

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

THE
STORY
AS IT'S
TOLD

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

MELANIE
BENJAMIN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Aaniin! As I write this column, it is Veterans Day. Native Americans have the highest rate of service in the armed forces of any other ethnic group in the United States, and the Mille Lacs Band is no exception. There is a wall in the Government Center that includes pictures of many of our veterans, and every time I walk past this wall I take a moment to reflect on the bravery and honor of our Band men and women who have so bravely protected and defended our Nation. I hope that all our Ojibwe felt the depth of our gratitude on this Veterans Day!

Recently, I wrote to Band Members and provided a fairly detailed update about the various issues we are working on in Band government. Since that letter, I attended the Tribal Nations Leadership Council meeting on October 27-29 in Washington D.C., which advises the U.S. Attorney General in the Department of Justice on issues impacting tribes. I also used time during this trip to schedule a private meeting with Assistant Attorney General John Cruden about our Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) application, which has been pending for quite some time. If this application is approved, we will be able to leverage more federal resources for addressing violent crime on the reservation.

On November 4-5, I traveled to D.C. again for the White House Tribal Nations Conference. This

meeting was also a great opportunity to pull aside various federal officials and advocate for action on our TLOA application. The snail-like pace that the federal government moves at can be very frustrating, which is why it is important to keep up the pressure. We are making progress, however, and I'm very

hopeful that we might have exciting news to report in upcoming months that will directly improve public safety as a result of all of these trips to D.C.

Other meetings this month have included a meeting with the elders living in the District I Assisted Living Unit, where we discussed the results of an Executive Inquiry I conducted about issues residents were concerned with. This was a good meeting that resulted in several recommendations from the elders that are now being put in place, which I hope will enhance the sense of safety of those who live there.

I also met with Lieutenant Governor Tina Smith and Explore Minnesota Director John Edman, in which we discussed ways we could partner with the State to promote tourism in our communities, and finished this week with a meeting of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe.

Please make sure you mark your calendars for November 19, when the Corporate Commission will host our annual Community Feast at the Grand Casino Mille Lacs Convention Center at 5:00 p.m. I hope to see many of you there! Miigwech.



Melanie Benjamin presented this Mille Lacs Band flag that will be displayed in the Hall of Tribal Flags at the Department of Justice to Tracy Toulou, Director of the Office of Tribal Justice, U.S. Department of Justice.

Melanie Benjamin

Band Hosts Indigenous Peoples Day Event in St. Paul

On October 12, members of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe gathered with other tribal groups, elected officials from the City of St. Paul and Minnesota's Lieutenant Governor, Tina Smith, to celebrate the Inaugural Indigenous Peoples Day in St. Paul.

The St. Paul City Council unanimously passed a resolution to recognize Indigenous Peoples Day in August of this year. By acknowledging Indigenous Peoples Day, the City will celebrate the culture and contributions of Minnesota's tribal communities.

The inaugural event showcased Native culture with the inclusion of the Timber Trails drum group and Native Pride Dancers. Native cuisine was also served during the event luncheon.

Joe Nayquonabe Jr., the Band's Commissioner of Corporate Affairs, welcomed guests to the event at the InterContinental Saint Paul Riverfront. AmVets Post 53 Honor Guard presented the colors, and Larry 'Amik' Smallwood gave an invocation in Ojibwe.

Speaking at the event, Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin said, "Today, St. Paul takes a stand for justice, for compassion, and for respect for us, your Anishinaabe and Dakota neighbors and community members. By replacing a day that celebrates colonization with a day that celebrates

our history and culture, you are celebrating our future! You are paving the way for other cities across the Nation. On behalf of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, 'Miigwech' to the City Council and all the people of St. Paul for having the courage to embrace Native people, and to celebrate not just our past, but our future!"

Other speakers included Lt. Gov. Smith, St. Paul Deputy Mayor Kristin Beckmann, and Jessica Kingston, the Director of the city's Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity. Kingston read the text of the city's Indigenous Peoples Day resolution.

When Beckmann presented Benjamin with a copy of the city's resolution, the crowd rose for a standing ovation.

The event ended with a circle dance led by Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition in memory of victims of domestic violence.

October 12 also represented

another important milestone for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe with a ribbon cutting for the new InterContinental St. Paul Riverfront Hotel, formerly the Crowne Plaza. Purchased by Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures in 2013, the refurbished hotel brings a new luxury hotel experience to downtown St. Paul and represents the Mille Lacs Band's continued economic growth and diversification.



Left: Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin accepted a copy of the proclamation from Deputy Mayor Kristin Beckmann. Right: Timber Trails drum group.

Members Bring Solutions, Stories to Round Tables

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin hosted Round Table Discussions in Districts I and III in October, and she described the resulting dialogue as “powerful” and “emotionally moving.”

Several Band members talked about their experiences with drug and alcohol abuse, which resulted in prison sentences. Two young men questioned the policy that allows prisoners and felons to continue to receive per capita payments, which sometimes are used to support drug habits. A young woman told about starting to drink at the age of 10 and running away from home.

Another former addict lamented that meetings and support groups in District I are poorly attended, and he asked family members of addicts to encourage them to attend meetings.

Several elders, some of whom said they are also in recovery, testified about taking care of grandchildren whose parents are addicted. A grandmother told about having to report her own son to law enforcement. A mom told about needles being found in a yard where children play.

Spiritual leaders called for a return to ceremonies, including sweat lodges, to treat those in recovery.

One man said drug dealers should be banished from the reservation. Another called for personal responsibility, saying women who are pregnant and using should be charged with a crime.

Others pointed out that the drug users and dealers are sick and in need of help, not punishment. They called on Band leaders to invest in culturally-appropriate treatment facilities.

One of the most powerful moments was when an employee of Nay Ah Shing schools read letters written by middle school students calling on drug dealers to be put in jail and expressing fears of drug dealers and users.

Melanie and Commissioner of Health and Human Services Sam Moose introduced the meeting by talking about what they’ve been doing to combat drugs on the reservation.

Melanie talked about her testimony before the U.S. Senate last summer and her meetings with Sen. Al Franken and Gov. Mark Dayton to get their help in addressing the crisis.

Sam talked about his crisis response plan, including the Band’s negotiations with the State to take over the Four Winds treatment facility in Brainerd.

Following the first round table in District I, Melanie said, “Miigwech to everyone who attended our listening session on Drug Abuse, and especially to the many who courageously shared their own personal stories. We heard first-hand from those who’ve been able to free themselves from addiction, as well as family members who live in constant fear for their loved ones who are hostage to drugs. I am so grateful to everyone who shared their ideas, suggestions and thoughts about what needs to happen next. Today was proof that the solutions are out there, in our community. I am so grateful for you sharing your wisdom and experiences with us. These meetings are so important and instructive and WILL result in next steps.”

Hinckley

Many of the same themes came up at the District III round table at Grand Casino Hinckley on Oct. 27. Elder Herb Sam opened the discussion with an invocation, and Melanie and Sam once again informed Band members about their activities to combat opiates and other drugs.

Ideas from the District I round table were printed and distributed, and new ideas were recorded on poster paper and displayed on the walls.

Again, ideas ranged from punishment of users and dealers to support for addicts. Some said taking away per capita payments and emergency assistance programs would help, while others said it would be a violation of their rights. Some argued for more treatment options, drug tests and education, while others said the Band needs to do a better job of integrating felons back into the community.

Everyone agreed that drugs are destroying lives and families at disturbing rates.

One elder gave an impassioned plea for elders in the community to step up and help those in need by listening without judgment. He said he has lost a son to drugs and spends his evenings at the fire, praying, crying and asking for help.

“I don’t want to see any more loss,” he said. “We need to teach them what that fire’s about and what that tobacco’s about. It gives me strength. The creator comes down and helps me. We gotta get people to that fire.”

A Firsthand Look at Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

Brett Larson Staff Writer



Twila Jesso was raised on the Leech Lake Reservation and has been working at Ne-la-Shing Clinic since 2013.

When Twila Jesso was working at Masonic Children’s Hospital in the Twin Cities, she saw it for herself: newborns with a nonstop, high-pitched cry, suffering from tremors, irritability and diarrhea caused by withdrawal from drugs.

“Before we knew there was this huge problem, I realized that a lot of these babies were coming from reservations, and I started making connections,” said Twila. As a member of the Leech Lake Band, that

troubled her, and she began paying closer attention.

Many of the babies were diagnosed with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) — a condition that results from being exposed to opiates or other drugs in the womb.

Last fall, it was revealed that American Indian babies were suffering from NAS at 8.7 times the rate of white babies, and that the Mille Lacs Reservation was one of the hardest hit.

In the two years she’s been at Ne-la-Shing, Twila has seen the increase. “At first there were just a couple, but now it’s become very common,” she said.

In Twila’s experience in the Cities, the babies would start out in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), where treatment with methadone or morphine would begin to wean the babies off of opiates. After a few days they would be transferred to pediatrics, where they might spend as long as three months before going home.

Babies who spend that long in the hospital miss out on some important developmental steps and bonding time with

their parents. “They’re left alone a lot,” Twila said. “The nurse has three or four patients, so babies can’t be held as much as they would be at home. Often the parents can’t afford to be there because they have jobs and other kids to take care of, and it’s a long way from home.”

Long-term effects are still poorly understood because there haven’t been enough studies, Twila said. However, she knows that some kids born with NAS still have tremors as toddlers.

It’s also unknown how best to give outpatient treatment to babies suffering from NAS, which is why they end up staying in the hospital so long. Most of the treatment requires close monitoring near a major medical institution, often in the Cities. This makes it difficult for families that live in rural Minnesota forcing some infants to live in medical foster homes with strangers instead of families.

For Twila, the most important question is how to prevent NAS from happening. She also believes the father’s role is not emphasized enough.

Twila talks to her teenage patients about their plans for the future, and too often they say they don’t know. Many suffer from depression and anxiety — symptoms of the historical trauma Indian communities are still battling.

Twila believes the various Band departments — schools, clinics, treatment programs, law enforcement — need to work together to address the needs of young girls and families.

Twila also wants girls to know that they can talk with their medical providers to get help if they’re pregnant and using. “They’re afraid if they tell someone, they’ll lose their kids, but that’s a myth,” she said.

The goal of everyone involved is to help young moms to keep their families together. “Any time the mom is with the kids, it’s a good ending,” said Twila.

Meet Twila

Twila Jesso took the longest route possible to her current role as Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. She worked as a nursing assistant, an LPN, a two-year RN and a four-year RN before applying to become a nurse practitioner.

She knows the medical system well, which makes her a highly qualified provider.

