

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

THE
STORY
AS IT'S
TOLD

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“PLEASE CHANGE THE LAW”

BAND LEADING CHARGE FOR NEW LEGISLATION ON AUTOPSY OBJECTIONS

Winnie LaPrairie testifies before the House Public Safety Committee on March 26 in St. Paul

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

MELANIE
BENJAMIN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Aniin! Sometimes, there is so much happening that it is hard to keep up, and March has definitely been one of those months. We co-hosted two amazing conferences for Band members this month. The first was the Band-wide opiate conference that I discussed in my State of the Band Address. We had initially estimated that about 45 people might attend this conference, so we were delighted when we had to create capacity for more than 200 attendees! Miigwech to our HHS staff and the Mille Lacs Chapter of Women Empowering Women for Indian Nations (WEWIN) for their work in planning this important conference, and miigwech to the Band Assembly for their generous sponsorship of this critical conference.

We also hosted an important conference on the topic of Elder Abuse. Like child abuse, Elder abuse is a very hard thing

and Autumn Martineau, whose tragic deaths just a few days apart made clear that a change in the law is needed to ensure that the religious rights are protected. Our Government Affairs team has been working non-stop on this issue and we will keep you updated as this matter progresses.

This has also been a busy period for the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT). Many Band members have strong feelings about the enrollment criteria we are required to follow under the MCT Constitution. Enrollment is a deeply personal issue for most families, especially when some family members are enrolled and others cannot be.

The Constitution requires a referendum vote among tribal members in order to change enrollment, so we have been working on finalizing language that will be brought to the

this issue, which has taken up a tremendous amount of my time and which I spoke to Band members about at our Treaty Day celebration.

Over the past several weeks, we achieved passage of resolutions from the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) and the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MAST) opposing the position of the Attorney General. We fully expect to gain support from our national organizations opposing modern-day attempts on the part of any state to disestablish any Indian reservation in the United States.

The day before the MIAC resolution was to be voted on, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council staff began receiving phone calls from a few members of the public who said they would attend the meeting in Shakopee in opposition to this resolution. At the last minute, an effort to round up about a dozen Mille Lacs Band members to attend this meeting and out-number our opponents turned into a showing of more than 50 Band members! The meeting was uneventful and respectful, and the resolution passed without any opposition. I was so proud of our Mille Lacs Band members!

The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council states that:

- MIAC considers the Minnesota Attorney General's position regarding the purported disestablishment of the Mille Lacs Reservation as a direct threat to all Minnesota Indian Reservations.
- MIAC asserts that the State of Minnesota should be deferring to the United States Department of the Interior when delineating and mapping the Reservation boundaries of all federally recognized Minnesota Indian tribes.
- MIAC finds that the actions of Minnesota Attorney General's Office regarding the Mille Lacs Reservation threatens to impair relations between all the Indian tribes of Minnesota and the State of Minnesota.

I just want to say Miigwech to every Band member who took the time to attend this meeting, to support our right to exist as a Reservation. I know it was not a very exciting meeting, but that is because YOU were there.

Finally, on March 20 we celebrated Treaty Day, commemorating our 1998 Supreme Court victory affirming our 1837 Treaty Rights. A few weeks ago, when I was in Washington D.C. meeting with our congressional delegation about the existence of our reservation, we realized that it was 160 years ago that our Mille Lacs leaders were also in Washington D.C. signing the Treaty of 1855. For me, this realization made these meetings 160 years later feel profoundly moving, and very humbling. There are many, many Band members who work hard every day in quiet ways to improve our community, protect our rights and safeguard our future. It is my greatest privilege to represent the Mille Lacs Band and I am so proud of all our Band members. Miigwech to all of you!



Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin and her staff have started taking an Ojibwe language class twice a week. Staff is pictured during a class with their instructor, John Benjamin.

to talk about. It requires bravery and honesty for a community to confront something as painful as the hard truth that some of our Elders are being mistreated during a time in their lives when they should be taken care of. There are different forms of Elder abuse. It can be physical, sexual, emotional, financial or spiritual. It is imperative that as Band members, we all learn to watch for the signs of Elder abuse and know how to report it if we believe our Elders are being mistreated.

The Band has also been very busy with the Minnesota State Legislature in session. We have taken the leadership role in a coalition to get legislation passed creating a right for family members to have their voices heard if they have an objection to autopsy based on a spiritual or religious belief. This legislation has become known among many in the State Capitol as the "Aubid/Martineau" bill, in honor of Mushkooub Aubid

voters in a Special Election of the MCT, possibly during 2015. Our Constitution requires that the U.S. Secretary of the Interior approve that referendum vote. Currently, only MCT blood can be counted in establishing whether a person can be enrolled in the MCT. MCT Members will be asked to vote on whether all Anishinabe/Ojibway/Chippewa blood should be counted (non-MCT Bands) toward enrollment, and whether verified Canadian First Nation Anishinabe blood should be counted.

I have also been very busy on another critical matter. Recently, in a letter to the BIA, the Minnesota Attorney General took the position that the Mille Lacs Reservation no longer exists, and was disestablished by the Nelson Act of 1889. In this letter, Solicitor General Gilbert indicated the State's position that the only Chippewa reservations that legally exist today are White Earth and Red Lake. The Band is fighting

Band Leading Charge for New Legislation on Autopsy Objections

Andy McPartland Staff Writer/Photographer

Shortly after Winnie LaPrairie started her testimony, the committee of state lawmakers fell silent.

Seated in front of the Minnesota House Public Safety Committee in St Paul, Winnie described the heart-breaking days following her husband's death on February 7. Mushkooub Aubid, a Rice Lake Mille Lacs Band Elder, was killed as a result of a single-vehicle car crash and underlying heart condition.

Winnie and her family expected to be able to take Mushkooub's body home to East Lake on Sunday morning for preparations for his spiritual journey in Midewiwin way. Instead, at the direction of the medical examiner, police were called to forcibly remove and transport Mushkooub's body to the morgue at the UMD campus for an immediate autopsy — against the family's wishes.

Winnie and her family mourned outside the morgue's loading ramp in 15-degree weather from Sunday morning until the body was released at 9 am Monday morning.

Only after Mille Lacs Band lawyers negotiated with county attorneys did authorities finally release Mushkooub's body. Tadd Johnson, an attorney and professor at UMD, worked on the Band's behalf.

In a bizarre coincidence, only 24 hours after Mushkooub's body was released, the same medical examiner refused to abide by a second court order for release of the body of a Fond du Lac woman whose Midewiwin family was also opposed to autopsy.

When asked by Band officials if she would consider testifying before the House committee to share her story and help get legislation passed, Winnie didn't hesitate — even for a second.

"When Tadd told me that he had a court order, signed by a judge, ordering the immediate release of my husband's body, but I still could not take him home, I was heartbroken," Winnie testified.

Winnie explained that she couldn't understand how the medical examiner could ignore a court order — and still doesn't understand.

"It took 10 more hours and negotiations with two county attorneys before we could take my husband home," Winnie said.

"I know people here are sorry for my family. I listened to the other hearings," she continued. "But the fact is there is still a medical examiner operating in four counties in northern Minnesota who believes court orders do not apply to him. There are still county attorneys and sheriffs who think he might be right."

"People's religious rights might be protected here in the Twin Cities," she said. "But what about the rights of my family in northern Minnesota?"

"Who is protecting us and looking out for us?" Winnie asked. "Because that night, nobody with power was."

The Mille Lacs Band is leading the charge to change that.

There is legislation moving through the state Legislature that would allow for religious objections to autopsies, which

"I ask that you pass this legislation because Native people and communities of color need to know our rights are just as important as yours."

— Winnie LaPrairie



Winnie LaPrairie meets with House members after her testimony.

state law does not currently authorize.

In Mushkooub's case, a judge familiar with Ojibwe people granted a court order to release the body. The medical examiner claimed that court orders did not apply to him.

In hearings in the past few weeks, the Band's Government Affairs team has been working full-time to get this legislation passed.

The lobby team is led by Director of Government Affairs and Mille Lacs Band member Jamie Edwards, former MLBO Corporate Commissioner and state legislator Gail Kulick, longtime Band lobbyist Rich Ginsberg, and former state legislator Chris DeLaForest. Gail took the lead on drafting legislation in connection with Senator Tony Lourey (D-Kerrick) and Rep. Steve Green (R-Fosston).

Band lobbyists are confident that state law will be changed so that families with a religious objection to an autopsy can get their day in court. After the bill becomes law, the medical examiners will be obligated to recognize court orders releasing the bodies of loved ones to families under certain conditions.

If a family objects to an autopsy on the basis of sincerely held religious beliefs, the state can respond as to whether it believes there is a "compelling state interest" in conducting the autopsy. The list of instances when an autopsy may be required includes deaths related to: suspicion of a crime, a public health concern (such as infectious disease), electrocution, unexplained drowning, unexpected death of a child, and several other specific causes of death.

You can go to the Band's website to read the bill in full: <http://bit.ly/1BJURwe>

"We're sending a message to the medical examiner community that they can't push people around and they have to respect people's beliefs," Tadd said after Winnie's powerful testimony.

"It didn't take the legislators very long to figure out that this

was an outrageous situation," he said.

In a previous hearing, when Hennepin County Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Andrew Baker was asked if he would ever ignore a court order, he replied, "I can't emphasize enough that what happened up north is appalling."

"I'm embarrassed for my profession because it never should have happened," he continued. "It just shouldn't."

The push for new legislation is gaining steam.

The legislation has received bipartisan support, including backing from the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition and Governor Mark Dayton.

The legislation is heading to the House and Senate floors for votes very soon. It was unanimously approved by the committee following Winnie's testimony on March 26.

"I was told that those who were thinking about speaking against this legislation didn't dare after Winnie's testimony," Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin said. "That could not have been an easy thing to do. I'm very proud of her."

