

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

THE
STORY
AS IT'S
TOLD

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LIFE-CHANGER

DIABETES CHANGED JEFF'S LIFE. NOW HE
WANTS TO HELP OTHERS BY SHARING HIS STORY.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

MELANIE
BENJAMIN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Aaniin, Boozhoo! February was a whirlwind of meetings, including: an officers meeting, subcommittee meeting, and Tribal Executive Committee meeting of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe; a Native Nations Task Force meeting which we hosted with the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities; Indian legal Services board meeting; Reservation housing meetings and many meetings with Band members.

The majority of February, however, has been spent working on various law enforcement and public safety issues, including the opiate crisis. At the State of the Band Address, I spoke about our work over the past year to combat the opiate crisis. We have focused significant attention on educational efforts, getting the word out about the danger of opiates and the impact these drugs have on our babies. We have also been working with federal and other tribal law enforcement agencies to strategize about how to get the drug-dealers off our reservation.

For those who were unable to attend the State of the Band Address, there is some good news. Increasingly, young women suffering from addiction are beginning to come forward and ask for help after learning they are expecting a child. Just last week, a grandmother contacted me to let me know that her addicted daughter decided to seek help after learning she was expecting. We know of three babies who tested drug-free at birth last year because their mothers requested medical help early in their pregnancy.

As with all problems we face, the Band members will always have the best solutions. After holding round-table discussions in each District last year, I had our staff compile a community survey. A total of 237 surveys were completed, and the results made one point very clear: Band members who responded to the survey overwhelmingly want drug dealers re-

moved from the reservation and would be supportive of much more harsh consequences than are currently in place.

During the week of February 15, I held Elder Meetings in each District to share our preliminary data from the survey results. These were very powerful, emotional meetings because everyone has been impacted by this crisis in some way. Many of our elders are now the primary caregivers for their grandchildren born addicted to opiates and have seen first-hand the suffering and pain of opiate withdrawal on these precious little babies.

Our elders are 100% invested in stopping the drugs and destruction because they care so much about the future of our children. I am very grateful to all the elders for sharing their wisdom, passion and commitment to helping us stop this epidemic. Chi Miiigwech to Representatives Blake and Davis, who were able to attend these meetings and made strong statements of support for working on legislation to combat this crisis. Working together with the Band Assembly, I know we can enact changes to our laws to help us fight this epidemic and protect the future of our children.

I wanted to first share this information with elders, and will soon be scheduling follow-up roundtable meetings in each District that will be open to all community members.

On the law enforcement front, our Solicitor General has begun meetings with the U.S. Attorney to coordinate implementation of the Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA). In this landmark decision, the U.S. Department of Justice has agreed to reassume federal jurisdiction over the worst crimes committed on the Reservation. This is an historic event, as we are only the 2nd tribe in the United States to achieve this status since the law passed 6 years ago.

We have also begun meetings to create a forum in our trib-

al court system to deal with drug and alcohol-related offenses in a way that stresses treatment and recovery, versus punishment. These are sometimes called "treatment courts." I have also directed our staff to collaborate with the Judicial Branch to institute our own tribal parole/probation program, so that we can more successfully keep first-time offenders — especially our youth — out of the state court systems and get them on the right path. I am hoping to have exciting news about this for the community later this spring.

I am very grateful for our many Band members of all ages who are committed to making our community a better and safer place for everyone. Despite the problems we face, there is also a lot of good happening and wonderful work being done.

On that note, I also spoke at the State of the Band Address about Economic Justice, which is about recognizing and providing assistance to our many Band members who go to work every day and contribute to our community and work hard to make the right choices to support themselves and their families, and who rarely, if ever, ask for help from the government. At the end of this month, I'm holding a Cabinet meeting with my commissioners to focus on an Economic Justice proposal that will involve streamlining and decentralizing Band government, helping those who are able to work but are dependent on government programs to find employment, and in partnership with the Band Assembly, developing a proposal to shift the savings to our hard working Band members.

I am excited to share more about this in upcoming months. Chi Miiigwech to all Band members for all you do for our Band!



Canada First Nations Present Gift to Band

The Treaty 3 First Nations from Canada presented this beautiful gift to the Band last month. Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin (pictured with DNR Commissioner Susan Klapel) said it would be displayed in an appropriate place in the Government Center. Here is Band Member Kelly Applegate's story of where this gift came from: "At a Voigt Task Force meeting in Lac Courte Oreilles, members of Treaty 3 came down from Canada to share and learn from each other as Anishinaabe peoples, mostly about manoomin. It was an incredible day that had drumming, dancing, culture and language. There was a bundle exchange between the GLIFWC tribes and Treaty 3 Tribes. Mille Lacs provided copies of 'People of Big Lake' to place in the bundles. Our gifts from Treaty 3 included the beautiful quilt for the Tribe that was brought up to the Chief's Office. The Grand Chief of Treaty 3 shook my hand and told me that quilt was hand made by one of their elders. It was one of the most beautiful ones there! What an honor to give that to us!"