Twila grew up in the Bemidji area, including remote towns on the Leech Lake Reservation, and her goal was to work on a reservation. She was hired at Ne-la-Shing as soon as she completed her schooling in 2013.

“I didn’t become a nurse practitioner just to diagnose sore throats and ear infections,” she said. “I wanted to be a change maker — to create a connection with kids. There are brief moments in the timeline of a child’s life that might be that moment that will change them forever, that may influence how they view themselves or the world. If that moment happens to be in my clinic during a visit, I want them to leave with hope for their future.”

Twila became interested in the medical field because of an experience as a child. “I remember going to the doctor in Cass Lake, and how the doctor and nurse treated me so kindly and compassionately,” she said. “There was something about the interaction that changed me. That was my moment.”

Commitment to Learning Brings Opportunities to Serve

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

Rayna Churchill started her college education after high school, but like many others, she ended up getting married and having children. "Life happened" is how she puts it today.

On Sept. 23, Rayna was appointed Executive Director of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. For Rayna it came as a result of her commitment to education and her long career in business and tribal government.

Rayna was raised in Pine City by her parents, Albert and Bernice Churchill, who were among the leaders of the District III Lake Lena community.

She taught at Nay Ah Shing schools in the 1980s and then took a position as an administrative assistant at the casino and worked her way up, eventually becoming the first Band member to achieve vice president status. She worked with the Corporate Commission on economic diversification as the Executive Vice President of Corporate Operations.

During those years, she felt the need to gain educational credentials to go along with her work experience, so she took weekend and evening classes at Augsburg College.

She attended the College of St. Scholastica Accelerated Degree Evening Program with Ronda Weizenegger, another Band member who has climbed the corporate ladder and is now Chief Financial Officer at Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures.

"When most people would be home with their families or in bed, we were sitting in class," Rayna recalls. "But it was worth it in the long run."

Eventually, Rayna earned her B.A. from St. Scholastica in Behavioral Science, and from there she went on to earn her Master's in Management.

In recent years she has served the Band as District III Appellate Judge and is currently serving another six-year appointment as Chief Justice of the Mille Lacs Band Court of Central Jurisdiction.

When she heard about the opening at the Indian Affairs Council, she was immediately interested. "It's always been my goal to help people," she says. "What's also rewarding about this position is that I get to work with the Sioux Communities, too."

The Indian Affairs Council is a state government agency that is the official liaison between the state and Minnesota's 11 Indian tribes. The agency plays a key role in development of legislation related to Indians. The council's work ranges from educational programs, including language immersion, to protection of burial sites and remains as required by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

The board is made up of representatives of the tribes and the Governor, as well as Commissioners of Education, Human Services, Natural Resources, Human Rights, Employment and Economic Development, Corrections and other state agencies.

From her new office with a view of the State Capitol, Rayna reflects on starting a new position as an Elder.

"There's still a lot of tread left on these old tires," she says with a laugh. "I'm not ready for retirement."

She's also not ready to retire from learning. She's enrolled in a Ph.D. program in Organizational Leadership.

"I would encourage the youth and young adults, even



From her office in St. Paul, Rayna can see the dome of the state capitol. She'll be spending time working with legislators in her new position as Executive Director of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council.

parents and grand parents, that you're never too old to continue your education," says Rayna. "Learning is a lifelong process."

Governor Signs Autopsy Bill

On Thursday, Oct. 15, Gov. Dayton hosted a ceremonial signing of the autopsy bill that came as a result of a controversy after the passing of Band Elder and Drumkeeper Mushkooub Aubid last winter. Members of Mushkooub's family were on hand, including his wife Winnie LaPrairie, son Steven and daughter-in-law Amanda Aubid and sister Raina Killspotted. Gov. Dayton expressed his admiration of the family, who responded to a personal tragedy by helping to accomplish something positive for others. Also present were Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin and many folks who were instrumental in the passing of the bill, including the family of Fond du Lac member Autumn Martineau.



Amanda Aubid, Melanie Benjamin, Steven Aubid, Raina Killspotted and Winnie LaPrairie joined Gov. Mark Dayton at the bill signing on Oct. 15.



Above: Health fairs were held in all districts Oct. 20-23. Band members were able to learn about all the services available from Band departments as well as area health providers, the Veterans Administration, the Social Security Administration and other private and public agencies. Kudos to the Public Health Department team that put the fairs together (pictured): Amy Maske, Lisa Blahosky, Donna Sutton, Darla Roache, Ginny Savaloja, Cassie Helmin, Dianne Holmquist, Cyndy Travers and Carol Hernandez. For more photos, see millelacsband.com.



Left: Temporary Home for Family Services

Some employees of the Mille Lacs Band Family Services Department have moved to a building on the east side of Hwy. 169 in Onamia. The new address is 101 Pony Farm Road, Onamia MN 56359. The move was necessary because the department was running out of space in the location shared with Public Health and Behavioral Health. At the new location are the Child Protection, Foster Care and Waivered Services departments. The staff in these departments spend a great deal of time moving around the region and working in all three districts. A small contingent of Family Services staff will remain in the old location. These staff will be working primarily in District 1. This is a short-term solution to the space problem. Eventually the staff will be relocated to a new facility.

Band, U of M Host Nibi and Manoomin Symposium

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

Over 100 tribal members, educators and scientists gathered at Grand Casino Mille Lacs Sept. 28 and 29 for the Nibi Miinawaa Manoomin (Water and Wild Rice) symposium. The event was sponsored by the Mille Lacs Band and the University of Minnesota.

The theme of the symposium was “Oshki-mikanansan Ji-wiidanokiindiyang Weweni Niigaan Akeyan” or “New Pathways for a Shared Future.”

The focus was “To build lasting relationships in the work of protecting nibi and manoomin for future generations.”

The symposium began with an invocation from Byron Ninham, a drum song by Timber Trails, and a water ceremony by Dorene Day of the Bois Forte Band.

Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu gave a welcoming address, telling the story of the Anishinaabe who migrated to the land “where food grows on water.” She stressed the importance of protecting manoomin by working together and valuing both scientific and cultural perspectives.

Carolyn’s welcome was followed by addresses from University of Minnesota officials.

U of M President Eric Kaler spoke to attendees through a video. Kaler not only expressed support for the symposium but also emphasized the importance of tribal advisory committees at all campuses of the U of M.

After the welcoming addresses, a panel of four rice experts spoke. Mille Lacs Band Wildlife Biologist Kelly Applegate talked about the Band’s efforts with water quality, restoration and wildlife habitat.

Tuesday’s agenda included an opening invocation by Band member Amik and an honor song by Timber Trails, followed by a traditional knowledge panel featuring Mille Lacs Band members Brenda Moose, Henry Sam and Joe Nayquonabe Sr.

Joe shared stories of ricing as a young man near Brainerd, when it was not just a cultural tradition or food source, but also a way to earn money. He called rice “a sacred food,” along

with deer and fish, and talked about the need to protect the rice and the water.

Brenda talked about ricing at Rice Lake Wildlife Refuge in District II, and about the history of the East Lake community. To white people, she said, “rice is just a commodity that you see in restaurants, but to us it’s part of who we are as Anishinaabe people... It’s part of our legends... When we lose our resources that make us who we are, we become less Anishinaabe. Our language, our foods, our ceremonies, that’s who we are.” Brenda also warned against pollution and pipelines, saying the rice has become smaller, less abundant and less flavorful since she was young.

Henry Sam said he learned about ricing from his parents and grandparents, and he stressed the need to pass that cultural knowledge on to the next generations and to protect the resources.

Larry ‘Amik’ Smallwood, who served as master of ceremonies along with Katie Draper, also shared stories of ricing during the morning session. Before the session began, he told the guests about the history of the Mille Lacs Band and the casinos, attributing the Band’s success to its adherence to traditions.

“It’s through our prayers and our tobacco and our Big Drums that we’re able to have this building we’re sitting in,” Amik said. “We used to be made fun of back in the ‘70s and ‘60s and ‘50s. They said we were backwards because we spoke our language, and we were poor.”

He talked about Art Gahbow, who was one of the most respected Indian leaders in the country, and about the leadership of Doug Sam and the late Dave Matrious and Albert Churchill, who helped bring the casinos to Mille Lacs and Hinckley while preserving the culture and language.

“Our prayers and our traditional tribal leaders made it possible,” he said. “We’re not laughed at anymore. We still speak our language, and we have our young ones doing our

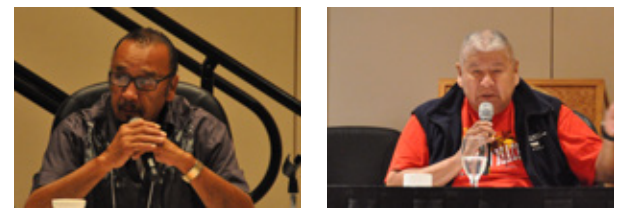
invocations now.”

The afternoon included working group breakouts and a presentation on building respectful collaborations.

The event closed with a water ceremony led by Dorene Day and a round dance with Timber Trails.



Secretary/Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu gave a welcoming address at the symposium.



Elders Amik, Joe Nayquonabe, Brenda Moose and Henry Sam shared their knowledge of manoomin and ricing.

Minor Trust Training Prepares Young People for Future

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

When Mille Lacs Band youth reach adulthood, they gain access to their trust fund. To help young Band members make smart decisions and plan for the future, the Mille Lacs Band’s Office of Management and Budget offers a Minor Trust Training course twice a year for high school students.

On Oct. 28, 13 students from Onamia, Brainerd and Nay Ah Shing high schools attended the morning session at Grand Casino Mille Lacs, followed by lunch at the buffet.

The course was led by William White, his wife Loran and Leisa Nash.

William White is a senior vice president and financial advisor with Morgan Stanley Wealth Management in Rapid City, S.D.

Loran is a retired teacher and former Morgan Stanley employee who helped her husband develop the course eight years ago and also helps deliver it.

Leisa is also a financial advisor with Morgan Stanley.

Participants received a guide to financial readiness that focuses on spending, debt, savings and investing, while emphasizing the importance of planning for the future.

Ronni Jourdain, a ninth grader at Nay Ah Shing, said she learned a lot from the morning class, including the difference between a Roth IRA and a 401K plan.

Tyler Naquonabe said he learned how to save money and avoid student debt — lessons he’s also learned from his mom, Shannon.

Di Browner, a senior, said, “I learned not to be dumb with money and to think of something long-term that you want in the future.” Di is planning on going to college next year, possibly at USC.

According to Commissioner of Finance Adam Valdez, the Band is reaching out to more students — and younger ones — because it is very important and relevant that Band children turning 18 have the basic knowledge and skills to make critical personal financial decisions.