"This is a First Amendment right in the U.S. Constitution: free exercise of religion," Tadd explained. "It's a good thing to fight for, but in this instance, it's so much more. This is a family who went through hell when they were most vulnerable. It was just wrong."

"This family has demonstrated a tremendous amount of courage in standing up for what they believe," Tadd said. "Winnie has been incredibly brave."

Winnie's testimony helped humanize the Band's cause. One lawmaker said it reminded them that laws are about people.

"I ask that you pass this legislation," Winnie testified. "Because Native people and communities of color need to know our rights are just as important as yours."

"Please change the law now. Everything that my family went through could happen tomorrow to someone else. Please don't let that happen," she pleaded.

"Please prove to us that we are not second class citizens," Winnie told lawmakers.

"Please change the law."

Opiate Abuse Awareness Takes Spotlight

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer **Chad Germann** Photographer

Last month a conference was held in District I to address one of the most pressing issues in the community – opiate abuse

More than 200 people attended the “Fighting for Our Future: Preventing and Stopping Opiate Abuse” conference that was held at Grand Casino Mille Lacs Convention Center on March 13-14. It was sponsored and organized by the Chief Executive’s Office, Health and Human Services and with help from the Band’s chapter of Women Empowering Women for Indian Nations (WEWIN).

“Babies born addicted to opiates is the biggest threat to our future,” Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin said during her opening remarks. “Mille Lacs is one of the hardest hit tribes in the state.”

Opiates are a group of drugs that are used for fighting pain and can be both prescription painkillers and illegal drugs such as heroin. Based on recent health statistics across the state, 28 percent of babies born to Native Americans have neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) based on the drug use of the parent.

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.

“If our children are to survive and thrive,” said Melanie, “we must follow the adage that it does indeed take a village and, in our case, a Band, to raise our children.”

While the long-term effects of opiate addiction on babies are still being studied, the short term effects are widely known – and heartbreaking. The National Institutes of Health cite symptoms such as fever, irritability, seizures, sweating, trembling, vomiting, diarrhea, hyperactive reflexes, poor feeding, rapid breathing, sleep problems, slow weight gain, and high-pitched or excessive crying.

Drug use also increases the likelihood of birth defects,

premature birth, low birth weight, small head circumference, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and problems with development and behavior.

According to the Band’s Behavioral Health Department, the statistics surrounding opiate use are troubling.

- Native Americans ages 12 and older are reported as having the highest drug-use rates of any ethnicity
- There’s been a 984% increase in opioid and heroin abuse among all groups from 1998-2011
- Since 2011, there’s been a 3,695% increase of opiate and heroin use among American Indians
- There were 38,329 drug overdose deaths in 2010 and of those, 16,000 deaths were due to opiates.

Dale Barry, a local physician who is an expert in opiate abuse, talked about why opiates are easy to become addicted to, what leads to addiction and what can help end it.

Cecilia Fire Thunder, the keynote speaker for the conference, told the attendees that it was important to follow the cultural teachings that were practiced by generations of Native people, that by following those cultural ways the community could find healing.

“Who we are and how we feel about ourselves is integral,” said Cecilia, a nurse and community health planner who was the first woman elected as the tribal leader of the Oglala Sioux.

Cecilia spoke of making mistakes and finding the power from within to get past them and move forward. She talked about making the decision to forgive someone and assured the



attendees that “only you can let it go. But, you never have to forgive anyone for hurting you because you are the only one who knows the pain.” She reminded attendees “our daughters are watching and learning from us.”

“A measurement of how well we are doing as an Indian Nation is how well we are taking care of our children,” Cecilia said.

Cecilia implored those in attendance to “do something to create a better community for the children, to pray harder for your tribal citizens, to celebrate being alive today and to die in peace, with no regrets.”

Other topics at the conference included healthy living, Mothers of Tradition, discussions with health care professionals, Elders and more.

Brett Larson contributed to this article.

Low Walleye Numbers Mean Smaller Tribal Harvest

Brett Larson Staff Writer

Ongoing concerns about the Mille Lacs walleye population mean this year’s tribal harvest will be limited to less than 12,000 pounds, down from 17,100 pounds last year.

The Minnesota DNR’s fall gillnet surveys — which are used to estimate the walleye population — showed improvement last year, but not enough to increase the allocation of walleyes for the state or the tribes. In fact, this year’s total harvest limit is down to 40,000 pounds from last year’s total of 60,000 pounds. Of the 40,000 pounds of walleye that can be harvested, state anglers will be allotted 28,600 pounds and tribal members 11,400.

Although final regulations have not been set, the bag limit for state anglers will probably remain at two. If anglers reach their quota, the DNR has said, anglers may be limited to catch-and-release fishing for walleyes.

Scientists believe that a number of factors may be contributing to the decline, including invasive species and climate change. They agree that tribal gillnetting is not a cause, because the problem is the survival of young fry into adulthood.

The DNR commissioned a “blue ribbon panel” of independent fisheries scientists from around the U.S. and Canada. They analyzed all the existing data and agreed with the Minnesota DNR that plenty of young walleyes are being born, but they are not making it through the first two years. Causes may include predation by northern pike and cormorants, and “cannibalism” by other walleyes, possibly due to improved water clarity or a shortage of tullibee.

One of the panel members, Paul Venturelli of the University

of Minnesota, said, “Our independent review of DNR management of Mille Lacs reached similar conclusions as the agency. Mainly, more walleye are not surviving their first three years of life. It is unlikely that recreational or sustenance harvest is a root cause of this problem.”

Resorters, guides, and anglers around Mille Lacs continue to point fingers at gillnetting as the sole or primary cause of the decline, ignoring the fact that walleyes have gone through “boom and bust” cycles forever — long before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Bands could fish under their own regulations by traditional methods like spearing and netting. They also ignore other possible causes, like invasive species and climate change.

Their eagerness to blame netting seems to stem from a desire to end the tribal harvest rather than a sincere desire to help the lake.

At the February meeting of the Mille Lacs Fishery Input Group, members voted almost unanimously in favor of a petition brought by anti-netting activist Joe Fellegly.

Fellegly asked the DNR to tabulate the results and then asked DNR fisheries chief Don Pereira to read them aloud. When Don declined, Rocky Reef resort owner John Odle said, “It would sound better coming out of your mouth, Don.” Pereira declined again, so Fellegly read the results himself, and said, “This is the official vote of the lake input group.”

The discussion spun out of control when Odle was quoted in the Star Tribune saying, “This is devastating. It’s going to affect the whole economy. There are businesses being lost every

year on this lake. Our livelihoods are in your hands.” Odle has been operating a successful resort on the lake for more than 15 years and has made many similar comments in the years since.

According to those in attendance, members also sarcastically questioned whether Bands are living up to their claim to be “stewards of the resource.”

Some members of the group proposed a “walleye replacement program” — basically “buying out” the Bands’ allocations by providing them with frozen walleye from other lakes.

Another member suggested a boycott of Grand Casinos.

Some members of the group — including owners of Twin Pines and Red Door resorts — took the DNR to court last year, claiming that the state agency was not doing its job under the Minnesota “right to hunt and fish” amendment. The state District Court and Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the DNR and against the resorters. Some of the most successful resorters on the lake, like Odle, have been among the most vocal in complaining that the tribal harvest is hurting business.

Decline of old-style “mom and pop” resorts is not unique to Mille Lacs, nor are slot limits or “boom and bust” walleye cycles. Traditional resorts around the state have gone out of business as the demands of tourists have changed.

Other groups in the area, like the Mille Lacs Area Tourism Council, are trying to deal with those changes by promoting a variety of activities in the region, like gaming, cultural tourism, wildlife watching, and fishing for smallmouth bass, muskies, and northernns.

Celebrating Treaty Day 2015

1837 Treaty Rights Honored at Annual Event

Andy McPartland Staff Writer **Kate Sutter** Photographer

The annual Treaty Rights Celebration was held on March 20 at Grand Casino Mille Lacs, hosted by the Band's Department of Natural Resources.

The Band holiday marks the day in 1999 that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Band members retained rights to hunt, fish and gather in areas ceded to the U.S. in the Treaty of 1837.

Drawing 500 attendees, the event featured informational booths, arts and crafts projects, door prizes, and games for kids and adults.

Vendors set up informational booths for attendees to learn about a wide variety of topics, from animal pelts to rock formations. Children were particularly thrilled to climb aboard a snow-

mobile used by the police department.

Visitors were excited to see the prize packages, including two trips: a ricing package that included rice knockers and a canoe, and a spring harvest package, which included nets, buoys and a canoe.

The yearly celebration aims to educate Band members and the greater community about the 1837 treaty rights.

Miigwech to everyone who helped put this wonderful event together!



Sugar Bush Season: One Sweet Tradition

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer **Mary Sam, Melissa Boyd, and Suzanne Wise** Photographers

As winter loses its grip and the air becomes warmer, it means spring is on the way. It is also a sign that the sap from the maple tree is ready to flow and its trunk is ready to be tapped.

For Mille Lacs Band members this tradition, known as sugar-bushing, goes back to the beginning of time and is still widely practiced year after year.

This year's winter brought less snow and less cold, and signs of spring came early. Sugar bush season was a bit more unpredictable than usual, and families who were sugar-bushing needed to pay even closer attention to the weather.

Sugar-bushing usually begins in February or March, but it depends on the temperatures, said Mary Sam, who taps trees every year with her husband Dave near their home in Onamia.

"The temperatures need to go below freezing at night and then to no more than 50 degrees during the day," said Mary. "If we don't get more snow, this will affect how the sap runs."

"More snow equals more sap," she said in early February.

Five weeks later and with not much more snow accumulated on the ground, Mary and Dave hung their buckets to start collecting the maple sap.

Dave said the sap wasn't running as strong as it had in previous years. The couple, along with their children and other

relatives, began boiling the sap soon after it was collected in their plastic buckets so it wouldn't sour.

