaang (East Lake) community and Mille Lacs Band DNR are receiving credit for helping to delay approval of the Enbridge, Inc. Sandpiper Pipeline Project. The 610-mile, 24-inch pipeline would stretch from Tioga in North Dakota's Bakken oil fields, to Superior, Wisconsin, running through the East Lake region and other native lands, potentially endangering wetlands and wild rice beds.

On September 11, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission voted 3-2 to order additional study of six alternate routes for the pipeline. Most alternate routes would follow existing pipeline corridors or highways.

The Honor the Earth organization, which has been leading efforts to stop the Sandpiper and other pipelines, sent representatives to East Lake with a dish and several gifts during the community's fall ceremonial dance in October. Honor the Earth's spiritual leader gave credit to the community's spiritual efforts for helping to delay the project.

They were especially grateful to Algin and Harvey GoodSky Jr., who participated in Honor the Earth's 200-mile "Love Water Not Oil" in August. The ride began at Rice Lake and stopped for lunch and a community potluck at East Lake Community Center before continuing west along the proposed pipeline route.

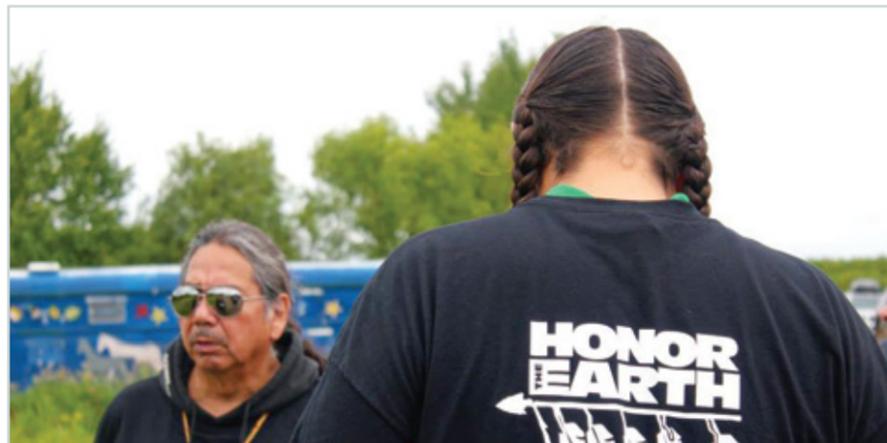
Michaa Aubid has also been active in protesting the pipeline (as well as mining activities in the region). The East Lake rice committee has sent letters opposing the project because it would endanger rice beds in the Sandy Lake and Rice Lake watersheds. "Rice can't handle an environmental disaster," he said.

Michaa describes himself as an environmentalist as well as an advocate for tribal rights. The pipeline is not just an Indian issue; other environmental groups have joined forces with bands to fight the project. "The pipeline jeopardizes everybody's fish and water," he concluded.

The proposed pipeline route was also opposed in an August 7 letter from Mille Lacs Band Commissioner of Natural Resources Susan Klapel. Susan said, "The proposed route for the Sandpiper pipeline project borders our Minisinaakwaang (East Lake) Community and threatens the Big Sandy Lake and Rice Lake watersheds, in which the Band's members and their ancestors have gathered wild rice and harvested other natural resources for generations."

Her letter points out that the environmental impact report on the project did not consider possible effects on wild rice waters or other resources of importance to the Band. She requested that other routes be chosen and that analysis should be conducted of all routes to determine potential impacts on wild rice.

Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin has expressed her opposition to the pipeline to Gov. Mark Dayton and the U.S. Department of Justice. She told the Inaajimowin in August, "The level of risk to our water, land, wild rice and resources is simply unacceptable."



David "Niib" Aubid and Michaa Aubid were among the East Lake community members who hosted the "Love Water Not Oil" riders in August.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency also opposes the route, saying it crosses many water bodies with little to no access downstream if a spill required cleanup. The route is also opposed by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, the White Earth Reservation Tribal Council, and Friends of the Headwaters, a group of concerned citizens based in Park Rapids. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources also asked that all six routes be studied.

Bakken oil is considered highly volatile. A train loaded with oil from the Bakken region derailed and exploded in Quebec in July of 2013, killing 47 people and destroying 30 buildings in the town of Lac-Mégantic.

Enbridge, Inc. was also responsible for the largest inland oil spill in U.S. history. A pipeline burst, spilling 877,000 gallons of oil into a tributary of the Kalamazoo River. Susan Klapel told Inaajimowin in August that Enbridge was responsible for more than 800 spills in the U.S. and Canada between 1999 and 2010, totaling almost seven million gallons of oil.

The MPCA and Minnesota DNR also expressed concern that if the Sandpiper route is approved, Enbridge will seek additional approval to expand the pipeline. If the Sandpiper route is eventually approved by the Public Utilities Commission, there would still be additional hearings, route reviews, possible modifications, and a trial-like proceeding before a state administrative law judge.