“This world has become very complicated and technology driven,” said Adam. “Our children need to learn how to manage their financial affairs properly to avoid becoming victims. Proper management of their financial resources today will help them to minimize or eliminate future financial hardships as young adults. My utmost wish is to have our Band children become informed consumers. They need to learn how to become financially secure adults. The Minor Trust training is but a

small beginning of a lifelong journey in developing these skill-sets.”

Jana Sam, who works for OMB, plans the sessions, which take place in the fall and spring. She enjoys the responsibility and making a positive difference in the lives of kids. Her own son took the class and benefitted from it, she said.

High school students or their parents should contact Jana if they’re interested at jana.sam@millelacsband.com or (320) 532-7466.



Back: Tyler Nayquonabe, Loran White, Thomas Lee Mitchell, William White, Jana Sam, Clayton Benjamin, Leisa Nash, Di Browner, Austin Stobb, Susan Potter, Toni Weous. Front: Raquel Maurstad, Kelsey Benjamin, Ronni Jourdain, Rachel Wind, Teri Boyd, Shaina Wind.

Busy Start to School Year for Education Staff

Commissioner of Education Suzanne Wise



The following are some of the many events that happen in Education on a monthly basis. All of our staff work very hard and are with children every workday. I applaud all of our Education staff members.

Niigaan Director Byron Ninham reports that the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Niigaan program has quickly moved into after-school hours for the school year. After-school activities for District I Niigaan programs are located at the Nay-Ah-Shing schools as a collaborative effort with our area school staff and children.

The Niigaan program is working with other Band programs to create youth leadership opportunities for our area children. The youth group came up with their name "Ge-Niigaanizijig" — the ones who will lead — and will focus on language, leadership skills and tribal governance.

In the month of November, all Niigaan staff will attend Youth Mental Health First Aid training provided by the Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health.

In October, each Niigaan program took part in Lights On Afterschool, a nationwide event that highlights activities that are offered through afterschool opportunities in the area and their area partners.

District I Niigaan coordinator Bugs Haskin reports that during the month of November, District I Niigaan will be offering Homework Help Monday through Thursday for all K-12th Grade Nay Ah Shing students. On Wednesdays after school, K-5th grade boys will participate in the Mighty Ducks Program, and girls will become Little Mermaids on Fridays. All Abinoojiyag kids will have the opportunity to go swimming once a week. Physical Fitness will also be taking place

under the watchful eye of Matthew Petty, Physical Education Specialist. Education Specialist Laurie Campbell will keep the kids' minds active with stories, educational games, arts and crafts, as well as guest speakers and field trips. Basketball and PeeWee Wrestling will also begin in November.

Upper School kids will be involved in critiquing movies on Mondays; Ojibwe on Tuesdays; Survival Skills class on Wednesdays; Swim Night will be Thursdays; Teen Voice will take place every night. Teens will discuss topics of concern or Current Events. Basketball for 6th-12th grade will also begin in November.

District IIA Niigaan coordinator Shawn Willis reports that Chiminising Niigaan staff members are helping in the Isle Alternative Learning Center, Elementary and High School throughout the day. This approach allows Niigaan staff firsthand knowledge of what the youth are working on and what areas the youth may need help in.

Obizaan and Chato Gonzalez have been publishing bilingual articles in Inaajimowin, the band's newspaper, since April 2014. The articles are there to serve several purposes. First and foremost they are there to have our language seen in daily context with the hope that it will make people think about learning or teaching our language. The articles also serve as a language-learning tool, as well as a resource for existing or future teachers to integrate them into their curriculum. Obizaan and Chato are also working on three books.

Along with these projects Obizaan, with the assistance of Chato, conducts funerals, naming ceremonies, and many other ceremonies to meet the spiritual needs of all three districts and the urban area.

Donna Churchill reported on the Johnson O'Malley Program and its purpose to serve as a supplemental program to meet the unique and specialized needs of Native American children

attending the area's public and tribal schools. In the upcoming year, Donna plans to present a survey to the Native American families regarding the needs of Indian children to better build community relationships and improve communications between families and their local schools.

Principal Noah Johnson reports that the Nay Ah Shing Upper School is over half way through the first quarter with many activities going on: October 19 -23 was Bus Awareness Week; school pictures were on Wednesday October 21; Spirit Week/Olweus Bully Prevention Week was October 26-30 and included dress up days and a powwow; girls' volleyball and boys' flag football are in season.

All staff and students took part in a read-a-thon starting Tuesday, October 20, with individual and grade level recognition for top readers. Phrase of the week is starting back up with the Ojibwe Language and Culture Department. Parent/Teacher conferences took place November 4.

Tammy Wickstrom of Wewinabi Early Education reported that in early October the Early Education Program received a health and safety grant from the Office of Head Start. This grant will be used to purchase a bus for the East Lake area and new bus harnesses. It has also been used to fence in the backyard of Wewinabi. This fenced area provides a new large outdoor play area for children, and they have already been enjoying it.

November is another busy month. The Shakopee Mdewakanton Dental Van visited all three districts November 3-6 to provide free dental check-ups to children who needed them. Parent/Teacher conferences were scheduled November 5 and 6.

Tammy also reminds us that parents are the first and most important teachers children have.

Nay Ah Shing Kicks Off Bullying Prevention Program

Amanda Sorby Staff Writer

Bullying is a problem in schools across the nation as well as right here in Minnesota. But Nay Ah Shing schools on the Mille Lacs Band Reservation want to change that. They have instituted a new program called the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.

To celebrate this amazing program, Nay Ah Shing schools held a kickoff event on Friday, October 2. The theme was "It's cool to be kind," focusing on the word "minododaadiwin", which means kindness in Ojibwe.

The kickoff started with students taking a pledge to stand up against bullying. A balloon release followed, symbolizing that commitment. Then students participated in a fun run with anti-bullying t-shirts, banners and posters to bring awareness to the community. It was a fun-filled day, and the staff at Nay Ah Shing see a bright future for the schools through this program!

Staff at the schools were trained in the program over two days and spent the summer training additional staff and planning how to incorporate the program into their schools.

The program is based around four basic yet very important rules: 1. We will not bully others; 2. We will try to help students who are bullied; 3. We will try to include students who are left out; 4. If we know that someone is being bullied we will tell an adult at school and at home.

These rules are posted throughout the school and discussed with students.

The program also includes a morning meeting with students every Wednesday to discuss bullying topics and issues, and it provides the students with resources and answers to their questions about bullying and how to stop or prevent it.



Nay Ah Shing students and staff took part in a fun run and balloon release on October 2 to kick off the Olweus program.

Department of Administration Focuses on Jobs and Culture

Commissioner of Administration Catherine Colsrud



The Department of Administration is working on several initiatives, including human resources policies, Department of Labor updates and State of the Band planning.

The Band is mandated by the federal government to perform background checks as part of our grant funding agreements. The Department of Administration is creating hiring guidelines for Band Employees and/or contractors who may come in contact with school children on a regular basis. The Solicitor General has provided opinions and material on the mandatory background investigations HR needs to perform on all education employees, and other Band employees who may come into contact with school children. This will be a change that expands from just education employees to all band positions that may come into contact with the school children. This also extends to contractors, so an educational piece will need to be done for those who deal with contracts. We are meeting weekly to create new policies and procedures.

The Department is also:

- Bringing culturally-relevant training to outer districts

instead of being centralized at government center. Certified facilitators in each district will conduct the training, which will be scheduled in the New Year after the holidays.

- Implementing community outreach in all districts by having an HR representative attend the community meetings, do a short presentation on open jobs, bringing applications along, and answering general questions from the community.
- Restructuring HR, bringing in an executive director to help facilitate the reorganization and restructure of the department. As the number of government programs offered has increased, the HR department is feeling the pinch of being undersized for the current employee base.

Michele Palomaki, Michael Kafka (DOL Director) and I are meeting with our regional director next week to start the process to revise our plan before submission. We have gotten good information back from the Tribal Employment Rights Officer and Michele when they recently attended the DOL conference in Wisconsin. This will benefit Band Members by expanding the training courses we are able to fund and streamlining the approval process.

In addition to these activities, the Department of Administration is:

- Planning the State of the Band events. RFPs will be put out for bids on fry bread, flowers/center pieces and gifts. Steve Premo is working on artwork for the invitation and other artwork needed for the event.
- Working with the District III community to research the history of the district with the goal of producing two books specific to our area.
- Planning Elders pot luck and story sharing in D3. This is a spin-off of the history project. The elders really enjoy getting together and sharing their photos with each other. They want to continue this get-together and would like to show off their cooking skills by having potlucks.
- Working to get BlueJay Wireless to provide information to the communities on free phones and inexpensive data packages. Those who are eligible will be able to get a free phone, 250 free minutes and 250 free texts each month. This will be offered for 12 months, and Band Members will be able to renew for another 12 months of free service.

HHS Responding to Needs of Mothers, Families

Sam Moose, HHS Commissioner



Health and Human Services is coming off what is typically our most active month. In October we hosted Health Fairs in each district during the week of October 19-23.

October was also the month where we conducted a homelessness survey in collaboration with Wilder Foundation and the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

The Behavioral Health Department hosted the Assistant Commissioner of the MN Department of Health and Human Services for a tour of chemical dependency programs on the reservation in District 1. The Assistant Commissioner hosted a listening session at Eddy's on October 22 to hear about substance abuse problems in the region.

The month of November gets us back to normal with our typical department work and regular calendar of monthly activities.

The following are a few of our many projects:

Special HHS Project:

Crisis Pregnancy Support Team. This team was developed and directed through a Commissioner's Order in September that requires HHS departments to form a team to coordinate care between departments to ensure that women who are identified as using drugs or alcohol during pregnancy are given priority and receive care and support from all departments. The team is led by the Wraparound facilitator and works with other departments to help women and their children who are impacted by substance use during pregnancy and also cases where infants are delivered with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome. Currently the team is working with several women who previously would have been falling through the cracks.

Public Health Department Update:

The major new initiative for the Public Health Department

during November is working on the development of a new line of Waivered Services. The department is engaging with the Department of Human Services to expand offerings of services to elders and disabled people through Waivers, which allow people who are eligible for Medicaid and Medicare to be able to access additional services through the Mille Lacs Band.

There is important work being done in collaboration with other HHS departments to bring Maternal Child Health Nurses in contact with the most vulnerable substance using pregnant mothers and mothers who have delivered NNAS babies.

November is National Quit Month: Carol Hernandez and Amy Maske will be presenting in each district during the month.