"This is one of my favorite times of the year...working hard, laughing with family and passing on our traditions to our children and grandchildren," Dave added.

Near the Iskigamizigo Powwow Grounds another couple, Melissa Boyd and Brad Harrington and their children, put their buckets out in mid-March to begin collecting sap for their family.

They use taps crafted from a sumac plant rather than the metal taps many people use, Melissa said.

For weeks Melissa's children and Brad's children went out at least twice daily to check the taps to see how the sap was accumulating. They too noticed, as others had, that it was flowing slowly.

"We're trying to see what we can get, but it's not moving too fast," Melissa said. "It's up to the trees and the weather."

Nonetheless they will continue with their efforts because it's rewarding, Melissa said.

It's rewarding not just because they will have sugar and syrup all year long from their efforts, but because they are teaching their kids about the tradition and spending time together

as a family.

"It's so lovely to show them our ways," she said. "We're excited they get to practice something we've done as a people and it's exciting to see how eager they are to help."

Like the Sam family, Melissa and Brad believe in the values of maintaining traditional practices and teaching their children about them.

While some children are taught at home how to sugar bush, others learn about it at the Band-operated schools, Nay Ah Shing and Wewinabi, said Education Commissioner Suzanne Wise.

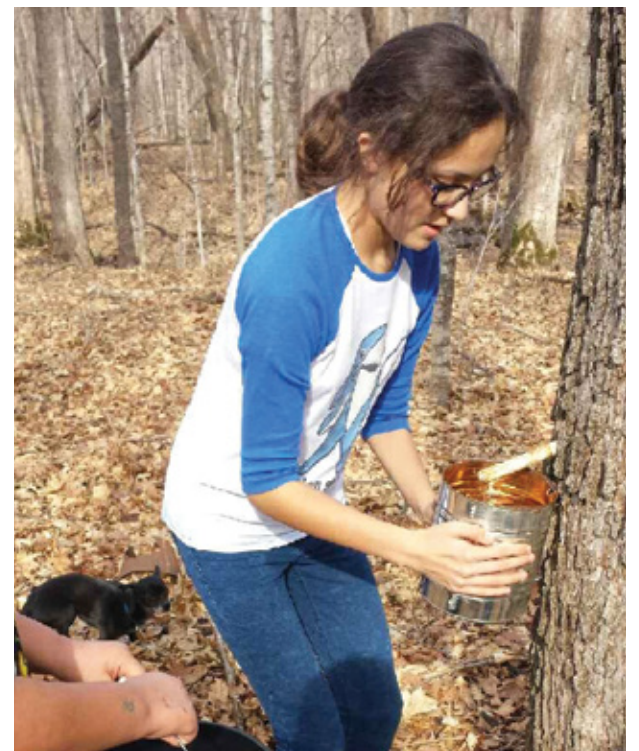
"It's really important for our kids to know who they are and what our culture is," said Suzanne. "It's important to their well-being."

"It is a priority for our tribal schools to make sure we are teaching our culture and language," she said. "We do that through the sugar bush in spring, ricing in the fall, collecting birch bark and sage in the summer, listening to storytelling in the winter and learning our Ojibwa language everyday."

"Learning to sugar-bush is just one of the important lessons we can teach our students."



Charlie Houle boiling sap.



Chuckie Weckert



Straight Talk with Joe Nayquonabe

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

Mille Lacs Band Elder Joe Nayquonabe understands addiction. He worked as a chemical dependency counselor for decades.

He also understands it from a personal perspective: He was a drinker and a three-pack-a-day smoker before he quit both cold turkey back in 1980.

Joe's impetus for quitting all those years ago was simple: He was getting a checkup with Dr. Bracken in Onamia, and Bracken used the word "diabetes." Joe's mind started spinning at that point, and he didn't hear the rest of what Dr. Bracken had to say. At the end of the doctor's speech, Joe said, "So when do I have to start the needles?"

Bracken was confused. He hadn't said anything about insulin shots. "That's up to you," Bracken said. "Do you smoke?" Joe said he did. "Do you drink?" Joe said he did. "Well, if you quit doing that, maybe you won't need any shots."

Eventually Joe, like many Native Americans, did develop diabetes, but he figures he got about 15 extra healthy years by quitting booze and cigarettes.

"Many of the guys I drank with are dead," he says. "If I would've kept drinking, I probably wouldn't have made it this far."

He points to statistics showing that over the course of 20 years, 70 percent of Indian deaths in Minnesota were due to alcohol and drug abuse. "If that were happening in society as a whole, it would be a state of emergency," he says.

'They know'

Joe doesn't think there's a lot of mystery to Band members' problems with addiction — most recently in the news because of the large number of opiate-addicted babies born to Mille Lacs Band members.

Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin made it a major part of her State of the Band address, calling it "the single greatest threat to the future of the Mille Lacs Band."

"People know the consequences of their actions," Joe says. "They know that our children are gifts from the creator — not gifts to you and me but to the community." He cites the adage "It takes a village" and says, "We were doing this way before Hillary. That's what communities do. They look out for the well being of each other."

One thing the Band doesn't need, he says, is another study. "I think we've been overstudied," he says with a grin. "We say our roads are bad, so they come and do a study and say 'You're right. The roads are bad.'"

People know, but they can't always find what it takes to quit. From Joe's point of view as a counselor, there's one thing that separates those who quit from those who don't: honesty.

Joe points to the fourth step in the Alcoholics Anonymous 12-step program: "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."

Those who fail to achieve sobriety are often those who fail to be honest. And what holds true with individuals also holds true at the community level, Joe says.

"We've all got character defects, but we need to face them. Our community needs to do that too." He says there's too much finger-pointing, blaming, gossip and jealousy on the reservation in general, and especially among addicts.

Joe believes that "historical trauma" — due to the centuries of abuse Indian people have suffered — plays a role in addiction and in the Mille Lacs Band's problems, but he also believes it can be used as a crutch. He's worked with people in treatment who blame their substance abuse problems on "the white man." Joe says, "I don't see the white man holding a gun to their heads."

Drinking and drug abuse are symptoms of something else — and what that is can only be found through honesty. "What comes with that honesty is a lot of pain," Joe says. Sometimes that pain is what stops people in recovery. "Some of these



Joe with his wife Rita, who has been a nurse for the Mille Lacs Band for many years.

guys, I would get close to what's going on, get within a hair, and all of a sudden they'd drop the wall on me, and I'd have to call it a day. Once I hit that wall, I knew I wasn't gonna get in there, not with a jackhammer or an atomic bomb."

Joe says some of his best sessions were when he said nothing. Once he listened for a long time as a group of men complained about bail bondsmen showing up on the day per capita checks came out. Finally Joe cut in: "I've been listening to you for two hours, and you make some good points, but how about if you all behave? Then they wouldn't have to come over here."

Joe says people need to stop asking for more and start looking for ways to help others. "It's the old John Kennedy thing: 'Ask not what your country can do for you.' I tell people in the community, instead of saying 'Can I get a hotel room?' or 'Can I get a food voucher?' we should be saying 'How can I help?'"

Joe heard about a girl who was having trouble getting to school on time, so he offered to pick her up every day. When he was asked why he did it, he said, "Because I'm an Indian man. It's my duty."

Joe also sees a need for compassion for those struggling with addiction, as well as their victims. "It's not just the babies, but the person who's taking it is also being affected, and the people in the community. They're having their houses broken into. They feel violated, vulnerable. There's other things that come along with that heroin."

He remembers a few years ago when some young men working with youth got in trouble for coming to an event drunk. Joe was at a meeting to determine what should be done about it. He said the feelings were very negative toward the men. "When they came to me, I said, 'They're wounded. What do we do with our wounded? Do we shoot them, or do we help them? They just displayed their wounds. We should treat them and give them a second chance. If I didn't get a second chance I wouldn't be here.'"

They didn't listen to Joe. The violators were fired.

Restoring sanity

Another thrust of the State of the Band address was "cultural sovereignty," a term symbolizing the importance of the culture to the health of the community and individual

Band members.

Joe agrees that culture and spirituality are also keys to stopping addiction. "I'm a big believer in mind/body/spirit," he says. To be healthy, you need to give attention to all three — but "spirituality" doesn't have to be a typical understanding of "God."

Band members sometimes give lip service to the importance of culture and language, but they don't follow through, Joe says. "If I left here back in the 1970s and I walked into that ceremonial building, I could tell you where people would be sitting today. And I don't think there would be any new people there."

He tells the story about another survey done with Band members, who said they wanted parenting classes. This was when Joe and Rita still had young children. They went to the class that was held in response to the survey, and they were the only ones there.

Joe sees the importance of spirituality in the second step in AA: "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

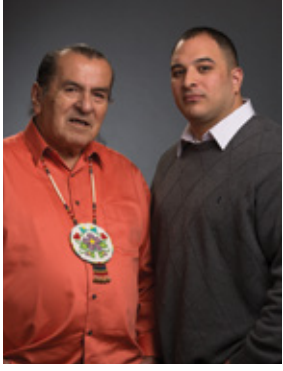
"Right now our reservation is insane," Joe says. "Look what we're doing to our children. Look at what we're doing to our families. We're killing each other. In order to restore us to sanity, we need to get back to the culture — drums, Midewin. So many people here are unaware of the culture, and when you get them in treatment they say 'I have a problem with God in (the second step).' I tell them to put 'creator' in there, or 'manidoo,' or just cross that part out."

Some are resistant to attend ceremonies because they don't know the Ojibwe language, but Joe says that should not deter them. Even Joe, who didn't speak English until he started school, doesn't consider himself fluent in Ojibwemowin.

"I do see them wanting it, but there's some guilt or shame there. Sometimes they'd open up to me, 'Joe I don't go there because I don't know the language.' I tell them 'You need to go there, and things will start happening.'"