Enbridge Postpones Sandpiper, Line 3 Pipelines until 2019

Brett Larson Staff Writer

Enbridge Energy announced on Feb. 16 that it would delay construction of its Sandpiper and Line 3 pipelines until 2019 due to delays in the permitting process.

The news validates the important efforts of those who have been fighting the pipeline — especially members of the District II community.

Enbridge wants both pipelines to follow a new corridor that would cross the Sandy Lake and Rice Lake watersheds in District II, threatening wild rice beds Indian people have relied upon for centuries.

Many District II Band members have testified in opposition to both pipelines in hearings on and off the reservation.

Although it's good news, it doesn't mean the fight is over.

Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin said, "While we still have work to do, this is a victory nonetheless! The more we delay the Sandpiper pipeline, the more time we have to continue building the environmental case about the damage that a spill would do to our lands, water, resources and health. A thorough Environmental Analysis is our best chance of permanently stopping this pipeline. Miigwech again to all the Band members who have worked so hard to protect our community!"

On June 5, 2015, the Band held a public hearing on the pipeline in East Lake. It was a response to the state of Minnesota's failure to hold any hearings on tribal land. Several Band members called for the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) before approving the certificate of need.

On the day of the hearing, the PUC made its decision to grant the certificate of need for the project. In her testimony at the hearing, Secretary/Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu said, "We ask that the PUC slow down, stop, and back up to a point where it can give tribal governments the respectful and honorable consultation we are due."

In July, the Band sponsored a resolution passed by the National Congress of American Indians urging a thorough environmental review of the Sandpiper project "including respect of tribal resources." The resolution states that "Manoomin" or wild rice is a sacred food of "tremendous spiritual and cultural importance" and "a federally-protected tribal resource."

The process appeared to be moving along in Enbridge's favor until September, when the Minnesota Court of Appeals ruled that the PUC violated the Minnesota Environmental Protection Act (MEPA) by granting the certificate of need before

an Environmental Impact Statement had been conducted.

The court decision — which affirmed arguments Band members had been making all along — came after a lawsuit by the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy on behalf of Friends of the Headwaters.

Also in September, the Band filed a petition to intervene in the route permitting for the pipeline, which also may have contributed to Enbridge's decision to delay its plans.

The Sandpiper would bring oil from the Bakken formation in North Dakota across Minnesota to Superior, Wisconsin. The Line 3 pipeline begins near Edmonton, Alberta, and would transport dirty oil from Alberta's tar sands through the state.

Enbridge originally planned to start construction in 2016, but the Court of Appeals decision forced the company to delay its start date until 2017.

Now they've pushed it back another two years.

In 2013, Marathon Petroleum Corporation agreed to pay 37.5 percent of the Sandpiper construction costs in exchange for a 27 percent interest in Enbridge's North Dakota pipelines, according to the Dickinson Press.

Enbridge acknowledged that the delay will likely lead to higher costs for the pipeline projects.

'The Jingle Dress Tradition' Premieres at Grand Makwa

A large group of Mille Lacs Band members who helped make a new documentary for public television were able to see the fruits of their labor on both the big screen and small screens in February.

"The Jingle Dress Tradition," produced by Band member Rick Anderson, was shown at Grand Makwa Theatre in District I on Feb. 10 and 11, and it premiered on Twin Cities Public Television on Feb. 28. It will be shown again on TPT MN on March 6 at 1 a.m., 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. and on March 27 on TPT LIFE at 12 p.m.

The Band's Urban Office also hosted a screening of the documentary at All Nations Indian Church on Feb. 20.

Producer Rick Anderson said, "I'm very happy with the overall turn out of the film. A big shout out to Composer Brent Michael Davids for his brilliant music scoring. Brent has worked on many films including The Last of the Mohicans. This entire project was well planned with all those that participated in it. The TV station did their work, but the credit should now go towards all that were in the film along with Amik, Natalie, and all the Elder Advisors. Am hoping to make more good stories come to life."

The Band financed the project with help from a Minnesota State Arts Board grant. Twin Cities Public Television was also a partner in the production.

The documentary begins with the traditional story of the origin of the jingle dress as told by Larry 'Amik' Smallwood in Ojibwe. Amik heard the story from his grandmother, Lucy Clark, and also from the late Ben Sam and Fred Benjamin, and he has wanted to preserve the story for many years.