Health Services Department Update

The Health Services Department includes the clinic services in all districts as well as the Assisted Living Units in District 1 and 2. The major theme of projects across Health Services in November is continuing to address quality improvement.

A significant focus of the department is being spearheaded by the Quality Improvement Coordinator and her work in collaboration with the HHS Quality and Compliance Department. These activities include policy and procedure reviews for each health service department (ALU, Lab, Nursing, Dental, etc.).

Community Support Services

During November the department is focusing a good deal of effort on bringing some additional services to District 2. The East Lake food shelf was operational during the last week in October and will be open Monday through Friday from 1-5 PM in the District 2 ALU Building.

The department is also working on putting the finishing touches on the greenhouse project that is being constructed in District 2.

In addition, the department is sending the Wraparound Team to intensive training on the High Fidelity Wraparound process that we are utilizing to help coordinate services and support around struggling Band members.

Family Services Update:

The Family Services department is focusing on trying to keep up with the serious demand for Child Protective services that has arisen due to the opiate crisis.

The department is involved in a collaboration with the Tribal Court and Band Legal Aid to administer a Community Justice Assessment Survey to identify areas of improvement.

The department is also developing a new Family Preservation team, which will provide a strong, culturally-focused alternative to cases that are in danger of entering the Child Protection system.

The department will be relocating to a new building on Highway 169 in Onamia. This move was critical to allow for program expansion in the Family Services departments and the Behavioral Health and Public Health departments that share space in the building on Noopiming Drive.

Behavioral Health Department Update

The major project focus of the Behavioral Health Department are six initiatives outlined in the plan developed by Health and Human Services titled Opiate Crisis: A Community Response from Health and Human Services, which has been outlined in previous issues of Inaajimowin. The Mille Lacs Band's Health and Human Services Department has arrived at a six-pronged strategy to address the problem and help the community move in a healthy direction.

The initiatives in the process of implementation are as follows:

- Creation of a Neonatal Drug Use Response Team
- Development of a recovery-oriented care system
- Strengthening of outpatient services
- Exploration of new residential treatment options
- Expansion of women's and children's programs
- Enhancement of existing prevention programs and collaborations

DNR Considers Hatchery, Stocking Program

DNR Commissioner Susan Klapel



The Department of Natural Resources is working on our strategic plan for the next 5 to 10 years. We are looking at the impacts of climate change on our lands, air and water. The effects will also change the wildlife and vegetation in this

region. We are making plans so that our children's children will be able to live comfortably and utilize the same traditions we do today. Through our fisheries and wildlife departments, the environment specialists and our land and forestry divisions we are working toward preservation of our natural resources not for us but for the people who are going to be here in the future.

The Mille Lacs Band's first Fisheries Program is taking shape with help from a Tribal Wildlife Grant, and we are developing partnerships with the Minnesota DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to begin feasibility studies on a future fish hatchery and stocking program for the Mille Lacs Band. We are also updating the vegetation sampling manual for Mille Lacs Lake and assisting the state fisheries with a study that will observe marked walleye hatchlings in Mille Lacs Lake. Currently, the old wastewater treatment facility is the targeted property for the proposed hatchery.

Our conservation officers attended all the district health fairs and completed firearms safety classes in McGregor. The tribal deer hunting season has begun, and they are finishing upcoming classes on Orienteering and Outdoor Survival. The officers will work with the licensing and real estate departments to develop maps for Band Members that will show hunting areas and lakes available to harvest walleye and

other species.

On October 15, the Mille Lacs Band DNR land maintenance installed a 190 ft. dock on Mallard Lake. The old dock was unsafe and on state land. It will be removed this winter. The new dock will allow for better and safer access for Band members who are ricing.

We are also going to install five facility-scale Photo-voltaic (PV) systems on four Mille Lacs Band buildings. These systems are intended to lower the carbon footprint of the Mille Lacs Band and to provide an educational tool for energy conservation and climate change. This project will also provide PV technical training for five Mille Lacs Band members.

The Forestry and Fire program has been conducting a number of different projects throughout Band-owned lands: prepping fire prevention equipment for fall fire season, improving access to band properties, prepping forest trails for hunting season, cleaning up of blow-down that occurred in District III area, conducting annual fire suppression activities and improving trails. We are also working with the wildlife department at the 3,300-acre parcel to improve habitat for the golden-winged warbler.

We have also recently purchased a truck that will aid in fire suppression, and we have purchased a sturdy side-by-side UTV that will be outfitted to be a fire-suppression vehicle that can go out in the field and be more mobile. This purchase was important because the current fire truck needs to stay in District I for fire season, as we are the first responders for fire on the properties in District I. By adding the truck and side-by-side to our equipment, we will be able to better work with our outlying districts.

The Namachers Lake project construction is completed. We

are waiting for the lake to refill and making plans to introduce fish to the lake in the spring. It is our intention to preserve a run of the Mille Lacs Lake walleye strain in this lake.

Additional activities:

- The THPO Office monitored the Eddy's wastewater project, which was completed in late October.
- The jingle dress documentary is almost ready for public showing; the premiere showing to Band members first will be in February or March of 2016.
- We are still working with Government Affairs on Enbridge issues, boundary issues and land use issues.
- The Mille Lacs Real Estate Department acquired 16 properties in fee simple status during fiscal year 2015. This included almost 400 acres in District III, 200 acres in District II and over 80 acres in District I.
- The Brownsfield Department has also remediated approximately 10 properties, which could include demolition of a structure and returning the land back to the natural environment or making the property suitable for rebuilding.
- The Enrollment Office will soon be uploading the new Enrollment Software "Progeny," a valuable tool for tribal membership data management.
- The Probate Office will soon be online with ProTrac system, a Probate Management and Tracking System.



This photo from the St. Paul Pioneer Press was reprinted in the Mille Lacs Messenger on Feb. 16, 1950. The original caption said, "Left to right: Ole Sam, and Jim Davis, of Isle; Kent Fitzgerald, Indian area placement officer; Fred Sam, of Vineland, chairman of council; Mrs. Jim Hill, housewife of Vineland; and Mrs. James Beaulieu, cook at the Indian school and secretary of the council."



The Buck Moore Dam was removed in late October to lower the lake level and bring back the lake's wild rice beds.

Ogechie Restoration Project Nears Completion

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

In 1950, Mille Lacs Band Chairman Fred Sam expressed fears that the rice crop on Lake Ogechie in District I would be destroyed by the construction of a concrete dam. A St. Paul Pioneer Press story reprinted in the Feb. 16, 1950 *Mille Lacs Messenger* read as follows: "Onamia Lake, once a source of much wild rice, has been raised and most of the wild rice beds destroyed. Lake Ogechie, another rice lake, is to be raised four feet, he (Fred Sam) said, which means another heavy loss to the Indians."

The dam was built anyway, and Sam's fears were realized, as wild rice was almost completely eradicated from the lake.

Now, wild rice may once again grow thick on Lake Ogechie as the result of a Band-led restoration project. During the

summer and fall of 2015, changes were made at both ends of the lake: upstream where the Rum River leaves Mille Lacs, and downstream, where the river leaves Ogechie.

During the summer, as part of the replacement of the Rum River Bridge on Highway 169, a fixed-crest weir was built at the outlet of Mille Lacs Lake. This new structure replicates the current flow from Mille Lacs Lake into Lake Ogechie while maintaining existing water levels within Mille Lacs Lake.

In late October, Landwehr Construction of St. Cloud removed three feet from the Buck Moore Dam in Mille Lacs Kathio State Park, at the downstream end of Lake Ogechie.

As a result, the lake level will be lowered by three feet, bringing it back to its natural level and creating the right

conditions for wild rice production.

For more than 60 years, the level of Ogechie has been kept artificially high by the Buck Moore Dam in Mille Lacs Kathio State Park, where the river leaves Ogechie. The three-foot concrete structure was built in 1952 and named for Hugh "Buck" Moore, the son of a family that homesteaded in the area.

Now, Lake Ogechie will again follow Lake Onamia, which was restored several years ago by the removal of a dam. The result has been an impressive resurgence of wild rice, benefitting local ricers as well as migrating waterfowl.

Community Development Working on Housing, Infrastructure

Commissioner of Community Development Percy Benjamin



The Community Development Department has been hard at work on infrastructure projects in District I, the Powwow Grounds in District II and the Zhingwaak housing development in District III, among other day-to-day activities.

In District 1, roads, sewer pipes and lift stations are being installed in the Sher property development. The total cost of this infrastructure project exceeds 5 million dollars. There will be approximately 40 lot sites available for housing units in Phase 1 of the project and another 50 lot sites in Phase 2.

We are currently looking into high speed Internet services and residential security cameras in our new developments. The lighting and security cameras were ideas brought forward from elder meetings that have taken place over the last few years with the chief executive. These plans will eventually be implemented in all three districts.

The Vineland Road paving in District I was completed using mostly BIA grant dollars totaling approximately \$600,000. The ceremonial building parking lot has also been repaved along with stripes and a new sidewalk.

Minobimaadiziwin shelter (the old Budget Host) is currently getting a slight remodel, which includes new windows right now and eventually a new kitchen area to accommodate the guests. A steel roof will be installed this spring.

The shelter is offering hand drum-making classes and will continue classes once per month going forward and eventually start drum and singing classes to anyone who is interested. There are still weekly sweat lodges being held due to the high demand of guests and local individuals. The Minobimaadiziwin recently purchased sewing machines to offer quilt making that would help assist individuals who want to attend Big Drum ceremonies during this fall and upcoming spring seasons. Some of our local Ojibwe speakers have offered services to the program, and we are currently interviewing for a coaching position.

Construction on the new powwow grounds in District II is expected to continue until the ground freezes. The new grounds will consist of an arena arbor, shower building, RV parking, campsites, roads and septic system to allow for three seasons of usage. Also there is space available for a future softball field and outdoor basketball court. The total cost of this project is estimated to exceed \$2.5 million. The project is expected to be completed in time for next July's annual Gishkonigewag powwow.

Four new homes are currently under construction in East Lake right now with anticipated completion before this winter.

In DIIA, three new homes on Moose Drive are being built with the same anticipated completion date.

In District III, we are currently finishing construction on six elder homes in the Zhingwaak development. We anticipate the completion of seven more homes in the early winter months

for a total of 13 units. There is also a four-plex unit currently being built with an early spring completion date set, bringing the total up to 17 units.

Sewer and water lines are being installed for the next phase of the Zhingwaak development. This work will continue until the ground freezes and will start back up in the springtime, with roads and lots developed next summer.

Currently still in the planning/architect phase is a community recreation center in Hinckley. Bi-weekly planning meetings are taking place at Grand Casino Hinckley. We hope to complete the planning phase this winter with a groundbreaking next spring or early summer.