Take it from Joe. He's seen changes in others, and he's seen them in himself.

Joe says he'd be happy to talk about these issues, or what he said in the article, with anyone who is interested.



Daga Apiitenimaadaa Ingiw Abinoojiyensag Let's Have Respect For Our Babies

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

Mii dash waa-ni-dazhindamaan ingiw ikwewag megwaa gigishkawaawaad oniijaanisensiwaan ani-aabajitoowaad wenda-inigaa'igod miinawaa wenda-noomange-apaginigod a'aw Anishinaabe. Nebowa igo omaa ayaawag ezhichigejig aaniindi-go endanakiid a'aw Anishinaabe.

I want to talk about our women who during the course of their pregnancy are using drugs. There are a lot of women who are using drugs in our Anishinaabe communities while they are pregnant.

Ishke geget mashkawaamagad noongom aabajitood Anishinaabe gaawanaajikaagod. Awegonen igo a'aw ikwe eni-aabajitood, mii imaa ani-izhaamagadinig inow oniijaanisensan gegishkawaajin. Mii i'iw wemiskwiimid a'aw ikwe, mii imaa ezhijiwaninig biinjina inow abinoojiyensan gegishkawaajin. Wawaaj igo zagaswaad a'aw ikwe, mii gaye imaa ge-onjikaamagadinig ani-maazhi-doodawaad inow oniijaanisensan bemiwinaajin imaa biinjina.

A lot of the drugs that are being used nowadays are strong. Whatever drug a pregnant woman uses while pregnant goes straight into the bloodline of her child. The blood flow of the woman who is pregnant also flows into the child she is carrying. This is also the case when a woman smokes: the toxins from her smoking also have an adverse effect on the child she is carrying.

Ishke dash ezhinaniizaaanichigeda'aw ikwe ani-aabajitood i'iw meshkawaamagadinig, mii imaa omiskwiiming ayaamagadinig, aazhita dash ani-biindigejiwaninig imaa oniijaanisensan bemiwinaajin. Ishke dash a'aw ikwe a'aw weweni eni-bimiwidood i'iw bimaadizid, mii iwapii weweni ani-giizhiginid oniijaanisensan bemiwinaajin. Mii dash wiin a'aw ikwe ani-aabajitood mayaanaadadinig, mii imaa wenjikaamagadinig inow oniijaanisensan weweni ani-giizhigisinig. Maagizhaa gaye gaawiin bimaadizisiwan inow abinoojiyensan azhigwa ani-ayaawaad.

What is dangerous about a pregnant woman using drugs is that the toxins of those drugs flow through her blood and then into the blood of the child she is carrying. For the pregnant woman who lives a healthy lifestyle, it is during that time that the child in her womb fully develops. However when a woman is using drugs it harms the child and prevents it from fully developing. Sometimes the baby is a stillborn at the time of birth.

Gishpin ani-dagoshimoonod omaa akiing a'aw abinoojiyens, booch igo gegoo ominezin, aaniish naa gaawiin weweni gii-kiizhigisiin, mii i'iw gaa-maazhi-doodaagod inow omaamaayan gaa-aabajitoonijin. Apegish dash ingiw ikwewag noongom eni-maazhi-doodawaajig inow oniijaanisensiwaan i'iw akeyaa waabamaawaad inow abinoojiinyan noongom eni-gagwaadigiziniin onji inow omaamaayiwaan gii-aabajitoonid mayaanaadak megwaa gii-kigishkawaawaad.

If a child does survive that kind of pregnancy he or she is born lacking that which a healthy baby has. It is a result of all the drugs the mother put into the baby's system that have prevented the child from fully developing. I only wish these women would see the harm they have caused their child by seeing the difficulties that other children go through as a result of their mother's drug use during pregnancy.

Aanind ingiw abinoojiinyag gagwaadigiziwag wii-kikendamowaad i'iw akeyaa ezhi-kikinoo'amawindwaa wenjida gaye azhigwa ani-maajii-kikinoo'amaagoziwaad. Ishke dash gaye ani-dibaabiishkoojigaadenig ogikendaasowiniwaa chi-ishkweyaang ayaamagadini apii dash waaj'agimaawaajin. Mii igo apane ge-ni-inaadiziwaad oniigaaniimiwaang. Gaawiin gwayak da-izhi-naanaagadawendanziiwag.

Some of these children have serious learning/behavioral disabilities and this becomes evident when they start going to school. When these children are tested on their abilities the results are much lower than others of the same age. These children will always have these difficulties throughout their lives. Their minds will not be fully functional.

Ishke geget chi-maazhichige a'aw ikwe apiitenimaasig inow oniijaanisensan gegishkawaajin, mii eta-go omaa biminizha'ang wii-mamood da-wanendang gakina gegoo, gaawiin oganawaabandanzin ezhi-maazhi-doodawaad inow oniijaanisensan. Mii igo gaye dibishkoo ingiw ininiwag ge-wiinawaa ani-maazhichigewaad ani-wiipemaawaad inow ikwewan, booch igo ogikenimaawaadogenan ani-aabajitoonid mayaanaadak inow ikwewan waapemaawaajin. Mii igo gaye ingiw ininiwag eni-maamiinaajig inow ikwewan i'iw neshwanaaji'igod a'aw bemaadizid, mii igo gaye izhi-miinaawaad inow gegishkawaawasonijin. Gaawiin eta-go ikwe maazhichigesiin, mii igo gaye ingiw ininiwag maazhichigewaad.

If the woman does not have any respect for the child that she is carrying and her focus is on only getting high to numb herself to reality, she does not realize the harm she is causing her child. This also pertains to men who sleep with these women fully realizing that they are using drugs. It is also these men who are supplying drugs to the women who are pregnant. It is not only the

women who are doing wrong, it is also the fault of men.

Mii dash omaa wii-ni-dazhindamaan a'aw Anishinaabe i'iw akeyaa gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amaagoowizid wenjida dazhinjigaazowaad ingiw abinoojiyensag. Ishke gii-abinoojiyiwiyaan gii-ayaangwaamizi a'aw Anishinaabe gii-kikinoo'amawaad oniijaanisans da-ni-apiitendaminid gakina gegoo omaa eyaamagak omaa akiing. Ogiimanidookaadaan gakina eyaamagak omaa akiing wenjida owiiji-bimaadiziiman. Mii i'iw wenitooyang noongom, gaawiin a'aw Anishinaabe noongom aapiji ayaasiin geyaabi ani-gikinoo'amawaad inow abinoojiinyan netaawigi'aajin da-ni-manaajitoowaad gakina ayaamagak omaa akiing biinish gaye owiiji-bimaadizimiwaan.

It is at this time that I want to talk about what the Anishinaabe has been taught especially when it comes to babies. When I was a child, the Anishinaabe worked hard at teaching their offspring to respect everything on this earth. The Anishinaabe considered everything sacred on this earth especially his fellow Anishinaabe. This is what is missing today, there are not many Anishinaabe today who teaches his or her offspring to have respect for everything here on earth and especially have respect for our fellow human beings.

Ishke dash mii i'iw noongom ingiw ikwewag ekawaabamaajig inow oniijaanisensiwaan, gaawiin igo odapiitenimaasiwaawaan oniijaanisensiwaan bemiwinaawaajin biinjina. Nashke mii omaa nisidawinaagwak ezhi-maazhised a'aw Anishinaabe ani-bimiwidooisig akeyaa gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amaagoowiziyang. Ishke gaawiin onjida gii-miinigoowizisiimin i'iw akeyaa gaa-izhi-gagiikimigooyang da-bimiwidooyang bimaadiziyang. Waasa ishkweyaang onjikaamagadoon iniw gii-wiindamaagoowizid a'aw Anishinaabe i'iw gwayak da-izhi-bimiwidood bimaadizid.

See what is happening nowadays, a lot of our pregnant women have very little respect for the child that they are carrying. This is where it is obvious the harm that is coming to us as Anishinaabe when we do not continue to carry on our teachings. We were given these teachings for a reason to practice during our lifetime. These teachings come from way back and guided us on how to live a good life.

Ishke gaye ezhiwebak noongom gii-noondaamin eshkam nebowa ayaawag eni-maazhi-doodawaajig owiiji-anishinaabemiwaan. Maagizhaa gaye obaashkizwaawaan nisaawaad biindigewaad gaye imaa owiiji-anishinaabemiwaan endaanid gimoodimaawaad eyaaminid. Mii igo omaa eshkam nisidawinaagwak gaawiin a'aw Anishinaabe ogikinoo'amawaasiin oniijaanisans geyaabi i'iw akeyaa ishkweyaang gaa-izhichigeng.

See what is happening today, we hear often of Anishinaabe doing harm to their fellow Anishinaabe. Sometime they are shooting them and killing them, or breaking into the homes of other Anishinaabe and stealing their belongings. This is where it is obvious that Anishinaabe is no longer teaching their children those teachings about respect like they did in the past.

Geget ingiw Manidoog ozhawenimaawaan inow Anishinaabe-abinoojiinyan. Nebowa ogii-atoonaawaa i'iw akeyaa izhi-naadamaagoowizid a'aw abinoojiyens. Azhigwa gaa-niiwo-giizhigak owapii gaa-ondaadizid a'aw abinoojiyens, mii ingiw Manidoog gii-miinigonaaanig ge-izhichigeng gaabige a'aw asemaa da-inikaad enabiwaad ingiw Manidoog gaabige inow asemaan atamawind a'aw abinoojiyens gaa-pi-oshki-dagoshimoonod. Mii gaye imaa anamikawind a'aw abinoojiyens gaa-pi-dagoshimoonod, mii gaye apii, "Oshki-daangishkang o'ow aki".

The Manidoog have a lot of passion for our Anishinaabe children. They gave us a lot of ceremonies geared toward children and to help them in their lives. Four days after the child's birth the Manidoog gave us a ceremony where the tobacco for the newly arrived baby goes out immediately to where those Manidoog sit. This is the ceremony where the baby is welcomed to this earth, and it is also the time that the child's little feet first touch the earth.