As Amik narrates, Band members Bradley Harrington, Melissa Boyd, Arianna Sam and others play the roles of the characters, speaking Ojibwe. The scenes were filmed at the Ojibwe Izhitwaawin cultural grounds in Rutledge.

Following the story, the scene shifts to the present, with interviews of Band members about the jingle dress tradition as it is practiced today. Adrienne Benjamin and Patty Sam talk about sewing jingle dresses, and Tom Benjamin shares two songs. Also featured are jingle dress dancers Darcie Big Bear, Ahnung Matrious, Chasity

Gahbow, Karla Smallwood and Va-laReya Leecy.

The film also includes "cameo" appearances by many Band members who attended last summer's Hinckley powwow, where most of the dancing scenes were shot.

Natalie Weyaus, who was instrumental in the production of the documentary, arranged the screenings at Grand Makwa and All Nations.

Nay Ah Shing students who attended the screening on Feb. 10 were proud and excited to see so many familiar faces on the big screen.



Left: Bradley Harrington, Adrienne Benjamin and Larry 'Amik' Smallwood all had major roles in the production. Right: Natalie Weyaus, second from left, was instrumental in bringing the project to fruition and planning the public screenings in February.

DNR Seeks Volunteers to Help with Walleye Hatchery Project

This spring, in response to a Joint Resolution from the Band Assembly and Chief Executive, the Department of Natural Resources will undertake a pilot project to explore the feasibility of a walleye hatchery at Mille Lacs Lake.

Commissioner Susan Klapel's DNR staff will collect eggs and milt (sperm) from this spring's tribal spearing harvest. The eggs will be fertilized in large jars, and once hatched, the fry will be transferred to tanks and then rearing ponds.

If all goes as planned, they will eventually find their way to Mille Lacs Lake and Namachers Lake in District III.

"We are stewards of this lake, so this research and the scientific experiments we're doing are directly related to following our culture," said Susan. Working with Susan are wildlife biologist Kelly Applegate, aquatic biologist Chad Weiss and fisheries biologist Carl Klimah.

The biologists are looking for Band members to assist them this spring by donating the eggs and milt from speared

walleyes. The DNR plans to set up an egg- and milt-collecting station during the spearing season at the landing by the powwow grounds.

DNR staff members will be in attendance at the Treaty Day event on March 25 at Grand Casino Mille Lacs to discuss the project and take names of volunteers. The Treaty Day holiday will also be recognized with an afternoon closure of Band facilities.

The Band Assembly and Chief Executive signed the Joint Resolution last August. It states that "the Band Assembly and Chief Executive believe that developing a fish hatchery here on Mille Lacs Lake can contribute to the restoration and preservation of the lake's unique walleye population, thereby ensuring that the Band's cultural heritage of harvesting walleye continues, as well as economic growth and jobs for the residents and business owners in the area."

Treaty Day Events

Each spring the Mille Lacs Band recognizes Treaty Day to celebrate the treaties that protect Band members' right to hunt, fish and gather — rights that were upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in March of 1999.

This year there will be a half-day holiday and a Treaty Day celebration March 25 at the District I Community Center. The event will begin at noon with an Honor Song by Timber Trails and lunch served at 12:30 p.m.

There will be vendor booths, arts and crafts booths, door prizes, and games for kids and adults. Among the prizes are two chest freezers, rain gear, handheld two-way radios and can crushers.

News Summary

Death of Justice Leaves Court Vacancy

Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia passed away Saturday, Feb. 13, at the age of 79. Scalia served on the court for nearly 30 years following his appointment by President Reagan in 1986. The conservative, and often-times controversial, justice was viewed by many as generally anti-tribal in his interpretation of the law. Scalia's death comes as four cases with impacts to native peoples currently sit on the Court's docket. President Obama has said he intends to appoint a successor, though he has given no indication of who he may appoint to fill the vacancy.

Natives More Likely to Abstain

A new study published in the journal "Drug and Alcohol Dependence" indicates that Native Americans are twice as likely as their white counterparts to abstain from alcohol consumption. The authors used data from two surveys, the National Survey and Drug Use and Health survey and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey to conduct their research. The findings issue another challenge to long-standing stigmas attached to Native Americans regarding alcohol consumption.

Ten File for FDL Chair

Ten candidates have filed the requisite paperwork to run for chair of the Fond du Lac band, a vacancy left by Karen Diver, who left to take a position with the White House. The candidates will vie for the job in an April 5 primary, with the winner determined on June 14. Diver served as chair of the Fond du Lac band beginning in 2007. She was named special assistant to the president for Native American affairs late last year.