We have also completed paving driveways starting in District II and District III, and we are hoping to get District IIA complete before the winter weather arrives; if not, the driveways will all be completed next spring band wide.



New Excavator Will Be Used in All Districts

A Caterpillar 316e excavator has found a new home at the Mille Lacs Band Earthworks building in District III east of Hinckley, but likes its operators, it will be spending some time on the road. Chris Matrious, left, and Chad Dunkley, right, are both trained in operation of the 42,000-pound machine. Commissioner of Community Development Percy Benjamin said the excavator is twice the size of the Band's old machines and can do twice the work. He said the Band is investing in improvements to machinery in order to better meet the needs of the Band and its members.

Dental Clinic Information

District I

MTWF: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thursday: 1 to 5 p.m.

Patients are scheduled all day, but emergency walk-in slots are open daily. Walk-in patients are welcome on a first come, first serve basis MWF, from 8:00 AM- 11:00 PM and 1:00 PM- 3:00 PM and Thursdays from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM.

District III Lake Lena =LL

November 19: 9 a.m. to noon, 12:30 to 3 p.m.

Walk-in clinic hours 10 a.m. to noon.

November 20: 8:30 a.m. to noon, 12:30 to 2 p.m.

Walk-in clinic hours 9:30 a.m. to noon.

District II East Lake

December 8: 9 a.m. to noon, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Walk-in clinic hours 10 a.m. to noon.

December 9: 9 a.m. to noon, 12:30 to 2 p.m.

Walk-in clinic hours 10 a.m. to noon.

Hours and dates are subject to change.

To schedule an appointment call (320) 532-4779.

Q: Do I need to take a vitamin D supplement

A: It's likely -- 70 to 75 percent of women are deficient in vitamin D. To know for sure, request a simple blood test (called 25-hydroxy-vitamin D) from your doctor; your levels should be between 40 and 100. Vitamin D is critical: Its deficiency is linked to osteoporosis, low immunity, and coronary artery disease. It's also an important nutrient in the prevention of several cancers (including breast and prostate).

So many people are deficient because the only way that our bodies can produce vitamin D is by exposure to the sun. But if you live north of the 35th parallel (which runs from southern California through North Carolina), the sun's rays are not strong enough during the winter months for vitamin D production, and even below that latitude, it takes much longer in the winter to get the amount you need. For people who are deficient, I start them off at 2,000 units a day, and often two days of the week I give them 20,000 units. Once they're back up to the optimal range, I recommend a minimum daily supplement of 1,000 units, which is the equivalent of 10 to 15 minutes of exposure to strong sunlight.

Note: People with calcium and kidney stone problems need to be taking extra vitamin D, and it's always important to clear any new supplement with your doctor before taking it.

Source: www.wholeliving.com/ask-dr-merrell



Dental Van

The Shakopee Mdewakanton Mobile Unit has been making the rounds of the Mille Lacs districts this fall. The mammography unit was on site at the health fairs in October, and the dental team came by Wewinabi Early Ed on Nov. 5. Back: Debbie Sumner, DDS, and Pearl Swift, dental assistant. Front: Courtney Hahn, dental assistant, and Dan Hockinson, mobile unit coordinator.

Corporate Ventures Shares Updates with Band Members

– Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures is currently reviewing deal flow for economic development projects in District II. The Commissioner meets regularly with the District II & IIA Advisory Committees to discuss ideas and projects.

– The Crowne Plaza Riverfront Hotel was rebranded to the InterContinental Saint Paul Riverfront on October 5. The new 410-room and -suite hotel offers stunning views of the Mississippi River and downtown Saint Paul skyline. The mid-century modern design and décor exude the brand's iconic elegance and glamour that the InterContinental Hotels Group brand has been renowned for since the first hotel opened in 1946. Every square foot of the property has been updated from the guest rooms to the meeting spaces, including a new restaurant—the new Citizen Supper Club, with a nod to the bygone era of the 1960s.

– In October, MLCV purchased the DoubleTree Minneapolis Park Place Hotel, expanding its hospitality portfolio. After an extensive due diligence process and being awarded the bid, MLCV officially acquired this hospitality asset in St. Louis Park. The popular hotel is close to shopping and is minutes away from the Target Center, Target Field and the new Vikings Stadium. This acquisition further strengthens the MLCV portfolio of hospitality assets, which already includes the InterContinental Saint Paul Riverfront, the Doubletree by Hilton Downtown Saint Paul, the Oklahoma City Embassy Suites, Eddy's Resort and our hotels at Grand Casino Mille Lacs and Grand Casino Hinckley.

– Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures is hosting its 16th Annual Fall Feast on Thursday, November 19, at 5 p.m. at the Grand Casino Mille Lacs Events & Convention Center. Entertainment will be provided by hypnotist Sami Dare.

– Also in November, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures will roll out a new Mille Lacs Band recognition card — exclusive to Band members — that can be used at our non-gaming hotels as well as our non-gaming businesses for monthly discounts. Band members will receive a mailer in early November with more information. Information about our latest investment will also be included in that letter. If you do not receive a letter, please contact the enrollments office at 320-532-7784 to update your address on file. Then, contact MLCV at 320-532-8810 or inquiries@mlcorporateventures.com to get a card issued.

Crowne Plaza Rebranded as InterContinental Saint Paul Riverfront

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures (MLCV) today announces the opening of the prestigious InterContinental® Saint Paul Riverfront hotel, ushering in a new era of luxury for Minnesota's vibrant capitol city.

The InterContinental® Saint Paul Riverfront hotel is an InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) property that showcases mid-century modern design and décor. The hotel's 410 fully renovated guestrooms and suites offer remarkable views of the Mississippi River and downtown Saint Paul skyline. The elegance and glamour that the InterContinental brand has been renowned for since the first hotel opened in 1946 is evident in this multi-million dollar renovation.

Joe Nayquonabe Jr., CEO of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, said the change isn't just about creating a more refined hotel experience — it's about delivering on MLCV's commitment to a higher level of excellence in all of its business ventures.

"We strive for continuous improvement. When we purchased the hotel in 2013, we immediately committed to making this historic property even better," Nayquonabe said.

"That commitment takes on a literal form that our guests can feel in the amazing renovation we've completed at the InterContinental® Saint Paul Riverfront."

The Mille Lacs Band's continued investment in downtown Saint Paul sets up the city and the Band for continued economic success.

"In our teachings, we focus on protecting future generations," said Melanie Benjamin, Chief Executive for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. "In an economic sense, that means diversifying our economy, which is what these hotels mean for the Mille Lacs Band. We're especially proud of our partnership with the City of St. Paul, and view this project as evidence of what tribes and cities can achieve



Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin, Board Member Arlene Weous, General Manager Tim Blaschke, Corporate Commissioner Joe Nayquonabe Jr and Joanne Whiterabbit, Executive Director of the Minnesota American Indian Chamber of Commerce.

when they work together."

"This reinvestment will continue downtown Saint Paul's rapid growth and vitality," said Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman. "I am thankful to have the partnership of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. The opening of the InterContinental® Saint Paul Riverfront is key to the continued success of our downtown business district."

Every square foot of the property has been updated from the guest rooms to the meeting spaces, even a new restaurant.

Weight Loss Challenge Gets Started As Holiday Season Gets Underway

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

A new weight loss challenge kicked off earlier this month with the intent of helping its participants lose inches and pounds during what can be one of the most difficult seasons to accomplish those goals.

At least 150 people have pledged to commit to healthy eating and lots of exercise during the holidays in an effort to lose a percentage of their body's weight in a contest sponsored by the Band's Diabetes Program that goes through the end of December.

"We're doing this so people can either lose weight or maintain their weight over the holidays," said the Band's Fitness Coordinator, Jim Ingle. "You can still eat sensibly and hit your goal through portion control."

The way it works is people picked a partner and will take on the challenge as a team. The pair was assigned a goal, and if they hit the goal each of the participants will earn a \$30 gift card along with bragging rights for accomplishing a feat that many find extremely difficult.

Since the competition began, Jim has noticed that more people are exercising during their lunch hours.

Cyndy Travers, a certified dietician and certified diabetes educator, encourages participants to eat small meals throughout the day and "not to starve yourself."

"Drink plenty of water," she said. "Many times people think they are hungry but they are really thirsty."

She said that everyone should strive to eat a balanced plate

that includes more vegetables than anything else.

Band member Carmen Weous is one of the 150 people who have signed up to participate in the challenge. Besides maintaining or losing weight, her goal is bigger — she wants to stop taking medicine to control her diabetes.

"I started to work out to control my blood sugar and went from taking two pills to one pill a day and I was able to stop using insulin," said Carmen. "The weight's been coming off slowly but it's coming off."

Carmen stepped up her fitness routine a few months ago and figures the extra boost of a competition will help her stay focused during the holidays.

"It's been hard work, but I enjoy exercising and it's a big accomplishment for me."

Carmen's dad, Tony Weous, who passed away in January 2014, was a diabetic, but was able to control it through exercise and by doing that set a good example for his daughter.

So far she's lost about 12 lbs. and about three inches from her waistline. Besides participating in the weight loss challenge, Carmen has also joined Weight Watchers.

"My buddy in the challenge will help keep me accountable," she said.

But, more importantly, Carmen is holding herself accountable because she wants to live a long healthy life that is free of medicine.

Helena Moose Graikowski — A Life in Three Cultures

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

Between Three Cultures

Many Anishinaabe know the feeling of being between two cultures — the dominant culture of Santa Clause, sitcoms and smartphones vs. the traditional culture of powwows, the sugarbush and the Big Drums.

Helena Moose Graikowski adds a third culture to the mix: the culture of the Deaf.

According to the World Federation of the Deaf, “Deaf people as a linguistic minority have a common experience of life, and this manifests itself in Deaf culture. This includes beliefs, attitudes, history, norms, values, literary traditions, and art shared by Deaf people.”

At Helena’s home in District I, she shared her story using sign language interpreted by her daughter, Gilda Burr.

Helena was born to parents Alex and Annie (Davis) Moose in 1938, the second youngest of eight children.

Alex was well known around Mille Lacs and beyond, due to the fact that he was a writer of *Indian Compass*, a book about Anishinaabe life. Helena remembers seeing him in his workroom, staring into space, deep in thought while working on his writing project.

Annie, Helena’s mom, was the sister of Henry Davis Sr. and the aunt of the late Marge Anderson.

Among Helena’s earliest memories was moving from their home at the end of Indian Mission Road in the winter of 1944, riding in a horse-and-buggy to their new house at the edge of the Chiminising (District IIa) reservation. Alex had purchased the house with earnings from work on the Alaska Highway.