A Wild Ride with the GoodSky Boys

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

Harvey GoodSky Jr., 24, and his brother Algin, 17, weren't planning to spend 10 days on horseback this summer. Harvey had only been on a horse twice, and Algin only once. "We didn't have much riding experience," Harvey said, "but that didn't stop us from jumping on and saying 'Let's go!'"

The "Love Water, Not Oil" ride was organized by Honor the Earth to protest the Enbridge Sandpiper Pipeline, which would run through the GoodSky brothers' home region of Minisinaakwaang (East Lake) in the Mille Lacs Band's District II.



Harvey Jr., left, and Algin, right, are not just brothers but also best friends.

The day the ride started, Algin was let out of school to see what was going on. He asked his mom, Tania Aubid, if he and Harvey could ride along for the day, but he didn't expect her to say they could.

As they were putting the horses away that evening, Winona LaDuke, one of the organizers, said, "We're going to bring you guys with us."

Harvey wasn't sure what she meant. "Where?"

"To White Earth!" she replied. LaDuke and Michael Dahl, another organizer, liked the brothers' positive energy so much that they wanted them to come along.

Harvey wasn't sure what they saw in him, but he felt something pushing him to say yes. "I didn't bring much to the table," he said. As an afterthought he added, "I can sing I guess."

And sing he did, both in the saddle and at evening events along the way. "As much as my voice permitted me, I would sing," Harvey said. Harvey plays a hand drum and sings songs by Pete Gahbow and Skip Churchill of the Little Otter Singers. "I also have one I composed," he added.

The brothers sang at Pine River, at Bemidji, and at an arts festival at Zerkel on the White Earth Reservation. At the festival Harvey Jr. and Algin performed a few songs for the headlining artists, who were so amazed with their performance that they stopped painting to take pictures.

Harvey said they work hard at their singing and try to do it "the right way."

At night they camped at campgrounds, but one night they were turned away. Harvey thinks it was because of their ethnicity. It was 7 p.m., and the riders and horses were tired, but they all had to pack up and find another place to sleep.

Another memorable experience was when a herd of hundreds of horses came thundering over a hill to greet them. The riders' horses talked back and forth with their penned up counterparts for a while.

By the end of the 10-day ride, LaDuke and Dahl wanted the brothers to stick around, but Algin had to get back to school.

Algin hopes to pursue a career in the performing arts, and the ride helped him to connect with people who may help him along the way.

"The ride gave me a look at things to come in the future," Algin said. "It also gave me a strong insight on independence." He said it made him think about the kind of world our ancestors wanted to leave us and how the current generation can protect the water, land and animals.

Algin wants to be a musician or actor and a positive role model for young boys. "They need people to look up to who aren't into smoking and drinking," he said. "It's all about love. Without love, we have nothing."

The experience was clearly life changing for Harvey as well. His eyes light up and his smile widens as he talks about it. "I'm just glad I'm doing stuff like this instead of being another statistic," he said, "another young Native man getting in trouble."

Child Support Enforcement Update

Child Support Office

The Child Support Office would like to stress the importance of attending child support hearings. Being present will reduce the questions and the “what ifs” after a child support order is ordered by the judge. Being present will also allow both parties the opportunity to raise their concerns and ask any questions they may have. As always, we encourage both parties to obtain counsel from Band Member Legal Aid for band members and Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid for non-band members. Below are some basic questions on how child support is calculated and what happens at initial court hearings.

How is the amount for basic support figured out?

Once a petition to establish child support is filed, the Child Support Office will send out financial affidavits to both parties requesting information about the parties’ income. To calculate basic support, we look at both parents’ gross income from all sources. This is income before any pre-tax deductions such as a pension plan. Income may include potential (imputed) income if a parent works less than full-time but could be working full-time. If a parent gets spousal maintenance (alimony) or benefits because of a disability or retirement (other than SSI) that is also included as income for child support.

If a parent is paying spousal maintenance in a different case or ordered to pay it in the instant case, the amount of support is deducted from the income. If the parent is paying child support in another case, that amount is deducted. There may also be deductions for non-joint children living in a parent’s home.

Each parent’s share of the combined income is calculated. The parents’ combined incomes are applied to a guidelines chart, and together with the number of joint children they have, a number is calculated by the chart. That number is divided by each parent’s percentage of combined income.

For the parent without primary physical custody of the children, there may be a deduction for costs that come up during parenting time. This is called the “parenting expense adjustment.” The amount of the deduction depends on how much parenting time the court orders. For example:

- If the court sets parenting time less than 10 percent of the time, there is no deduction.
- If the court sets parenting time between 10 percent and 45 percent, there is a 12 percent deduction.

If the court orders parenting time of 45.1 percent or more, that is equal custody and a different formula is used.