Mii gaye gaabige ani-wiyawen'enyikawind a'aw abinoojiyens. Ishke dash ani-izhichigenid inow ogitiziiman asemaan omiinaawaan waa-wiindaawasonijin. Ishke dash a'aw asemaan maanind booch igo inow Manidoon omiinigoon i'iw bawaajigan maagizhaa gaye gegoo owaabandaan, mii imaa dash wendinang odizhinikaazowin da-miinigoowizid a'aw abinoojiyens.

At that time or shortly after, the child is given namesakes. The parents at that time give out tobacco ahead of time to the person who is going to give the child a name. The person who is given the tobacco is given a dream or shown something by the Manidoo, it is from there the Anishinaabe name comes that is given to the baby.

Nebowa ayaamagadoon i'iw akeyaa ge-izhi-asemaaked Anishinaabe da-ondinigenid inow oniijaanisans da-ni-naadamaagoowizid. Ishke gaye ayaapii gii-noondaamin ayaawaad ingiw Manidoog ingiw Memengwesiwag wenjida zhewenimaajig inow

Anishinaabe-abinoojiinyan bi-wiji'aawaad.

There are several ceremonies that the Anishinaabe has been given that are helpful to the child in his or her future. Every so often we hear of those Manidoog, the "little people," that especially have compassion for our Anishinaabe children and come and play with them.

Ishke dash gaye imaa waabanjigaadeg izhi-zhawenimaawaad Anishinaabe-abinoojiinyan ingiw Manidoog. Ishke geget gaawiin minwendanziidogenag ingiw Manidoog izhi-inigaachigaazonid iniw abinoojiiyensanaanind ingiw Anishinaabekweg bemiwinaawaajin. Mii igo gaye dibishkoo ezhi-ganawaabamaawaagwen inow ininiwan nayaadamaagowaajin ingiw ikwewag chi-maazhichigewaad. Booch igo da-

bi-azheshkaagowaad omaa gegoo ani-maazhi-doodawaawaad inow abinoojiiyensan.

I just gave some examples that show the love that the Manidoog have for our children. Those Manidoog certainly must not like to see our babies being harmed, especially by some of our Anishinaabe women who are using while they are pregnant. The Manidoog also must not look down favorably on our Anishinaabe men who enable these women to use drugs while they are pregnant. There has to be some sort of repercussion to these women who are using during their pregnancy and the men that assist them in the harm caused to our babies that the Manidoog have so much compassion for.



Education Department Focuses on Graduation Rates

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

Each winter the Minnesota Department of Education releases a statewide look at graduation rates for high school students. This year's results showed a three-year increase of eight percentage points for Native American students across the state, but it's still not enough, according to many educators and tribal leaders.

The graduation rate for Native American students moved from 42.41 percent in 2011 to 50.6 percent in 2014, but those numbers are far lower than for other student groups, according to the state's education department.

The rate for Minnesota's Native American students is the second worst in the nation. The on-time graduation rate for Native American students is one of the lowest in the nation.

"It seems like there's a trend we're seeing: if students can make it through the ninth grade they are making it through high school," said Suzanne Wise, Mille Lacs Band Commissioner of Education. "But, if they struggle before then, there's a chance they won't make it to graduation.

It's a problem the Band is working to solve, Suzanne said.

"We have learned that one-on-one support matters even when students get to high school," she said. "We know that adolescence plays a role, and we know that sometimes Indian students are treated differently from non-Indian students. All those things can impact a student's ability to succeed in school."

A particular problem in the Mille Lacs Band is that truancy is high, which also means students might have a harder time reaching graduation, Suzanne said.

"At Nay ah Shing we haven't made Adequate Yearly Progress because of attendance," Suzanne said. "Getting kids to school is a huge undertaking."

Adequate Yearly Progress, commonly called AYP, is a measurement defined by the federal No Child Left Behind Act that

allows the Department of Education to determine how every public school and school district in the country is performing academically based on results from standardized tests.

To address the issue representatives from family services, law enforcement, tribal courts and other agencies have been meeting to find a way to get students to schools. There's a move to bring truancy to the tribal court system, and police officers have been seeking out truants to encourage them to attend school. Nay Ah Shing has hired an American Indian Parent Involvement Coordinator to help its efforts.

"We've built up strong parent involvement at the school and it's been successful," she said. "We have more parents at teacher conferences. We are seeing more involvement at the school and more student growth."

Still, she said, attendance is a struggle and will take more intervention efforts to help change the mentality about the importance of attending school and then graduating.

"If kids don't feel like they are getting anything from coming to school, then they won't come. We are looking at adding more things to our schools to make them more inviting and to make the kids feel more vested in school."

Suzanne is hopeful that the Band's Niigaan program, which was formerly the Boys and Girls Club and has shown some success in engaging students in school, will continue to grow.

"Through the program we have added more people to work as school liaisons. We have found that it helps students," she said. "We have made it a priority to reward students who are doing well in school in attendance, whose achievement has increased, and who are on the honor roll."

The Niigaan model school is Isle. There the program has its own classroom, and its staff help with lunch periods and homework and tutor the students. The goal is to get more Niigaan staff into schools, Suzanne said.

"I want our children to know what success feels like," she said. "I want them to graduate. To make that happen we need the support of their parents, their caregivers and the community."

"By working together we can make a difference in their lives," she added. "Native people are relational. To suggest it's just up to the schools is not relational. It's not the way Ojibwe people are supposed to be."

In February, Native American leaders implored legislators to increase support for Native American education. The request came after a focus group comprised of tribal representatives met with state Education Commissioner Brenda Casselius to discuss the state of education for Native American students.

They asked for increased funding for mentoring efforts, and early childhood programs in school districts that serve Native American students. They also requested a boost in funding to supplement federal funds for tribally-operated schools, including the Band's Nay Ah Shing school.

The tribal schools receive \$5,000 a year per pupil from the federal government, but that is half of what other Minnesota districts receive from the state. Tribal leaders say that equalizing per-pupil funding could help improve achievement of Native American students and would help provide an equitable education for all students.

Looking for 2015 Graduates

Do you know a Band member or descendant who's graduating in 2015? Let us know! Call 612-465-8018 or email mick@redcircleagency.com

Join the Mothers of Tradition!

Tuesdays at the D1 Community Center at 5:15 p.m.

As Native women and mothers, we are faced with great responsibility for our next generations. There was a time before European contact, that our peoples practiced healthy, balanced lifeways. We want to once again hand down those healthy teachings to our next generations.

Our group's goals:

- Educate about the origin of White Bison/Wellbriety Movement
- Help gain an understanding of how Intergenerational Trauma has affected us personally, and as family, community and Nation.
- Present tools to help process the effects of Intergenerational Trauma, to become healthier.
- To gain an understanding of how important we are as first teachers and mothers, in passing on the teachings of living healthy and balanced lives.

Here's to STRONG women: May we KNOW them. May we BE them. May we RAISE them.

Questions? Call Kim at 320-532-7773, ext: 2419.



Update from the Office of Gaming Regulation & Compliance

Teresa Kozumplik Director of OGR&C

One of the responsibilities of the Office of Gaming Regulation & Compliance (OGR&C) is to write and implement regulations for the Mille Lacs Band gaming properties: Grand Casino Mille Lacs and Hinckley. From time to time, these regulations are reviewed and revised to address issues that occur on property or concerns that are brought to the attention of the OGR&C.

As most know, in order to gain employment at one of the Mille Lacs Band gaming establishments you must be able to obtain a gaming license. Upon review of this licensing regulation, we were able to make some significant changes that could have an impact on individuals who were unable to obtain a gaming license prior to 2014. Changes include a waiver process for Mille Lacs Band members, along with a reduction in time frames for all classes of licensure.

The OGR&C has also made a few changes in staff, as a new Licensing Manager has joined the team at Grand Casino Mille Lacs. Wendy Merrill joined the OGR&C in August 2014 and will be handling all licensing issues. Wendy is available to answer all questions in regards to your gaming license application or review. At the Hinckley location, Deanna Blesi will be assisting all applicants. Deanna will also be handling all questions and concerns regarding exclusions for both Mille Lacs and Hinckley properties.

Please note that any individual looking for employment who was deemed ineligible for a gaming license should contact these licensing managers to discuss the changes to see if you may be eligible at this time. Contact our Mille Lacs office at 320-532-8887 and our Hinckley office at 320-384-4468.

Free Lung Cancer Screening Available

Saturday, May 16
8 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Hennepin County Medical Center
Minneapolis

Participate in free lung cancer screenings as well as breast cancer screenings, if applicable. Call 612-873-9576 to schedule.

Visit millelacsband.com/resources/public-notice-updates/

Interested in submitting to the *Inaajimowin*?

Send your submissions and birthday announcements to Mick Sawinski at mick@redcircleagency.com or call 612-465-8018.

The May issue deadline is April 15.

Students, Staff Celebrate Dr. Seuss' Birthday

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer



Ojibwemowin instructor Bonita Nayquonabe dressed as "Thing 1" from Dr. Seuss' *Cat in the Hat* books.



Ojibwe language and culture coordinator Jodell Meyer reading "Hand, Hand, Finger, Thumb".



A translated page.

Nay Ah Shing Abinooyiyag has been celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday for many years, but 2015 had a special surprise: two Dr. Seuss stories translated into Ojibwe and read aloud by Ojibwemowin instructor Bonita Nayquonabe and Ojibwe language and culture coordinator Jodell Meyer.

Jodell said she took on the challenge of translating her favorite Dr. Seuss book, *Hand, Hand, Finger, Thumb*, in order to get students excited about reading and learning Ojibwe. She was assisted in the reading by students Louis Whiteman-Cram, Talia Nadeau, and Deshania Jackson.