Shortly after the move, Annie took Helena to the Academy for the Deaf in Faribault, where she would spend the next 13 school years until she was 19 years old.

At first she was afraid, unsure where she was going or why. She was shown to her room, where there was a small bed, a chair and some dolls. Her mother slipped out when Helena was playing, and that was the last she saw of her family until Christmas, 13 weeks later.

She missed her little sister Brenda the most. The two were inseparable, and Brenda was her “interpreter.” The two went everywhere together and had their own way of communicating.

Although it was difficult to be away, it was a valuable experience for Helena. In those days, there were no special needs classes or paraprofessionals to help deaf children learn

in mainstream classes.

The school for the deaf taught Helena to communicate in sign language, speech and writing, word by word. It took years to learn to read and write, just as it does for hearing children. In addition to the “3 R’s” and science and history, Helena also learned to read lips and people’s expressions and how to get along as a deaf person in a hearing world.

Early on, she fought with some of her classmates, who



made fun of her for her “dirty skin,” but soon they came to accept each other, forging bonds that would last a lifetime.

Helena has fond memories of being home on breaks from school. She and Brenda would ride their bikes or play with their friend JoAnn Sam. During the winter she would tag along with her brother Freddy when he went hunting. She also enjoyed fishing with her brother Basil. “I always got all the fish, and he would never get any,” Helena signed with a smile.

In late summer the family went ricing. Helena was the poler, and Brenda would knock, but Helena has no illusions about their mastery of the art. “We were just small girls playing around, so we never earned much pay,” she said.

She remembers a day when she was 19, crossing a big lake somewhere, with waves crashing against the boat. “We were in an aluminum canoe going through really rough waters,” she said. “It was challenging to get through, and we were far from land. We didn’t wear lifejackets then, and I didn’t know how to

swim, but it was very beautiful, one of the most serene times I can remember. I wish I had a picture of it.”

Being deaf made it difficult for Helena to understand some aspects of Anishinaabe culture. “When I came home, I would go to the dances and ceremonies, but I didn’t understand the purpose of them,” she said. “I became a little frightened because I wasn’t around it as much as the other kids.”

After graduation, Helena went to cosmetology school, but she was allergic to the chemicals. She thought about going to college, but fate intervened.

Helena had been writing to a boy named Richard from the school for the deaf in Delavan, Wisconsin. The two had met when he came to Faribault for a football game. “When we were at the game, I just wanted to talk to him a little bit, but he kept chasing after me,” Helena recalled.

Eventually the two got married and moved to Appleton, Wisconsin, where they started their family. The two had five children and moved around Wisconsin while working various jobs.

After her children went off to school, Helena worked in a factory making parts for TVs, then went to school for key-punching. Later she operated a drill press and worked for the Postal Service.

Helena’s mom was protective of her when she was on the reservation, for fear that someone might take advantage of “the little deaf girl.” But after attending school and moving to Wisconsin, Helena learned to feel comfortable and unafraid — driving, working and socializing as part of the deaf culture.

“Most of my friends are deaf because that’s who I can relate to,” she said. “And we’re still friends, even after all these years.”

In 1992, after her divorce from Richard, Helena moved to Chiminising to be near her son Corwin and daughter Gilda, who had moved to the reservation. She worked at the casino and received computer training at Anishinaabe OIC.

In 2009 she moved to District I. Her son Corwin had moved to the west side of the lake by then, and he wanted his mom to be close by.

These days Helena enjoys walking her dog to the lake, or sitting on a bench in her yard, or being with her children and grandchildren.

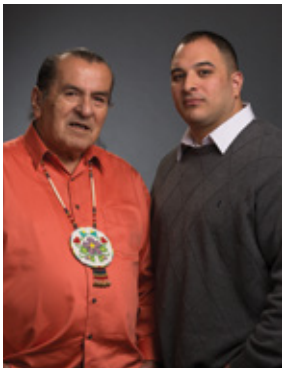
She has attended reunions at the school in Faribault, and she stays in touch with old friends — from three cultures.



Helena Moose Graikowski, right, with her father Alex Moose, son Corwin and grandson Ricky.



Helena loves her home in District I, where she can walk her dog to the lake.



Gikinoo'Amawind – Nanaginind A'Aw Abinoojiinh Teaching and Disciplining Our Children

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

Booch da-gikinoo'amawind a'aw abinoojiinh gaa-ina'oonwewizid a'aw Anishinaabe. Ishke mii ingiw giniigaaniiminaaning ingiw ebinoojiinyiwijig noongom ge-ni-bimiwidoojig gaa-izhi-miinigoowiziyang anishinaabewiyang. Ishke a'aw abinoojiinh mii-go gaye wiin ezhichiged ani-gikinawaabamaad eni-waabandang eni-izhichigenid iniw ogitiziiman.

We have to teach our children what we have been given as Anishinaabe. Our children are the ones who will be carrying on the teachings we have been given as Anishinaabe into the future. A child learns from observing his or her parents and in turn does the same.

Ishke noongom wenijaanisijig, mii iw ge-izhichigewaapan endaso-giizhik iniw odasemaawaan da-asaawaapan. Agwajiing odaa-asaawaan iniw odasemaawaan ani-bimi-ayaanid iniw Binesiwana. Odaa-biindaakoodaanaawaa waa-mamoowaad bagwaj waa-aabajitoowaad. Odaa-naazikaanaawaa a'aw Anishinaabe okwii'idid ani-biindaakoojiged anooj inakamigizid. Weweni daa-ozhiitaawag da-dazhiikamowaad waa-pagijigewaad ani-naazikamowaad ani-manidooked a'aw Anishinaabe. Da-anishinaabemotaadiwaad imaa endaawaad. Ishke mii a'aw abinoojiinh ge-waabandang mii dash gaye wiin ge-ni-izhichiged ge-ni-inaadizid oniigaaniiming.

What our parents can do on a daily basis is offer up their tobacco. They can put their tobacco outside as they hear the Thunder-beings going by. They can offer up their tobacco to the plants in the wild that they plan to use. They can also attend the ceremonies where the Anishinaabe is offering up their tobacco. They can prepare for these ceremonies by putting their offerings together in a good way that they plan to use in these ceremonies. They can also use the Ojibwe Language as they speak to one another in the home. This is what the young child will observe and will also continue to live his or her life in the same manner.

Ishke ginwenzh igo nibi-naadamawaa ani-ganoodamawag iniw odasemaan a'aw Anishinaabe ani-biindaakoojiged. Ishke dash ingiw aanind gaa-naadamawagig ishkweyang, azhigwa gaa-ishkwaa-ayaawaad niwenda-minwendaan waabandamaan onijaanisawaan ani-bimiwidoonid iniw ogitizimiwaan gaa-izhichigenid gii-pimaadizid. Ishke mii imaa wenjida ani-waabanjigaadenig gaa-izhi-wawiiingezid ogitizimiwaabanen weweni gii-gikinoo'amaagowaad geyaabi ani-gikinawaabiwaad ani-bimiwidoowaad iniw ogitizimiwaabanen gaa-wenda-apiitendamid.

I have been speaking for the Anishinaabe's tobacco for a good length of time. I really like seeing that some of the Anishinaabe I have helped in this way, that once they have passed on their children continue to carry on in the same way as their parents did. It really shows in how efficient the parents were in teaching their children that they still continue to carry on the same practices that their parents valued.

Daa-nanaginaa a'aw abinoojiinh. Ishke a'aw mindimooyenyiban gaa-nitaawigi'id mii iw gaa-ikidod, "Gaawiiin gidinigaa'aasiin a'aw abinoojiinh nanaginad. Gimino-doodawaa." Ishke noongom niwaabamaag ingiw abinoojiinyag azhigwa ani-baakishimind a'aw Manidoo-dewe'igan ani-aabajichigaazod imaa niimi'iding, mii

imaa gakina ingoji babaamibatoowaad imaa abinoojiinyag endanakamigak. Mii-ko gaa-igooyaan gii-kwiwizensiwiyaan gii-wiiji'iweyaan gii-izhaayaan imaa endazhi-niimi'iding, "Bizaan omaa nanaamadabin. Mii eta-go ge-onji-bazigwiiyamban maagizhaa gaye da-niimiyamban gemaa gaye waakaa'igaansing da-izhaayamban." Ishke nigii-igoo "Giishpin baamibatooyan omaa baakishing a'aw gimishoomisinaan bangishinan gidaa-wenda-wiisagishin." Mii imaa gikinoo'amawind a'aw abinoojiinh da-apiitenimaad gimishoomisinaan, aaniish naa mii iw iwidi gaa-onjikaad iniw Manidoo gii-miinaanid iniw Anishinaaben da-apenimonid.

A child should be disciplined. The old lady that raised me had said, "You are not doing a child harm when you discipline him or her. You are doing good to the child." I see that when we have our ceremonial dances and the drum is laid out to be used, the children are running all over the place in the dance hall. When I went along with those old people to the ceremonial dances as a young boy I was told, "Sit quietly. The only reason you need to get up is to go to the bathroom or to dance." I was also told, "If you were to run around while the ceremonial drum is being used, if you should fall you will hurt yourself badly." This is where a young child is taught to have respect for a ceremonial drum, after all the drum came from the Manidoo and was given to us as Anishinaabe to depend on for support.

Ishke dash gaye eko-maajaa'iweyaan, mii imaa noongom wenda-ombiigwewetoowaad abinoojiinyag babaamibatoowaad anooj izhichigewaad. Ishke mewinzhaa gaawiiin ingiw abinoojiinyag gii-pagadinaasiwag imaa da-bi-izhaawaad endazhi-maajaa'iweng. Ishke a'aw eni-gaagiigidod ani-maajaa'iwed, ishke imaa gegoo ani-noondang ombiigwewetoonid awiya, mii-go izhi-waniba'igod waa-ikidod.

Ever since I started doing funerals I noticed that today a lot of our children are making a lot of noise running around at the funeral site. A long time ago children were not allowed to be present at these funerals. When the one who is talking at the funeral hears some noise he will tend to forget what to talk about.

Ishke dash i'iw enendamaan noongom waabandamaan ingiw abinoojiinyag ezhichigewaad, mii-go imaa ani-naniizaanendamaan dibishkoo ani-naanaagandawendamaan aaniin ge-ni-inaadiziwaad oniigaaniimiwaang ingiw abinoojiinyag noongom. Ishke mii imaa wenjida da-ni-apiitendamawaawaapan iniw Manidoo dewe'iganan, miinawaa weweni da-doodawaawaad inow gaa-ishkwaa-ayaanijin azhigwa waa-maajaanijin da-ni-aanjikiinid. Ishke ani-gichi-aya'aawiwaad, gaawiiin gegoo oda-ni-apiitendanzinaawaa, mii dash geget da-nishwanaadizid a'aw Anishinaabe.