What you should bring to the hearing

1. Proof of your income (bring a recent pay stub or other written proof of your income)
2. The amount of child support you pay for other children, if any (bring a copy of the most recent order if you have one)

3. The amount of spousal maintenance (alimony) you pay or get (bring a copy of the most recent order if you have one)
4. Your monthly expenses (make a list of your average monthly expenses and bring it with you to the hearing)
5. Whether or not you can get medical and dental insurance through your employer or a union and how much it costs
6. Medical or dental bills for the children that are not covered by insurance or public assistance and that you want the other parent to help pay
7. How much you pay for child care (bring a statement from your day care provider or other written proof of how much you pay)
8. If you are on any form of tribal or public assistance, it may be helpful to bring any supporting documents.

If you used the online child support calculator at childsupportcalculator.dhs.state.mn.us you can also bring the worksheets from the calculator to the hearing.

What happens at a child support hearing?

At the start of the hearing, the Child Support Magistrate will explain the purpose of the hearing and the way the hearing will proceed. The Magistrate will check to see who is present and if the parents agree on any facts or issues. It is a good idea to talk with the other parent before the hearing to see if you can agree on any part of the proposed child support order.

Presenting your case

Next, each parent will have a chance to present information to the Judge or Magistrate. You can do this by testifying yourself, by having witnesses testify, and by giving written documents to the Magistrate.

Note: If you plan to call witnesses besides yourself, you must notify the other parties in writing at least 5 days before the hearing. The notice must give the name and address of each witness and a brief summary of what the witness will say. If you plan to bring any documents, make sure you bring enough copies for the Magistrate, other parent, and the child support office..

The Magistrate will then call upon each parent individually. First, one parent takes an oath to tell the truth and provides information to the Magistrate. The person testifying is a witness and the Magistrate may have questions for the witness. When the witness is done talking, the Magistrate will give the other parent a chance to ask the witness questions. That parent then calls any other witnesses he or she might have.

When the first parent is done, it will be the other parent’s turn to testify, answer questions, and call witnesses. The same procedure is followed. The other parent is sworn in and be-

comes a witness. He or she will have a chance to give information to the Magistrate, answers questions, and call other witnesses. Do not talk or interrupt when it is not your turn to talk. This will only irritate the Child Support Magistrate.

Do not raise issues other than child support, such as custody or parenting time (visitation). Remember, the Child Support Magistrate doesn’t have authority to decide issues other than child support, medical support and child care contributions in these hearings. You will only waste everyone’s time by raising issues that the Magistrate can’t decide.

Summarize the information in writing as much as possible. That way, you can give the information to the Magistrate quickly and you won’t forget it.

The decision

The Magistrate will either make a decision orally at the hearing or take the case under advisement. Sometimes, the Magistrate will leave the record open for a limited time to permit one or both parties to submit additional information before making a decision. Once the case is decided, the Magistrate mails each party a child support order that contains the Magistrate’s decision. The Magistrate must issue the order within 30 days of the close of the record.

What if I am unhappy with the order?

If there are mistakes in the order, either parent may bring a motion for correction of clerical mistakes, typographical errors, or errors in calculation. This motion may be brought at any time and must be served to the other parent and filed with the Court. The Child Support Magistrate who issued the order reviews the case and generally there is no hearing.

If either party is unhappy with the order, they may bring a motion for review with the Court. A motion for review also must be brought within 20 days after receiving the order. The parent requesting review of the order can choose to have the Child Support Magistrate or a District Court Judge review the order. Again, there is generally not a hearing and no new information may be submitted unless the Child Support Magistrate or Judge requests it.

Either parent may appeal the initial order directly to the Mille Lacs Band Tribal Courts or the Minnesota Court of Appeals. You may need an attorney to do so.

Contact Us

Mille Lacs Band member Legal Aid Office

Phone: 320-532-7798 or 1-800-709-6445

Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid

Phone: 320-532-0121 or 1-888-360-2889

Small Business Development Help Available

Brett Larson Staff Writer



John Gunstad

Have you ever dreamed of starting your own business? Many people have but don’t know where to begin.

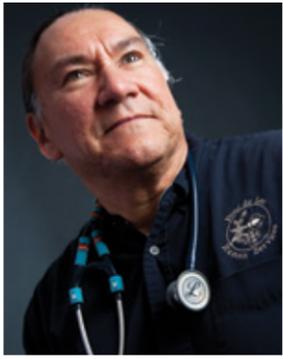
John Gunstad, a consultant with the Small Business Development Center in Brainerd, is ready and willing to help Band members who are thinking about going into business for themselves.

As part of Commissioner of Administration Catherine Colsrud’s economic development efforts, Gunstad will attend the District III Community Meeting on December 17 at 5:30 p.m. in the Grand Casino Hinckley ballroom. Interested Band members can attend the meeting

to find out more about the services Gunstad offers.