Bonita translated *Marvin K. Mooney, Will You Please Go Now!* and performed dressed as "Thing 1" from Dr. Seuss' *Cat in the Hat* books.

Students were also treated to readings from Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin, Secretary/Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu, and Commissioners Suzanne Wise, Joe Nayquonabe, and Percy Benjamin. Every year they invite the President and Vice President. The students got a very nice letter from Vice President Biden. In the past they have had state senators and representatives as readers, and a representative from U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan.

In addition to the readings, the afternoon of March 2 was

devoted to the birthday party, "Seussian" games in the gym, and an art project involving coloring of paper socks. A favorite with the kids was making "oobleck," a green goo featured in one of Dr. Seuss' books. The food station, where they made red-and-white Jello and whipped cream desserts, was also a hit.

Roger Nieboer, who coordinated the event, said the translations were a highlight, "We've been trying to do it for about three years. To translate anything is tough, but to translate something like Dr. Seuss is a big undertaking. Jodell was the first to bite on that.

"What's cool about it for me is to see kids hearing Ojibwe language used in a contemporary context," Roger added. "They have a sense of ownership."

Bonita, who has been teaching at Nay Ah Shing for more than 15 years, said "Marvin K. Mooney" was a good fit with Ojibwe. The kids were mesmerized by her performance. "I absolutely enjoyed myself," she said.

Next year she plans to translate another favorite book. "I'm also hoping that next year I'll get my second or third grade to do Marvin K. Mooney and act it out."

What is Self-Governance? Just Ask John

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer



John Mojica

John Mojica, the Mille Lacs Band self-governance coordinator, puts it this way: "Self-governance describes the relationship we have with the federal government. Instead of them providing the services to us, we provide the services ourselves."

Prior to self-governance the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which is part of the Department of the Interior, delivered programs and services to Indian tribes.

Self-governance grew out of a Presidential directive by Richard Nixon supporting tribal sovereignty; this was the driving force behind legislation that became the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA).

Tribes had been lobbying for more power to manage their own affairs, in part because they were frustrated with Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service bureaucracy. Inefficiency, mismanagement, and fraud were common.

Demonstration projects began in 1975, and tribes began entering self-governance agreements in 1988. The Mille Lacs Band was one of seven tribes that engaged in negotiations and implementation of the cooperative self-governance agreements.

Self-governance recognizes a tribe's inherent sovereignty, but the main benefit of self-governance is that those who know Band members' needs best can address those needs most efficiently. There are no federal "middlemen" determining how those federal dollars are spent; instead, the Band itself makes the decisions.

When many Band members hear the term "self-governance," they think of tribal sovereignty or self-determination. However, "self-governance" has a more specific meaning, referring to federal dollars given to tribes to operate their own programs.

John describes the alternative model, which existed before self-governance and still exists on some reservations. Without self-governance, if a tree needed to be cut down, a call would need to be made to the Bureau of Indian Affairs forestry division, permission granted to cut the tree, and a BIA forester sent out to do the work — when they could find the time.

Under self-governance, the Band makes that decision, sends its own people to cut the tree, and pays for it out of the federal dollars already in the bank.

"Self-governance is more responsive," John says. "That's the whole idea: locally we know what we need and what our priorities are, and self-governance supplements our funding so we can carry out those priorities."

In 1992, Congress amended the Act to allow tribes more autonomy in managing health care programs. In 2000, Congress permanently authorized the Indian Health Service Tribal Self-Governance Program.

Today, of the 566 federally recognized tribes, there are 351 tribes in Indian Health Service and 262 in the Department of Interior participating in self-governance.

At Mille Lacs, John negotiates cooperative agreements based on input from elected officials. Department heads determine what the funds will be used for in accordance with their budgets.

About half of the self-governance funds that flow through the reservation are IHS funds and the rest are for other purposes, including education, natural resources, and social services.

In the early days, prior to the opening of the casinos, self-governance funds paid salaries for workers in various departments. Now the funds are used to supplement programs and services supported by the Band's revenue.

John, a Mille Lacs Band member, was raised in Deer River by his mother, Carol (Boyd) Mojica. He came to Mille Lacs after attending college at Concordia in Moorhead.

He has been in charge of self-governance since 2002. Prior to that he worked in the casino, the DNR, and the Housing Department. John also serves as chair of the Mille Lacs Band Housing Board.

Band Member Named GM at Grand Casino Mille Lacs

Andy McPartland Staff Writer **Sarah Barten** Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures Public Relations Manager



Tracy Sam

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures recently announced the promotion of Tracy Sam to General Manager of Grand Casino Mille Lacs. In her new role, she will be responsible for the overall day-to-day operations of the property.

"For years I've honed my skills while helping Grand Casino Mille Lacs become the premier gaming and entertainment destination in Greater Minnesota," Tracy said. "I am excited to put my experience and energy to work every day to continue to improve operations at the casino."

Tracy has a long history with Grand Casino Mille Lacs. In fact, she has been involved since the groundbreaking — from the long hours of construction and floor planning, to the first

job fairs in rural communities to hire Grand Casino Associates in 1991.

"Tracy brings with her invaluable experience in the gaming industry," said Joseph Nayquonabe, CEO of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures. "We are excited to have her at the helm of our Mille Lacs property. She will provide a fresh perspective and new ideas, which will assist us in enhancing the guest experience."

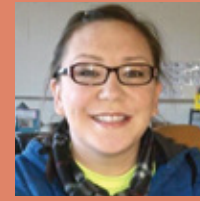
In 1992, Tracy took a brief hiatus from Grand Casino Mille Lacs to work for the Mille Lacs Band, where she gained a wealth of knowledge working for Human Resources, and later with the Chief Executive on tribal government operations.

In December 2003, Tracy returned to Grand Casino Mille Lacs as the Assistant General Manager, where she assisted in overseeing the entire gaming operation of Grand Casino Mille Lacs. Most recently, she served as the Corporate Vice President of Human Resources for Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures.

Tracy began her new role on February 23.

Gidinwewininaan

Baabitaw Boyd Gaa-ozhibii'ang



This month's article is about helping children understand how they feel.

Mii ow waa-ini-dazhindamaan ge-izhi wiidookawindwaa ingiw

abinoojiinyag da-mino-izhiwebiziwaad imaa gikinoo'amaagoziwaad gikinoo'amaadiiwigamigong.

Ishke omaa gikinoo'amaadiiwigamigong omaa Wewinabi ezhi-wiinjigaadeg, nigikinoo'amaagozimin niinawind izhi-gikinoo'amaagekwewiyaang da-wiidookawangidwaa ingiw abinoojiinyag weweni omaa da-bagikendamowaad enimanji'owaad.

Mii go endaso-giizhig bebezhi odazhindaanaawaa l'iw enimanji'owaad ingiw abinoojiinyag.

Indaabajitoomin mazinaakizonan da-bagikendamowaad ezhiinaagozid ezhiinwenid awiia enimanji'od bebezhi. Giishpin nisidotamowaad enimanji'owaad, begish weweni wii-kikendamowaad ge-wiidookadaadizowaad zakab da-izhi-ayaawaad imaa biinjina da-mino-ayaawaad. Ishke dash gaye biindaakoojigewag maa zanagendamowaad gegoo nawaj-igo bebezhi da-naadamaagoowiziwaad ingiw abinoojiinyag weweni da-baazhidaakonindwaa.

Ishke imaa ge-ondinigewaad da-mino-ayaawaad ge-minosemagak omaa nindabiwininaaning. Mii o'o waakwajitooyang.

Exclusive Tour of Eddy's Scheduled for Band Members

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures



Eddy's Rendering. View the real thing on April 29 or April 30 from 1 – 3 p.m.

Eddy's Resort is set to open to the public on Tuesday, May 5, but before it does, Band members will have a chance to tour it. On Wednesday, April 29 or Thursday, April 30 from 1 – 3 p.m., representatives from Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures will show you around the resort. You'll see the new room types, the views of Lake Mille Lacs, the lobby, The Launch Bar & Grill, the cabins and much more. No need to call and schedule a time — just show up at Eddy's between 1 – 3 p.m. on either day. See you then!

April is Stress Awareness Month

Tammy Mooreland

Performance Improvement Manager

Stress does not merely afflict your mind. Stress can also lead to a number of major health problems, ranging anywhere from anxiety to severe depression and from mild acne to life-threatening heart attacks, so it is easy to see why it is so important to keep life's major stressors in check. Understanding the mind/stress/health connection can help you better manage stress and improve your health and well-being.

When you perceive a threat, stress hormones rush into your bloodstream — increasing heart rate, blood pressure, and glucose levels. Other hormones also suppress functions like digestion and the immune system, which is one of the reasons why chronic stress can leave you more vulnerable to illness.

Danger triggers the stress response — but, unfortunately, so can conflicts, worry over debt, bad memories, or anxiety. Although one bad day won't compromise your health, weeks or months of stress can dampen your immune response and raise your risk for disease.

Combat Your Stress

If you suffer from chronic stress and can't influence or change the situation, then you'll need to change your approach. Be willing to be flexible. Remember, you have the ability to choose your response to stressors, and you may have to try various options.

- Recognize when you don't have control, and let it go.
- Don't get anxious about situations that you cannot change.
- Take control of your own reactions, and focus on what makes you feel calm and in control.
- Develop a vision for healthy living, wellness, and personal and professional growth and set realistic goals to help you realize your vision.

While you can't avoid stress, you can minimize it by changing how you choose to respond to it. The ultimate reward for your efforts is a healthy, balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation, and fun.

Nay ah Shing Abinooyiyag is Looking for a New Principal

Due to retirement, the Band is looking for a new principal for the Nay ah Shing Abinooyiyag campus, which serves students in grades pre-k through five.

More information can be requested from Human Resources. The job vacancy will be posted online in the coming weeks.