When I see what our children are doing today I begin to be fearful as I think on how these children will conduct themselves in the future. They should especially have respect for the ceremonial drum when it is laid out and should be especially respectful to the spirit of the deceased who is about to leave and change worlds. What is scary about it all is to realize that when these young people get older they will not have respect for anything, and this is when Anishinaabe will go downhill as a people.



Men at Work

Elder Larry Wade helped residents and staff at the Minobimaadziwin Hotel in District I rebuild their sweat lodge on Nov. 4. Larry said the old lodge was too big to heat efficiently. He quoted the late Margaret Hill, who once pointed to a poorly built wigwam, saying, "A man built that one." Sweat lodges are generally held on Monday evenings, with some for women, some for men, and some for both. Watch Facebook and the website calendar or call the Minobimaadziwin for information.

Building Wigwams Is Part of a Larger Quest

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

When Bradley Harrington learned that Larry “Amik” Smallwood wanted to build a traditional village at the Band’s cultural grounds in Rutledge, he was quick to volunteer his services.

Bradley learned to build a sweat lodge when he was serving a five-year prison sentence for DWI. Since a sweat lodge is built like a wigwam, Bradley figured he could do it.

So far, he has built the frames for four wigwams at the cultural grounds — three to be used for sleeping and one long-house for congregating or additional sleeping quarters.

He’s received help from his friend Cortney Nadeau and a men’s group from the American Indian Family Center. The Band DNR’s forestry department has also made considerable contributions, Bradley said.

It took him more than 10 hours to gather and prepare the poles, which are made of black ash, ironwood and maple. He and two of his sons spent another three or four hours to frame up each wigwam.

He buries the poles in the ground and slowly bends them into shape, tying the poles together where they cross.

Next year, he plans to gather the birch bark to be used to cover the frames. He and Larry also plan to build a cooking area.

“This is all part of my quest to learn Ojibwe,” Bradley said. “Coming here and doing this means I get to hang out with Larry.”

When Bradley was in prison at the Minnesota Correctional Facility in Lino Lakes, he had a revelation that started him on his quest and helped him give up the behaviors that had gotten him in trouble.

It was “Victim Impact Week” in April of 2010, a year after he started his sentence. Two men came in, one pushing the other in a wheelchair. It turned out that the man in the wheelchair had been paralyzed by a drunk driver — the man who was pushing the chair. The two had become close friends after the accident.

“Seeing that forgiveness made me finally able to forgive myself,” Brad said. “I was always feeling sorry for myself, but this guy has to sit in a wheelchair all his life. Watching those two guys interact, it was like part of me talking to another part of me. Ever since then, the relationship I have with myself is getting better.”

Bradley decided he should learn Ojibwe, which might help keep him out of trouble. He had an Ojibwe dictionary sent to him in prison, and other books like William Warren’s History of the Ojibwe People. “For the next 2-1/2 years I just focused on bettering myself, practicing new ways to talk to people,” Bradley said. “I even stopped cussing. As my relationship with myself got better, I was able to have deeper conversations with people.”

When he got out of prison, he considered moving away from the reservation to steer clear of bad influences, but his



On a September day at the cultural grounds in Rutledge, Bradley Harrington showed students from the Chiminising Niigaan program how to build a wigwam.

family and community meant too much to him.

He said to himself, “What kind of place would it be if all the good people got up and left?”

Instead he threw himself into the community. He got a job, signed up for college, joined the powwow committee, and started spending time with accomplished Ojibwe speakers like Larry, Lee Staples, Adrienne Benjamin, Chato Gonzalez, John Benjamin and Melissa Boyd — Bradley’s girlfriend.

Bradley teaches his kids Ojibwe, brings them to drum ceremonies and gets their help at the sugarbush. He’s teaching them to clean fish and process rice.

He also learns from Doug Sam at the District I cultural grounds — how to make a ricing pole and how to tap trees using sumac instead of metal taps.

“Just in a few short years, a lot has changed in my life,” Brad said. “If you were to tell me five years ago I’d be speaking Ojibwe and learning culture, I would’ve said ‘Yeah right. No way. I’m probably gonna keep getting drunk and end up back in jail.’ That was life. And now here I am.”

Bradley has learned enough Ojibwe to converse with other speakers, and even to teach. When a group of kids from the Chiminising Niigaan program came to see the wigwams recently, Bradley took the opportunity to teach them words like “mitig” (tree), “mitigoons” (branch) and “onapidoon” (tie it in place). He asked them “Aaniin ezhinikaazoyan?” (“What is your name?”) and “Aaniin ezhi-ayaayan?” (“How are you?”)

“When I heard the kids were coming, I went through my

notes and made sure I knew some of the words,” Bradley said. “I was able to not only show them how to build a wigwam, but to practice my pronunciation. With kids this age, anything you say just sinks in. They have a deep hunger for culture and learning.”

Although he’d love to share his knowledge with the next generation, Bradley’s felony means he’ll never be a licensed teacher. But he hopes he may be able to teach adults, be an administrator, or otherwise become involved in passing on knowledge and traditions.

For now, he does it informally, hoping to be a good influence to balance out some of the bad things he did in his past.

In the old days, he used to call his friends to say, “I got a case of beer,” or “I scored some drugs.” Now he calls them to go ricing, or fishing, or even to enroll in college.

“If I were to approach someone to do something good as many times as I did to go out and get drunk, I’d be making a pretty big difference,” he says.

His eyes mist over when he talks about how far he’s come.

“I’m grateful,” Bradley says. “Just being alive is pretty much a miracle in my eyes. With how deep down I went into drugs and drinking and violence, it’s almost too good to be true sometimes. It’s really awesome when I wake up and have a house full of kids, and I can round them up and show them how to turn the rice over, how to sack it up. That’s the least I can do for being the way I was, to give them a good start in life.”



Language and Leadership Group Takes Shape

Young Band members are devoting one Sunday a month to developing their language and leadership skills. The inaugural session was held Oct. 4 at Chiminising Community Center in District II and facilitated by Adrienne Benjamin, Byron Ninham and Laurie Harper, along with other adults. The name the students chose is “Ge-niigaanizijig,” which means “the ones who will lead.” For information on how to get involved, contact Adrienne at Adrienne.Benjamin@millelacsband.com. For more on this story, see future issues of Inaajimowin.

TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

Happy November Birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Floyd James Ballinger
Carleen Maurice Benjamin
Clifford Wayne Benjamin
Franklin James Benjamin
Irene Bernice Benjamin
Barbara Jean Benjamin-Robertson
Charles Alvin Boyd
William Boyd Jr.
Alice Elizabeth Carter
Mary Maxine Conklin
Mary Ann Curfman
Richard Thomas Dakota
Michael Roger Dorr
Donald Ross Eubanks
Thomas Rodney Evans
Terrance Wayne Feltmann
Roger Granger
Eileen Marjorie Johnson
Bridgette Marie Kilpela
George Vernon LaFave
Sidney Ray Lucas
Darlene Doris Meyer
Mary Ellen Meyer
Marie Linda Nahorniak
Bernadette Norton
Elizabeth Anne Peterson
Ralph Pewaush

Dale William Roy
David Wayne Sam
Leonard Sam
Karen Renee Sampson
Mary Ann Shedd
Kenneth Daryl Shingobe
Ronald Eugene Smith
Maria Ellena Spears
Nora Grace St. John
David Le Roy Staples
Donald Gerard Thomas
John Henry Thomas
Joyce Laverne Trudell
Lawrence Eli Wade II
Linda Marie Wade
Natalie Yvonne Weyaus
Sylvia Jane Wise
Patricia Beatrice Xerikos

Happy November Birthdays:

Happy Birthday **Railei** on 11/4 from mom, Kelia, Cyrell, Candy, Uncle Richard. Love you from Grandma Marlys. • Happy Birthday **Brandi Smith** on 11/9, with love from mom, Brandon, Chantel, Jazmin. • Happy Birthday **Mommy** on 11/9, with all our love, Elias, TANK, Alizaya and Rico! • Happy Birthday to

my wonderful **Auntie Brandi Jo** on 11/9, all my love Ahrianna Grace! • Happy Birthday **Samuel Eugene Benjamin** on 11/13 from Dad, love you! • Happy 2nd Birthday to **Lyric Bedausky** on 11/18. Lots of Love from Dad, Great Gramma Mary, Nikki, Papa, Auntie Taryn, Uncle Rome, Uncle Logan Great Auntie Brenda, Lucas, and the rest of the family. • Happy 3rd Birthday **Rico Garbow** on 11/19, with all our love – mommy, Elias, TANK, Alizaya, Gramma Tammy, Uncle Brandon, Auntie Chantel, Jazmin and Baby Nah! • Happy 2nd Birthday **Fredrick “Freddie” Louis Gahbow** on 11/20. We all love you bunches Bubby! Love, Mommy, Daddy, Gamma TT, Benny, Joshy, Caddy & LoLo! • Happy Birthday **Jason Lee Sam** on 11/22. Happy Birthday to my love, and many more. Love you, Sylvia. • Happy 14th Birthday to the twins **Ryan Pacheco** and **Rylie Pacheco** on 11/27. With lots of love from Auntie Louise, Uncle Rod, Shane, Courtney, Connor, Dan,

Emma, your sister Kelsie, Niece Annabel, and your Brother Syrus.

Other Announcements:

The Public Health Department Smoking Cessation Program would like to congratulate **Barb Laws** on reaching 3 months smoke-free. Part of the program provides incentives for reaching milestones. Barb chose a candle and yoga mat to help keep her on track with her healthy lifestyle goals. Way to go Barb, keep up the good work!! If you would like help with quitting smoking, please contact Amy Maske at 320-532-7760 or Kim Leschak at 320-532-7776 ext. 2407. • Congratulations to **Michael Costello**, who exceeded state standards in math and scored higher than his school, district and state in reading and math. Michael is 14 years old, in the 8th grade at the Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle school. Michael is thinking about engineering as a career but hasn't figured out which college to attend. We all are

so proud of you and keep up the good work. From Grandma Christine Costello, Anthony Costello and auntie Melissa, Maria and Marquell. • Grand Casino Mille Lacs will be holding a Blackjack class that will run for two weeks. Classes will start on Monday December 7, 2015, Monday through Friday from 10 am to 6 pm. Classes will be held in the Blackjack training room. Applications will be valid through Friday November 27, 2015. Interviews will be held on Monday November 30th and Tuesday December 1st. Send your resume to Grand Casino Mille Lacs to jkeller@grcasinos.com any other questions, please call 320-532-8232.