Young people are especially encouraged to attend. The adult program is for anyone 18 years of age and older, but there is also a youth entrepreneurial grant for youth under 18. Even if you don’t have a concrete idea yet, you are welcome to come and start dreaming of a successful future.

Additional opportunities to meet and work with John may be scheduled for other districts in the near future. If there is interest from Band members, John can be available before and after the community meeting. Contact John at 218-828-2002 or jgunstad@charter.net if you are interested in spending more time before or after the community meeting.



I Will ALWAYS Be Your Friend

Arne Vainio, M.D. Family Practice Physician **Stephan Hoglund** Photographer

In March I was asked to travel to remote reserves in Ontario, Canada. This was a beautiful and powerful experience and I will never be the same. I was asked

to go again and was in Ontario for five days in October. I traveled with Charlene from the Northwest Community Care Access Centre, Thunder Bay and Florence Highway, an elder from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Florence and her sister were forcefully taken away from her family when she was a little girl and put into a residential school. Her father was gone at the time and her mother didn't speak English and couldn't understand why her children were being taken from her. She was driven far away from her family, her braids were cut off and she was forbidden to speak her language. This was the beginning of a downward spiral that would span decades. "I was always told before that that I was a beautiful little girl inside and once I was taken away I was told I was stupid and ugly. When I got older I fell in with the wrong lifestyle because I couldn't go back home and I just wanted someone, anyone to accept me."

We started the first day with three different presentations in Thunder Bay and the first one was at the Indian Friendship Center. Every seat was full and Florence told her story first and I could tell many of the elders there connected with her story. We had lunch and then I showed "Walking Into the Unknown" and the questions for Florence and I went well over the time allotted for them. I was asked questions about heart disease, diabetes, chemotherapy and cancer. For some reason, I can never seem to give a short and direct answer. I felt it was important to explain the basics of cancer and when and why surgery, chemotherapy and radiation were used as treatments.

This made us late for the second presentation and we walked into a room full of health professionals who had already exhausted their business meeting objectives and small talk. The room was totally quiet when we walked in and the main reason we were there was to try to help everyone understand why they weren't connecting with their First Nations clients the way they wanted to. Florence's story hit them hard and many of them were totally unaware of the things that happened to children in those schools and the burden they carried for the rest of their lives. They were unaware of what it meant for an entire culture to lose a generation of parents. I showed the suicide segment of the film and talked to them about issues of power in the dominant culture and how they didn't even understand the imbalance when they walked into any interaction with their First Nations clients. We were video linked to another packed conference room and six remote sites. We went over our time and there were lots of questions afterward.

We were almost late to our final visit of the day. This was the Canadian Diabetes Association conference and Florence again went first and I showed the diabetes segment of the film

and spoke after that. The questions for both of us spilled into the hallway afterward.

The next day we took a small plane to one of the remote communities and we spoke to about fifteen elders and twenty some high school students. I was watching the elders as Florence told her story and I could tell many of them had similar experiences and had kept it to themselves this entire time. I talked to the students about becoming a physician and told them we needed them as much or even more than they needed us. I talked to them about not listening to anyone who told them they were incapable of doing something and that it only meant the person telling them was incapable of it. It was snowing hard when we left and the streets in the village were mud and the side of the plane was covered with mud from landing on the dirt airstrip in the heavy, wet snow. We got back to Thunder Bay in time to try to make it to one of the high schools with a high First Nations student population. The remote villages don't have the resources to have their own high schools and they only go through the ninth grade. After that the students go to city schools and have to be apart from their families and they live with host families. One of the students was murdered in the weeks before we got there and we were hoping to be able to talk to the students. School was almost out when we finally got there and we were unable to talk to them, but we did spend time with the guidance counselor. He immediately knew what we were hoping to do and he invited me to come back to speak to the students at one of the schoolwide events and we will be setting that up.

By this time, Florence and I were very close.

The next day we flew to Sioux Lookout and had two presentations at the hospital. For the evening presentation it looked like we weren't going to have many people attending and we moved everything to the hostel where patients from remote communities stay when they have extended treatments or when they're first getting dialysis set up. We had a makeshift DVD player balanced on top of the TV on the wall because the cord was too short, but we made do with what we had. There was a man in the back of the room in a wheelchair. Part of his foot was missing and I could tell this was the reason he was in the hospital. He was pretending like he wasn't really watching the film, but at the end of it he came up to me in his wheelchair and extended his hand to me. He never said a word, but I could tell it was important to him that we touched like that.

I made sure he knew it was just as important to me.

The next day we drove to one of the remote villages and our community presentation was at 1:00. Charlene is never one to let an opportunity pass and we went to the school to talk to the students. The vice principal gave us a tour of the school and arranged to have us talk to the seventh and eighth grade, then to the fifth and sixth grades.