Bella Boyd Honored at Special Olympics Minnesota Event

Sarah Barten Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures



Bella Boyd received a visit from Minnesota Timberwolf Ricky Rubio.

On Friday, March 6, more than 30 Minnesota executives — including Commissioner Joe Nayquonabe, Jr. and Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures' (MLCV) Mike Engel — loosened their ties, tossed their suit jackets aside and took an icy dip into Lake Calhoun, raising over \$200,000 for more than 8,000 Special Olympics Minnesota athletes.

What made the night even better was the Special Olympics Minnesota athlete who was featured — Bella Boyd, daughter of Mille Lacs Band member Adrienne Benjamin.

Grand Casino Mille Lacs and Grand Casino Hinckley sponsored that special evening, so Joe was asked to say a few words about what it means for Grand Casino to support Special Olympics. Joe immediately thought of Bella.

Bella is a Special Olympics athlete and the inspiration behind one of the largest plunge groups at the Mille Lacs plunge location — Bella's Babes. When Bella was five weeks old, she became extremely sick and had a hemispheric stroke that caused permanent damage to the left side of her brain.

Adrienne knew her daughter was a fighter and wasn't about to give up. She signed Bella up for therapy and brought her to several different doctors who all worked hard to push Bella and give her the best chance to overcome her medical situation. She has had her ups and downs over the years, but not only has she beat all odds against her, she has thrived and grown up to be an amazing young girl.

This fall, her mom noticed some hesitation in her ability to get around the house as she normally did. After a series of doctor appointments, Bella underwent hip reconstruction surgery on December 2, 2014. Her doctor also made surgical cuts to specific tendons to help loosen the muscles in her affected leg. "This was a tough decision for me," Adrienne said. "I needed to make sure the benefits would outweigh the dangers and pain for her. The surgeon reassured me that this surgery would give Bella the best chance of walking, which is something we have been working towards."

In January, Bella started aggressive therapy and has al-

"It has given me a new way to be proud of her and opened my heart to the true beauty of Bella's world."

— Adrienne Benjamin



Bella Boyd and Commissioner Joe Nayquonabe.

ready made tremendous strides. "We are all excited for her future and the possibilities of her mobility," Adrienne said.

What people saw the night of the Executive Plunge was exactly who Bella is — a funny, smart, charismatic girl who loves being a part of her family and friends' lives. Even Ricky Rubio of the Minnesota Timberwolves had a chance to meet Bella!

Adrienne said Bella has found joy in Special Olympics competing with her school team — the Mille Lacs Raiders. She competes in bowling, basketball and track and field events each year. Adrienne said she is so appreciative of Special Olympics Minnesota because it gives her daughter a fun and accepting place to celebrate her wonderful accomplishments. "It has given me a new way to be proud of her and opened my heart to the true beauty of Bella's world."

The world Special Olympics creates is one of love, kindness and inclusion. "We are inspired by the tremendous work this organization does. Inclusion and acceptance are values our company stands for and we are proud to sponsor the Executive Challenge and the 4th Annual Mille Lacs Plunge," Joe said.

The night ended with a big round of applause for Bella and all the Special Olympics Minnesota athletes.

Mille Lacs Polar Bear Plungers Raise More Than \$42,000!

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures



Last month 290 individuals took the plunge into the frigid waters of Lake Mille Lacs for the fourth annual Mille Lacs Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Minnesota.

Together the plungers raised more than \$42,000 in donations toward the cause. Combine that with the \$20,000 that Grand Casino Mille Lacs donated to help bring the plunge to the area and the \$16,000 donors and Associates raised for Commissioner Joe Nayquonabe's Executive Plunge at Lake

Calhoun and all together, the money raised for Special Olympics Minnesota totaled more than \$78,000!

Miigwech to all of the plungers who raised money, for all of the supporters who donated money for Special Olympics Minnesota and for the help of local law enforcement (Mille Lacs Band Tribal Police, Mille Lacs Band DNR, Mille Lacs County Sheriff's department, Mille Lacs Search & Rescue and Mille Lacs Health Systems Ambulance).

New Judge Is at Home Away From Home

Brett Larson Staff Writer



Dave Christensen

Dave Christensen, the Mille Lacs Band's new District Court Judge, is a familiar face in the community, although he's been away for a few years.

Dave was an attorney in the Office of the Solicitor General beginning in 1993. He worked there for four years before becoming

the Band's first-ever legislative counsel.

In that job Dave worked on the revision of the judicial code and the transition to the current Tribal Court system.

After three years as legislative counsel, he transferred to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the Twin Cities, where he worked until he decided to return to the Band as judge.

Dave is a member of the Three Affiliated Tribes in North Dakota and was immersed in his Indian heritage through the influence of his grandfather and other relatives. Dave's grandfather, a native Hidatsa speaker and direct descendant of Mandan Chief Four Bears, passed along the stories of his people. He even came to live with Dave when he was in law school in New Mexico.

"I learned to dance as a boy, and there were different dances for the different songs, and they all have roots and meanings, like many other things," Dave says.

While growing up in North Dakota, Dave split time between the reservation and the ranch of his Norwegian grandpa, Ole, who taught him how to ride horses, mend fences, put up hay, and raise crops. He even taught him to thresh wheat using an old belt-driven thresher. From age four, it was his job to gather eggs — and fight off roosters. (Ask him to show you his scar.)

Dave says Mille Lacs feels like home. "I like the Mille Lacs Band. When I was here in the '90s, it reminded me of my home community in the '60s. I like being a part of so many good things that the Mille Lacs Band does."

Dave has always been impressed with the leadership of the Mille Lacs Band and their commitment to their people and culture. "Their hearts are in the right place," he says.

Dave was born in Scotland when his father was in the Air Force, and as a child he lived in North Dakota and the state of Washington. His mother and stepfather were educators working for the Quinault Nation when Dave graduated from North Beach High School in Washington.

From there he attended college in Washington and North Dakota and eventually earned his law degree from the University of New Mexico.

Dave lives in the Twin Cities area with his wife, Georgette, and three daughters: twin 17-year-olds and an 11-year-old. Dave met Georgette, a White Earth member, when he was working at Mille Lacs.

He said he was drawn to the District Court Judge position because it allows him to practice law within the context of Indian culture. "We're not here to snap people in line," Dave says. "We're here to provide a place to listen, to resolve disputes, and to get people back on track." The tribal courts are more people-driven than rule-driven, he says, and the statutes he upholds incorporate cultural values.

"My life has been a path of continuous learning, including much about myself," Dave says. "I hope I am growing. Mille Lacs has been a part of me since I came here, and I am glad I am closer to it now."

Mille Lacs Band 2015 Spring Clean Up

District I, Vineland

Saturday, April 18 – Friday, April 24

Hours of operation: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday through Friday.

All roll-off dumpsters will be located at:

- The Mille Lacs Band Old Transfer Station Site off of U.S. HWY 169.

District II, East Lake, McGregor, Minnewawa, Sandy Lake and Isle

Saturday, May 9 – Friday, May 17

Hours of operation: 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. on Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Roll-offs will be placed at the following locations:

- East Lake Maintenance facility for District II
- Isle Community Center for District II-A.

District III, Lake Lena and Hinckley

Saturday, May – Friday, May 8

Hours of operation: 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. on Monday – Friday, and 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Roll-offs will be placed at the following locations:

- Four Plex on Evergreen Dr.
- Earthworks building located on Hwy 48, 2 miles east of Hinckley Casino
- Maintenance building in Lake Lena across from Community Center
- The Cull de sac at Wise Owl

Mille Lacs Band Elders in all Districts will receive free curbside pickup for their community cleanup items.

Elders must call the Public Works office at 320-532-7433 by Friday, April 10, to be placed on the list for pickup.

Anyone receiving curbside pickup must have their pile at the end of their driveway. Please contact Public Works at 320-532-7448 if you have any questions or concerns about the 2015 spring cleanup! Thank you.

Powwow Stories

If you have a powwow story you would like to share email Mick at mick@redcircleagency.com or call 612-465-8018.

Department of Labor Office Hours

District II-A Community Center

Tuesdays from 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Aazhoomog Community Center

Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Wednesdays from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Corporate Commission

Building Hinckley

Tuesdays from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

District II Modular

Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

Happy April Birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Roland Lee Anderson
Susan Mary Antonelli
Dorothy Ann Aubid
Terry Louis Beaulieu
Jerry Jonas Benjamin
Donivon Leroy Boyd
Russell Edward Boyd
Wayne Theodore Boyd
Debra Lynn Ceballos
Sharon Lee Chavarria
Rayna Joyce Churchill
Raymond Charles Daly
Wesley Dorr Jr.
Rhonda Kay Engberg
Nancy Mae Foster
Duane Wallace Haaf
Gwendolyn Marie Hanold
Douglas Happy
Arleen Joy Hunt
Darryl Vernon Jackson
Evelyn Kegg
Raymond Kegg
Victoria Jean Kroschel
Bruce Marvin LaFave
Glenda Marie Landon-Rosado
Ada Mae Merrill

Louis Kevin Merrill
Gregory Allen Mishler
Bonita Louise Nayquonabe
Russell Daniel Nayquonabe
Gloria Jean Nickaboine
Sherry Marie Nielsen
Donald Eugene Oswaldson
Jeannette Oswaldson
Ricky Harold Pardun
Solita Efigenia Reum
Lorraine Diane Sam
Darlene Rae Savage
Ruth Anne Schaaf
George Augustus Sharlow Jr.
Perry Don Skinaway
Debra Ann Smith
Marvin Lee Staples
Gail Marie Tyson
Duane Lee Wind
Leonard Myron Wind

Happy April Birthdays:

Happy birthday **April Weyaus** on 4/1, love you forever, Roland Sr., Roland Jr., and Kayloni. • Happy birthday **Auntie Dorothy** on 4/1. Have a great day, love Mrs. B and the family. • Happy birthday **Dad** on 4/4 from Cilla

• Happy 3rd birthday **Lorena “LoLo” Gahbow** on 4/8, with lots of love from Mommy, Daddy, Benny, Joshy, CaddyBug, Freddie, Buzz, JerBear, Baby Tammy, and Gamma TT. We love you to the moon & stars and back! • Happy birthday **Lise** on 4/12 from your big sis Cilla. • Happy 22nd birthday to my beautiful daughter **Lisa** on 4/12, with love from Mom and Raquel! • Happy birthday **Justice Drumbeater** on 4/14 from Mom, Dad, and brothers. • Happy birthday **Papa Juice** on 4/14 from all your grandsons. • Happy 9th birthday **Kelia A**, my sweet and lovable granddaughter, on 4/20. Love you forever. Be happy. Hugs & kisses to you, from Gramma Marllys. • Happy 6th birthday **Hayden Lynnae** on 4/20, love Gramma B, Papa, Cedez, Uncle Ron, Uncle Al, Uncle Walter, Uncle Bert, Aunty Chew & Baby AveS, Aunty Tola, Aunty Ca & Ria, Mommy N Caylz, Grant & Rico Harvey, and Uncle Sean.