Submit Birthday Announcements

Send name, birthday and a brief message that is **20 WORDS OR LESS** to Myles Gorham at myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com or call 612-465-8018.

The deadline for the December issue is November 15.



WEWIN Fundraiser

The Mille Lacs Band chapter of WEWIN (Women Empowering Women for Indian Nations) hosted a breakfast fundraiser Nov. 5 at the District I Community Center. Members put together a tasty spread of fry bread, hard-boiled eggs, oatmeal, fried potatoes, bacon, sausages, coffee and juice.

Financial Help for Band Members

Bii Gii Wiin is a Native community resource created to help Native community members achieve a sense of prosperity and financial empowerment with the money they earn. We do this through providing individual mentoring and group training programs as well as an array of resources that help you to plan, manage and save money. Bii Gii Wiin programs are designed to help you make strides in these areas:

- Everyday money management
- Quickly grow your savings with a money-matching IDA- Individual Development Account
- Achieve home ownership
- Start your own business with the help of our Micro Entrepreneur training program

It may seem that owning a home, saving for college or starting a business may be out of reach—especially after paying all the monthly bills. At Bii Gii Wiin we know how tough it can be, Which is why we'd like the opportunity to help you see what's possible and start you on a path to achieving your dreams.

Native financial confidence starts here.

Drop by 1113 East Franklin Ave., Suite 200, in Minneapolis, or give us a call at (612) 354-2249 and set up a time to talk. You don't need to have a plan or prepare anything ahead of time. Just bring your desire to find out more.

Reporters Wanted

The Mille Lacs Band and Red Circle Agency are seeking Band members in all three districts to cover events and provide content for the Inaajimowin newsletter, millelacsband.com, and the Facebook page. If you or someone you know enjoys being out in the community, is active on social media, likes taking photos, or has an interest in writing, send an email to brett.larson@millelacsband.com or call (320) 237-6851. No experience necessary. Hours and pay will depend on work experience, education and availability.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
15	16	17 Easy Enrollment Day 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. DI Government Center 50th Iskigamiziga Traditional Pow-Wow Opening Session 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley Event Center Open Gym 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. DI Community Center	18 Circle of Health Outreach 1 - 4 p.m. Urban Office Honoring Native American Veterans Dinner 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. Minneapolis American Indian Center Open Gym 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. DI Community Center District III Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley	19 Elder Services Meeting Hinkley ALU District 3 Open Gym 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. DI Community Center 16th Annual Feast for all Mille Lacs Band Members 5 p.m. Grand Casino Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures Annual Feast 6 - 7:30 p.m. Grand Casino Mille Lacs	20 Ceremonial Dance Joe & George Mille Lacs	21 Ceremonial Dance Joe & George Mille Lacs
22	23	24 Wiidookodaadiwag Pow-Wow 1 - 3:30 p.m. Central Lakes College Circle of Health Outreach 1 - 4 p.m. District II-A (Isle) Community Center Open Gym 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. DI Community Center	25 Open Gym 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. DI Community Center	26 Mii Gwetch Day Open Gym 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. DI Community Center	27 Mii Gwetch Day Ceremonial Dance Bob & Perry Mille Lacs	28 Ceremonial Dance Bob & Perry Mille Lacs
29	30	<p>Want your event here? Email myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com or call 612-465-8018.</p> <p>Visit millelacsband.com/calendar for additional Mille Lacs Band events.</p> <p>Due to unavoidable delays in production of this paper, the calendar is shorter this month. A full monthly calendar will appear in the December Inaajimowin. You can also visit millelacsband.com for a full calendar of events. Click on "calendar" on the left side of the homepage. If you have items to add to the calendars, please email brett.larson@millelacsband.com or call (320) 237-6851.</p>				

November is National Family Caregivers Month

Jackie Jensen RN Mille Lacs Band Public Health

Let us first take this time to thank our family and friends that are caring for someone now. Your job is hard and often thankless. Be strong and know there is support and help for you out there.

Caregivers are more often females but certainly can be males also. They are often providing care for an elder or disabled spouse, but certainly it could be a parent, friend or even child.

No two cases are the same. What works for one family might not work for yours. There are many places to look for help and support, such as agingcare.com/Caregiver or aarp.org for elders in our lives. Children's services available are cdc.gov or disability.gov.

There are often local facilities that do respite time, which is time that a person in need of care could go into an adult day care while the caregiver is at work, or even stay a few days, allowing the caregiver a well needed and deserved break. Using respite does not mean you are weak or unable to provide care. It just means that you are taking time to be you and taking care of yourself also. If you are not healthy, you will not be of much help to the person you are caring for.

Recently I was talking to a local care giver that stated "I am doing this on my own, the family avoids coming here anymore." This is not uncommon for the family that has a choice to stay away as much as possible. It is hard to watch a loved one's health decline. But remember you are still not alone. You need to have time to deal with your own life issues and circumstances also. You have the right to ask family to come stay with this person, allowing you time to get out even if it's just for dinner. A local hospital or long-term care can do respite services with the correct payment sources. Mille Lacs Band Public Health does offer some assistance with personal cares for people in need of this service, but we do not provide respite or PCA cares.

Talk with the primary care providers for services available in your area. Call the county for other services or options in your area for increased services and assistance with caregivers needs.

Thank you to all of the Caregivers out there. Pat yourself on the back—you're doing great work in a hard field.



If you need anything from Circle of Health, don't be afraid to call one of these friendly ladies. Left to right: Roberta Lemieux, Pam Spears, Jamie Rancour, Ginger Weyaus, Shirley Boyd, Deb Smith, Bonnie John and Mary Kegg.

Make Plans to Eat Healthy and Exercise During the Holidays

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

During the holiday season, it's common for food to take the center stage. Family celebrations frequently include favorite foods and elaborate culinary masterpieces make everyone want to go back for second or third helpings of the delicious dish.

However, experts warn against over-indulgence and urge eaters to practice healthy habits during the festive holiday season.

Cyndy Travers, a certified diabetes educator and registered dietician for the Band, suggests that families look for a "physical activity and not just a food activity."

"Families could go out for a walk as a part of their holiday activities to make the focus on spending time together and not just the food," Cyndy said.

She also encourages people to move away from the food when socializing.

"If you go to a family gathering try to talk to people and not stand around the food when you do it," she said. "That will cut down on the nibbling."

Band member Carmen Weous is focusing on maintaining her weight during the holiday season. She has joined the fitness challenge offered by the diabetes program and is exercising daily. Sometimes she's walking, working out at home or during lunchtime with others at the District I fitness center.

"My goal is to go daily and do the circuit training that Jim Ingle has set up," said Carmen referring to the Band's fitness coordinator's daily circuit training sessions.

She admits that even though she's focused on her goals, the holidays make it harder to remain disciplined.

"It's tough because during our ceremonials there's a lot of food that isn't healthy...like frybread and dumplings," she said.

Still, Carmen plans to practice disciplined eating as much as possible. She will drink a lot of water, and fill up on fruits and veggies. She recently gave up drinking Diet Coke – which she loves – in an effort to lose weight.

Cyndy offers other suggestions that could help cut calories and make it easier to lose or maintain weight during the festive season ahead.

"Bring a healthy dish to any gathering you attend, start your day with a healthy breakfast so you're not starving and don't deny yourself," Cyndy advised. "Just take smaller portions or have a salad or soup first to take the edge off of your appetite."

She also advised that people should eat bigger volumes of less calorie-dense food too, so they feel satisfied.

Other tips include substituting fruit, like applesauce, for oil in recipes, avoiding artificial sweeteners and paying attention to beverages that are consumed. Cyndy suggests that sparkling water can be festive and a good substitute for carbonated beverages. She also says to avoid starchy foods and vegetables such as peas and corn.

Grilling, broiling and baking are also good ways to practice healthy eating during the holiday. While it may be succulent, it's better to avoid the fried turkey and stick with grilling or baking the bird.

Other tips to remember:

- Incorporating traditional foods such as fish, rice and veggies can help cut the calories and fat that can be found in the typical holiday meal.
- Don't skip meals because you'll end up hungrier and will eat more than intended.
- Eat slowly and savor every bite. It often takes 20 minutes before your brain will register that you are satisfied.
- Don't waste calories on foods you don't like. Choose the foods you really want and keep the portions small.
- Choose smaller portions of foods so you can sample several food items.
- Balance your meals to include equal portions of healthy choices and rich, high calorie foods.
- Fill up on fruits and veggies and other healthy snacks.
- Drink lots of water, cut back on high calorie beverages.
- Don't diet during the holidays. You could end up feeling deprived and could end up overeating. Focus on weight management instead.
- Be cautious of sugary foods – rich, sugary treats tend to make you crave more. Fight the urge with fruit or a small, satisfying portion of your favorite treat.
- Eat a light snack before going to holiday gatherings.
- Don't skip on your exercise routines.
- Enjoy your time with your family and friends and make them the center of attention, not the food.

Gloves for Hides

The Mille Lacs Band will give out gloves for deer hides this fall at deer registration stations. The District I, contact licensing agent Kevin Stobb at (320) 532-7896 or kevin.stobb@millelacsband.com; District II, Randi Harrington (218) 768-3311 or randi.harrington@millelacsband.com; District III, Vanessa Gibbs (320) 384-6240 ext. 230 or vanessa.gibbs@millelacsband.com. In District IIA, contact Carmen Green at (320) 676-1102 or carmen.green@millelacsband.com. In the Urban Area, contact Barb Benjamin-Robertson at (612) 872-1424 or barb.br@millelacsband.com.

Cultural Skills Teachers Wanted

The Mille Lacs Band DNR is seeking community members in

all three districts and the urban area who would be willing to teach cultural skills like hunting, snaring, trapping, processing, brain tanning, sugarbush, netting, ricing skills (pole making, knocker making), birch bark harvesting and others. Contact Rachel Shaugobay for more information at (320) 532-7443 or rachel.shaugobay@millelacsband.com.

HHS Feedback Form

If you have an idea about how the Band's Health and Human Services Department can serve our Community better, the Office of Quality and Compliance has a form on the website for your suggestions, questions, concerns, complaints or feedback. <http://millelacsband.com/.../health-and-h.../quality-compliance/>

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 toya@redcircleagency.com, brett@redcircleagency.com or mick@redcircleagency.com or call Mick at 612-465-8018.

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MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE
43408 Oodena Drive
Onamia, MN 56359
millelacsband.com



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.