Florence talked to them first and we were running out of time to show any film segments to the students and I told them

briefly how exciting it was to be a doctor and how I was able to travel and work with smart and caring people every single day. One of the fifth grade boys had question after question for me:

"What it the flu? What is pneumonia? Why are people afraid of needles? What happens if you get bit by a pregnant spider?"

I answered all of them and told him in front of his class that maybe he should think about going to medical school. We were getting ready to leave the room and he came up to the front. "Thank you," he whispered as he hugged me.

As we were getting ready to leave the school, he came up to me again. "Dr. Vainio, can I show you something?"

He sat down at the beat up old upright piano in the entryway of the school and he started to play. And he played. No sheet music, no mistakes. We were supposed to be leaving for the community presentation, but I knelt next to the piano and he played for me and he played and his small hands danced over the keys. He was playing his own music and he was playing from somewhere deep inside and he was playing simply for the love of playing.

"Thank you," I whispered to him when he finished and I gave him one of my cards. He got up and ran back to his classroom. I had to go talk to the vice principal and tell her I gave a fifth grader one of my cards and that I didn't want that to seem inappropriate. I just didn't want him to fall through the cracks and I really do think he should go to medical school. I wanted to stay in touch with her so she could let me know how he's doing. She told me he wanted to paint that old piano someday and that she was going to help him with it.

Florence and Charlene and I had our last meal together that night as the next day I was flying on to Kenora to be the keynote speaker at the Kenora Diabetes Expo and they were driving to one of the most remote communities that can be driven to. We had dinner overlooking one of the lakes and the sunset was spectacular over the snowy shoreline.

Florence gave me a beaded brooch for Ivy and she gave me a beaded key ring for me. She once beaded a medallion and hung it around Prince Edward's neck when he was in Canada for a state visit. I gave her a copy of the film and I wrote on the front cover:

"Florence-

Your story will bring healing wherever and whenever it is heard. You still are that beautiful little girl you thought you left behind. I will ALWAYS be your friend."

She cried when I gave it to her.

Have I ever told you I love my job?

Arne Vainio, MD (Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Member) is a family practice physician on the Fond du Lac Ojibwe reservation in northern Minnesota. He has been writing health articles for News From Indian Country, and other tribal and non-tribal newspapers, for over 4 years.

MLCV IT Department Wins TribalNet Award

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures

The Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures IT Department was awarded an Industry award from TribalNet at their 15th Annual Conference in Las Vegas, NV.

The award recognizes deserving Information Technology teams for some of their outstanding accomplishments. There were more than 40 tribes from across the U.S. who sent in nominations for this year's award. There are only two awards given each year, so this recognition for MLCV is significant.

"We are thrilled to be recognized with an Industry Award from TribalNet," said Ned Weizenegger, IT account manager for Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures who accepted the award. "It's paramount for the gaming and hospitality industry to continue to innovate and this recognition is a direct endorsement that reinforces our continued commitment. It's also a tribute to our talented team that works together to advance our company through innovative technology."



Ned Weizenegger with TribalNet officials

TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

Happy December Birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Judith Louise Beaulieu
 Gayle Marie Bender
 Pamela Jean Bixby
 Henry Benjamin Bonga
 Loann Dana Boyd
 Phyllis Ann Boyd
 Vicki Marie Burton
 Kyle Matthew Cash
 Lawrence Churchill
 Frances Davis
 Marilyn Ann Davis
 Winifred Marie Davis
 Delsie Louise Day
 June Louise Day
 Randy James Dorr
 Rodney John Dorr
 Timothy Craig Foreman
 Bernadine Louise Garbow
 Ruth Elaine Garbow
 Diane Marie Gibbs
 Rosalie Marie Gopher
 David Darryl Granger
 Dale Herbert Greene Sr.
 Angeline Hawk
 Viola Mary Hendren
 Michael Ray Hensley
 Carole Anne Higgins
 Frank Hill Jr.

Esther Marie Johnson
 Peggy Lou Klapel
 Larry Allen Koeppel
 Renda Lynn Leslie
 Michael Allen Mager
 Daniel Rae Matricious
 Gordon Wayne Matricious
 Kim Alane Modaff
 Debra Jean Morrison
 Richard Raymond Mortenson
 Linda Lou Moxness
 Dale John Pindegayosh
 William Richard Premo Jr.
 Herbert Sam
 Susan M. Shingobe
 Laura Ruth Shingobe-Garbow
 Louis Franklin St. John
 Vanette Louise Todd
 Carol Ann Turner
 Anita Louise Upegui
 Kenneth Laverne Wade Sr.
 Maureen Cynthia Weyaus
 Yvonne Cecelia Winiecki
 Douglas Alan Wistrom
 Lucille Mabel Woyak

Happy December Birthdays:

Happy Birthday **Pickle** on 12/3 from Waylon and Rachel. • Happy Birthday to my sister **Delsie Day** on 12/6 with lots

of love, your sister Joanne and the Weyaus/Boyd family. • Happy Birthday to our daughter **Danni Jo Harkness** on 12/7, love Mom and Dad and the Weyaus/Boyd Family. • Happy 20th Birthday **Jordan Anderson** on 12/8 with Love from Shyla, Destanie, Bella, Dal Jr., Papa, Mom, and Gramma Gina. • Happy Birthday **Clayton** on 12/10 from Waylon and Rachel. • Happy Birthday **Delaney** on 12/11 from Waylon and Rachel. • Happy Birthday **Baby Gabe** on 12/12 from Rachel and Waylon. • Happy Birthday **Grant Garbow** on 12/12 with love from your son Rico Harvey, Mom, Gerald, Cede, Sean, Sheldon, Levi, Wade, Jodi, Levin, Erica & Maria, Penny & Baby Avery, Kc, Hayden, and Cayleigh. • Happy Birthday **TJ** on 12/14 from Dad, Craig & Boys, Arielle & Girls, and Rachel & Waylon. • Happy Birthday **Manuel** on 12/15 from Rachel and Waylon. • Happy Birthday old man **Dale Pindegayosh** on 12/15! From your #1 daughter. • Happy Birthday **Wesley** on

12/16 from Dad, Payton, Eric, Brae, Bryn, Bianca, Papa, Randi, Rachel & Waylon, Val & kids, Jay & kids, and Bruce & girls. • Happy Birthday **Marcello** on 12/16 from Rachel and Waylon. • Happy Birthday **Tiny** on 12/16, love Dad, Braelyn, Payton, Eric, Brynley, Bianca, Papa, Auntie Val, Pie, Kev, Jay, Taylor, Adam, Bruce, Jayla, Lileah, Randi, Rachel, Waylon, and Adrian Jr. • Happy Birthday **Beater (Jeremy Jr.)** on 12/17 from Mom, Dad, Nam, Papa, Juice, Lily, Deonna, Morgan, Chazzy, Chandler, and baby brother Justice. We love you! • Happy Birthday to our daughter-in-law **Raenelle Weyaus** on 12/17, love Dan and Joanne Boyd, and the Weyaus/Boyd Family. • Happy 51st Birthday **Lyle Woyak** on 12/19 from your family. • Happy Birthday **Beverly Kegg** on 12/20 with love from your kids: Kacie, Grant, Sean, Sheldon, Erica, Penny, Levi, Gerald Jr., and Jodi & Levin. We love you, Mom! • Happy Birthday **Gramma B** on 12/20 with lots of love from your

GrandBabies: Nikkia, Hayden, Cayleigh, Mercedes, Maria, Rico Harvey, and Baby Avery. • Happy 1st Birthday **Baishauna Morrison** on 12/22! Love the Boyds, Gramma Nae, Grampa Jeremy, and Uncle Damz. • Happy 41st Birthday **Grampa Jeremy Boyd** on 12/23, love Jasyn and Baishauna. • Happy Birthday **Nikkos** on 12/24 from Rachel and Waylon. • Happy 14th Birthday **Tourrie Thompson** on 12/29! We love you, from Dad and Mom! • Happy 38th Birthday **Chilah "Baybush" Brown** on 12/29 from your Mom, Son, Dezy, Xavi, Jayden, and Jordan in DII-A.

Submit Birthday Announcements

Send name, birthday and a brief message that is **20 WORDS OR LESS** to Andy McPartland at andy@redcircleagency.com or call 612-248-2051. The deadline for the January issue is December 20.

Dealing with Dementia

Donna Hormillosa RN Tiffany Bolk Photographer

December is often a month full of holiday celebrations and wrapping up the old year. But for many of us the challenges of the past year will carry over and even get more difficult in the coming year. For those who are providing care for an elder, one of those challenges may be the increasing symptoms of dementia.

According to Mayo Clinic, "dementia isn't a specific disease. Instead, dementia describes a group of symptoms affecting thinking and social abilities severely enough to interfere with daily functioning." Dementia is often progressive, meaning that it develops slowly over a number of years. We often think of dementia in terms of memory loss. However, it can also include difficulty with coordination or motor function, paranoia, personality changes, changes in social behavior, impaired judgment, and an inability to perform daily activities such as paying bills or driving.

The most commonly known form of dementia is Alzheimer's. This condition got its name from a German psychiatrist and neuropathologist who first described it in 1906. There are several other types of dementia and dementia symptoms can also be associated with conditions like traumatic brain injury or head trauma, HIV infection, vascular conditions like stroke or others.