• Happy birthday **Aiva Lee** on 4/26 love Dad, Mark, Emery, DeBreanna, Gram Tracy, Gram Karen, Uncle Brad, Val, Pie, Kevin, Auntie Rachel, Shelby, Max, Aidan, Jarvis, Auntie Sharon, Ravin, and Melodie. • Happy birthday **Auntie LuLu** on 4/27 from Cilla. • Happy birthday **Lu** on 4/27 from Deanna and Raquel. • Happy 24th birthday to another one of my beautiful daughters — **Cilla** on 4/28, with love from Mom and Raquel. • Happy birthday to a great niece, **Kelia**. Love you, from Uncle Richard. • Happy birthday to my loving man, **Anthony**. Love you with all my heart. Thank you for being with me in the last four months, you are a great man. I appreciate everything you have done for me. Love you always, Marllys.

Happy Belated Birthdays:

Happy belated birthday **Craig Hansen** on 3/30 from your

loving Auntie and Weheh Deb and family.

Other Announcements:

Miigwech to everyone who donated and participated in the fundraiser for Shelly Sam. She started her treatment in late February. We appreciate all of the love and support! From Shelly's family. • Happy anniversary to **Clayton & Candace Benjamin** on April 17. Sent with love from your Mom, Dad, sisters Desi & Camille, brothers Roland Sr. & Collin, and their families.

Submit Birthday Announcements

Send name, birthday and a brief message that is **20 WORDS OR LESS** to Mick Sawinski at mick@redcircleagency.com or call **612-465-8018**. The deadline for the May issue is April 15.

Mille Lacs Indian Museum April Events

Nature's Paint

Wednesday, April 1 – Thursday, April 30

Fee: Free

Pat Kruse, a birch bark artist who lives in Mille Lacs community in Minnesota, has been working with birch bark for more than 30 years. View some of Kruse's three-dimensional mosaic birch bark art in this free museum exhibit.

"Nature's Paint" Artist Reception

Saturday, April 18

1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Fee: Free

Come to the Mille Lacs Indian Museum and meet Pat Kruse, the artist of "Nature's Paint," a three-dimensional mosaic birch bark exhibit. Refreshments will be provided.

Loom Beading Workshop

Saturday, April 25

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Fee: \$30/\$25 MNHS members; additional supply fee of \$15 applies

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

Participants will learn the art of loom beading through hands-on experience. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. A minimum of five participants is required to host workshop.

Upcoming Job Fairs

Lake Mille Lacs Job Fair

Tuesday, April 7

12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Holy Cross Center
104 Crosier Drive
Onamia, MN

No cost or registration required. This event is FREE to all job seekers!

List of participating employers available at mn.gov/deed/events/LMLA2015

East Central Minnesota Job Fair

Tuesday, April 21

12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

AFRC — Cambridge Community Center
505 Spirit River Drive S.
Cambridge, MN

Free to attend and free parking available. Bring your resume and be prepared to interview.

Individuals requiring accommodations to either job fair should call 763-279-4472.

APRIL CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5	6	<p>7</p> <p>Lake Mille Lacs Job Fair 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Holy Cross Center See page 14</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Circle of Health Outreach 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. East Lake Clinic</p> <p>District I Community 5:30 p.m. District I Community Center</p> <p>Comm. Colsrud Visit 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Urban Area Office</p>	<p>9</p> <p>APB Meeting 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Aazhoomog Community Center</p>	10	11
12	13	14	<p>15</p> <p>Comm. Colsrud Visit 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Urban Area Office</p> <p>Circle of Health Outreach 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. Urban Office</p> <p>District III Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley</p> <p>Chiminising Bingo 6 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	16	17	<p>18</p> <p>“Nature’s Paint” Artist Reception 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum See page 14</p>
19	20	<p>21</p> <p>East Central MN Job Fair 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Cambridge Community Center See page 14</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Comm. Colsrud Visit 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Urban Area Office</p> <p>Circle of Health Outreach 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. DII-A Isle Community Center</p>	<p>23</p> <p>APB Meeting 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Aazhoomog Community Center</p>	24	<p>25</p> <p>Loom Beading Workshop 10 a.m. – 4p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum See page 14</p>
26	<p>27</p> <p>Art Gahbow Day (actual April 26)</p>	28	<p>29</p> <p>Comm. Colsrud Visit 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Urban Area Office</p> <p>Eddy’s Resort Tour 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. Onamia, MN See page 11</p> <p>DII-A Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Eddy’s Resort Tour 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. Onamia, MN See page 11</p> <p>Urban Area Community Meeting/ Family Night 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. All Nations Indian Church</p> <p>Sobriety Feast 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>Want your event here? Email mick@redcircleagency.com or call 612-465-8018.</p>	

Get Moving: Easy Tips to Get Active!

Mille Lacs Band Diabetes Program

Temperatures are finally heating up and so should your exercise routine! Building physical activity back into your daily lives is one of the greatest challenges for busy people. However, it's important to remember that our bodies were designed to be physically active. Lack of physical activity is a major risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, but just 30-minutes a day can have a big impact on your health. Whether it's a structured exercise program or fun activities with the family, all exercise adds up to a healthier heart!

Here are some tips for exercise success:

Make the Time

- Build a workout routine and make it a habit.
- Start slowly. Gradually build up to at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.
- It can be one 30-minute session or three 10-minute sessions.

Set Reasonable Expectations for Yourself

- Create a success plan. Set one or two reasonable goals to begin, then build upon achievement.
- Be kind to yourself. Give yourself credit for any effort you make.

Make it Fun!

- Choose activities that are fun, not exhausting.
- Ask family or friends to join or enjoy an exercise group, health club or community center.
- Use music or audio books to keep you entertained.

Track and Celebrate Your Success!

- Keep a record of your activities. Reward yourself at special milestones with non-food items, like a small gift or shopping trip for yourself.
- Nothing motivates like success!

The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Diabetes Program offers Personal Training Sessions, fitness classes and workout programs in all three districts! Contact Jim Ingle 320-532-7547 for more information.

Website Lets Loved Ones Know You're Safe & Well

When a major disaster happens, one of the most frightening

aspects is not knowing if a family member has been affected or not. The American Red Cross offers "Safe and Well," a website where people can register themselves and their families after a disaster to let loved ones know of their status.

Individuals can list their name, birth date, email, phone numbers, address, and best current contact information. You will also have a choice of the message you want family and friends to see, such as "I am safe and well," "Currently at shelter," or "Will email when able." You can also leave a custom message. Much of the identifying information will not be viewable by someone searching for you, but it will be used by the system's search engine.

With tornado season here, first responders should keep this service in mind to let family members know their status.

Visit the website at: safeandwell.communityos.org

Download American Red Cross Disaster Apps

Now is a good time to familiarize yourself with some of the disaster preparedness tools the Red Cross offers, including a variety of mobile applications (apps). The free apps provide alerts for weather hazards, first aid, shelter, pet first aid, and more.

As the winter weather hazards come to an end, you can use the weather-related apps to prepare for spring hazards, such as tornadoes.

Features of the tornado app include:

- An audible siren that automatically sounds when the app is closed if a tornado warning is issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA);
- A notification when the warning expires; and
- Instructions on what to do if cell phone towers and other communication are down.

The Red Cross also offers a mobile application that engages children in disaster preparedness in a fun, exciting way. The "Monster Guard" app uses an interactive game to show kids how to stay safe when responding to emergencies at home.

Take action today! Download these apps to your tablet or smartphone using the Apple App Store or Android Google Play. Doing so counts as one of the ten ways to participate in America's PrepareAthon!, so be sure to register your actions on the campaign website.

Correction

In our March issue, we featured a story on Mushkooub Aubid that mentioned the circumstances behind his father's death. We wrote that Mushkooub switched cars when transporting George Aubid's body from the Aitkin hospital 25 years ago. Winnie LaPrairie, who was in the car as well, informed us that this was a myth: they did not switch cars. We regret the error in reporting and sincerely apologize to the Aubid family.

Mille Lacs Early Education Promoting Exercise and Fitness

Next year, Wewinabi will focus on getting the children outside as much as possible and we need some winter clothing donations. We are looking for snow pants, coats, boots, hats and mittens. The sizes for snow pants and coats would be from 2t to 8. For boots, sizes 6 child through 2 youth. Parent bucks will be given to parents of our program. All donations can be dropped off at the front desk at Wewinabi.

Are you an Elder or do you know an Elder who has a story to tell?

The *Ojibwe Inaajimowin* is looking for Elder stories for upcoming issues.

Send your name, contact information, and a brief description of the Elder you would like to feature to Mick Sawinski at mick@redcircleagency.com or call 612-465-8018.

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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.