The number of people with dementia is growing as the population ages and lives longer. According to 2010 census data, 1 out of 9 people over the age of 65 have some form of dementia

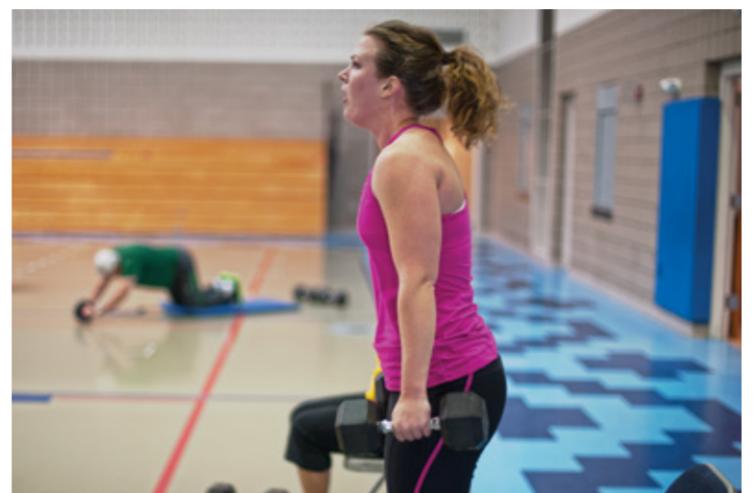
and 1 out of 3 people over the age of 85 have this condition. In the coming years, more and more people will find themselves impacted either by the condition itself or in the role of caregiver for an affected elder.

In the early stages, dementia has few visible symptoms. The biggest impact is to the change in family roles and responsibilities. Caregivers and elders may feel lonely and have difficulty expressing feelings. Elders often have difficulty accepting the changes in their mental and physical abilities. Caregivers may be resentful, overwhelmed or uncomfortable providing personal care.

It is important to get support early on in the development of dementia. An early evaluation could mean that a medical condition causing the symptoms is treated. Also it is very helpful for planning for the future. A good place to start is with your primary care medical provider.

Some tips for dealing with dementia include:

- Safety checks: keep medications, cleaning supplies, and dangerous items secured with childproof locks; remove area rugs to prevent tripping or falling; install grab bars in the bathroom; adjust water temperature.
- Paperwork: keep all important papers such as medical and financial records well organized.



As a caregiver, take time daily to care for yourself, like exercising.

- Legal advice: seek advice regarding the healthcare and financial decision-making process.
- Routine: maintain a simple daily routine with limited choices for clothing and foods. Provide finger foods frequently throughout the day and drinks with spill-proof cup.
- Support for the caregiver: as a caregiver, take the time daily to care for yourself — time with friends, meditation/prayer, exercise, support group, spiritual rituals or practices.

Further information is available from mayoclinic.org/patient-education or alzfdn.org.

DECEMBER CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7	8	9	10 District I Community Meeting and Holiday Party 4:30 p.m. Enter for prizes 5:15 p.m. Dinner Grand Casino Mille Lacs Event Center	11	12	13 Urban Area Holiday Party 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Minneapolis American Indian Center Birch Bark Ornament Workshop Noon–4 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum See page 5 Sons of Tradition 1 p.m.–3 p.m. D1 – Red Brick Building
14	15 District II Sobriety Feast 5 p.m. East Lake Community Center	16 District II-A Holiday Party 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center	17 Grocery Bingo 5 p.m.–6 p.m. Nay Ah Shing Upper School Call Rosella Eagle at 320-532-4695, ext. 2303 to reserve your space DII Holiday Party 4:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m. East Lake Community Center D-III/Aazhoomog Community Meeting and Holiday Party 5 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley Contact Monica Benjamin: 320-384-6240, ext. 224 Chiminising Bingo 6 p.m. Chiminising Community Center	18 District II-A Sobriety Feast 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center	19	20 Sons of Tradition 1 p.m.–3 p.m. D1 – Red Brick Building Elder Holiday Party 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Mille Lacs Convention Center
21	22	23	24 Government Center Closes at Noon	25 Government Center Closed	26 Government Center Closed	27 Sons of Tradition 1 p.m.–3 p.m. D1 – Red Brick Building
28	29	30	31	Want your event here? Email andy@redcircleagency.com or call 612-248-2051.		

Circle of Health Update

Health Insurance Enrollment Assistance

Circle of Health is here to help assist you and your family with education and enrollment in the Health Insurance Marketplace. If you don't have health insurance coverage, we can help you get covered on a plan. We help people enroll in MNsure or on the Healthcare.gov website.

Most people are eligible for Medicaid or a low cost health plan. Health insurance is a benefit on top of the care provided by Ne-la-Shing Clinic. Health insurance means more choices for our families and more resources for our tribal health facilities.

- Mary Kegg, Patient Benefits Coordinator
320-532-7740
- Jamie Rancour, Health Benefits Assister
320-532-4163, ext. 2583

Annual Circle of Health Enrollment forms

All Circle of Health enrollment forms must be updated on an annual basis. If you need a copy of the enrollment form, you can find it on the Mille Lacs Band website, under Circle of Health. Please return the enrollment forms with a copy of:

- A current Tribal ID or Certificate of Enrollment
- All current insurance cards (front and back)

A new Circle of Health card will be sent after your paperwork has been processed.

Legal Name Verification

If you have changed your legal name, please submit your birth certificate, marriage, divorce, or court order that provides us proof of a legal name change.

Temporary or Permanent Legal Guardianship

If you have temporary or permanent legal guardianship of children, please submit a copy of the document to Circle of Health. This allows Circle of Health to place the children on your account; process claims for the children; and reimburse covered expenses to the legal guardian.

HOLD Status

If you have not submitted your updated enrollment form, as of September 1, 2014, your account has been put on a HOLD status. This means that any reimbursements, claims, or premiums we pay on your behalf will not be paid until an updated and completed enrollment form is received. This also means we will not authorize any DME, eyeglasses, orthodontia or any other benefit Circle of Health pays on your behalf.

Medicare Reimbursement Notice

Social Security Benefit Letter 2015

Please submit your Social Security Benefit Letter for 2015 to

Circle of Health. Please be advised that this information is needed before any Medicare premiums can be reimbursed for the next year. You will receive your new Benefit Letter in the mail beginning November to January.

My Social Security account

If you do not receive a new letter for 2015, Circle of Health can help you access this information online. You will need to establish an online account with Social Security called "my Social Security". The link to this website is: ssa.gov/myaccount. Once an account is established, you have access to request a copy of your 2015 benefit letter.

American Indian Exemption for Affordable Care Act

Starting in 2014, every person needs to have health coverage or make a payment on their federal income tax return called the "shared responsibility payment". The American Indian Exemption means that you are exempt from the tax penalty if you have no health coverage for 2014 and each year after.

If you are a member of a tribe or eligible for Indian Health Service, you can apply for an exemption/waiver anytime this year. You can find the form on the band website under Circle of Health.

New Tribal Delta Dental Plan

Good news! The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has started a new dental plan for tribal members. Beginning October 1, 2014, we have been enrolling band members that do not have a dental plan into Delta Dental. Premiums for the Delta Dental plan are paid by Circle of Health each month. You can enroll, add/remove dependents, or opt out of the plan by filling out the Delta Dental membership enrollment form provided on band website under Circle of Health or at our office.

Medica — MCHA policy holders

Your plans will end December 31, 2014. You should be receiving notices in the mail. It is important that you contact Circle of Health to help you sign up health insurance.

If you have any questions, contact your claims processor at the Circle of Health.

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Summary of Expenditures and Financing Uses:	Approved Budget for FY 2015	Expenditures through 10/31/2014	% of Budget Expended
Administration (1)	13,788,402	696,538	5.1%
Workforce	20,349,437	411,067	2.0%
Judicial	1,203,503	53,811	4.5%
Department of Justice	5,139,850	333,325	6.5%
Education	15,147,500	962,857	6.4%
Health and Human Services	21,718,887	1,016,247	4.7%
Circle of Health Insurance	10,555,180	506,813	4.8%
Natural Resources	5,542,425	674,534	12.2%
Community Development	13,708,261	1,342,220	9.8%
Gaming Authority	5,324,748	324,067	6.1%
Bonus Distribution	5,178,088	2,629,900	50.8%
Economic Stimulus Distribution	3,100,000	0	0.0%
Total	120,756,281	8,951,379	7.4%

- (1) Administration includes chief executive, administration, finance, legislative, government affairs, and district operations.
- (2) The amounts above do not include casino operations. However, they do include government operations funded by casino distributions.
- (3) The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has its financial statements audited every year by an independent public accounting firm. Audit reports from previous years are available for review at the government center upon written request.
- (4) Economic Development appropriations have been excluded as of October 31, 1997. As of October 1, 1997, The Band has separated accounting functions for the Corporate Commission from the tribal government.

- Roberta Lemieux, Claims Processor, A-F
320-532-7724
- Deb Smith, Claims Processor, G-N
320-532-8903
- Bonnie John, Claims Processor, O-Z
320-532-8904

Please fax all completed enrollment forms to Circle of Health 320-532-4354 or email to Pamela Spears at: pamela.spears@hhs.millelacsband-nsn.gov.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Circle of Health at 1-800-491-6106.

Heating, Water, and Maintenance Problems?

During normal business hours: tenants in Band rentals and Elders living within the service area should call 800-709-6445, ext. 7433, for work orders. **After business hours:** tenants with maintenance emergencies should call 866-822-8538 and press 1, 2, or 3 for their respective district.

Free Hearing Evaluations

Evaluations take place on the second Friday of each month at Ne-la-Shing Clinic. Call 320-532-4163 to schedule an appointment. Walk-ins are welcome — we will do our best to serve you. Ask us about the \$1,000 in hearing aid benefits you can receive from the Circle of Health.

Hearmore Hearing has offices in Saint Paul and Osseo. To schedule an appointment Monday through Friday, call the Saint Paul office at 651-771-4019 or the Osseo office at 763-391-7433.

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