Why Treaties Matter

Cloquet's *Pine Journal* reports that the "Why Treaties Matter" exhibit is currently on display at the Cloquet Senior High School. The exhibit is a product of a collaboration between the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, the Minnesota Humanities Center and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. The exhibit is also scheduled to be displayed at the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College also located in Cloquet.

Funds for Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig

A bipartisan cohort of Minnesota's Congressional delegation sent the White House a letter in early February asking for funds to rebuild schools in Indian Country such as the Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig school, which operate under the auspices of the Bureau of Indian Education. According to Rep. Collin Peterson's website, "The substandard conditions at these [tribal] schools—including in our state of Minnesota—are not conducive to educational achievement, and they unfairly restrict learning opportunities for the Native youth attending these schools," wrote the group. "We have seen the deplorable conditions of these schools first hand in our state. The Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School in Minnesota is in dire need of replacement.

Survey Results Shared with Elders

Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin visited with elders in all three districts in February to share the results of a survey that compiled Band members' ideas about addressing opiates in reservation communities.

In District I on Feb. 16, District III on Feb. 17 and District II on Feb. 18, Melanie presented the results and received great feedback from those in attendance. Melanie said she wanted to share the survey results with elders first before releasing the results to the Band as a whole.

Katie Draper of the Government Affairs Division created the survey after Melanie's roundtable meetings with Band members last fall. The survey was distributed at the State of the Band Address in January and also included space for additional comments.

Katie also compiled the results, which included both an executive summary and a packet showing statistical analysis of responses. At the Chiminising meeting on Feb. 18, Katie shared the main theme of the comments in the surveys: "We need to take care of each other."

The survey focused on nine topics that took shape at last fall's roundtables: drug tolerance, treatment/recovery, traditions/wellness, per capita, youth, police/safety, housing/shelter, accountability/enabling and additional.

The following statements received the highest number of positive responses:

- Have the drug dealers removed (86 percent)
- When people ruin their homes, they should be responsible to repair it (83 percent)
- Teach kids that we care about them and their future" (79 percent)
- Get kids involved in the community (78 percent)
- There should be consequences for pregnant women using drugs (77 percent)
- Zero tolerance for drugs (76 percent)
- Show young mothers what their child goes through be-

ing born addicted to heroin (76 percent)

- Teach parenting skills (75 percent)
- Consequences: Take away houses from drug dealers (75 percent)
- Kids need to know their own history/their clans/the good history (75 percent)

The executive summary concludes, "The definition of crisis: any event that is, or is expected to lead to, an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, community, or whole society. This opiate epidemic is a very dangerous situation, and the repercussions are affecting our communities. We need to move forward. Together."

Watch for more information about meetings on this topic.

If you have a tip for law enforcement about drugs or other crime, call this anonymous tipline: 320-630-2822.

"This opiate epidemic is a very dangerous situation, and the repercussions are affecting our communities. We need to move forward. Together."

Syphilis Rates Rise in Minnesota

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

New data from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) shows that there's been a significant increase in the number of syphilis cases it has seen in the past year.

But, what's even more troubling is there has been an even higher increase in Native American women in 2015, according to Jackie Dionne, Director of American Indian Health at the MDH.

"Almost all of the cases in American Indian women are in the Twin Cities metro area, but we are starting to see some cases in the greater Minnesota area as well," said Jackie. "Preliminary data for 2015 show that 28 syphilis cases were reported among American Indian women compared to five cases in 2014."

Jackie said she wants to spread the message that people should "get tested and get treated" as to prevent further spreading the sexually transmitted disease and to keep women safe.

"Minnesota has not seen this many reported cases of syphilis in women in more than 20 years," said Dr. Ed Ehlinger, Minnesota Commissioner of Health.

Eighty-seven percent of all female syphilis cases in 2015 were concentrated in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and 13 percent in Greater Minnesota.

"We are working with our public health partners to address this significant increase and are taking the steps needed to curb it," Ehlinger said.

The preliminary data for 2015 indicate that the number of cases went up by 63 percent compared to 2014. The disease is

occurring in women of child-bearing age in all racial and ethnic groups, including pregnant women.

If left untreated, the sexually transmitted disease can be a serious health threat. Women who are pregnant can pass the disease along to their babies, which could lead to life-threatening conditions. It can also lead to stillbirth or premature birth.

Three infants born to infected mothers have been reported to the MDH within the past six months. Prior to this time, there were no reported cases among infants in the previous four years.

"The good news is that there is a test to detect syphilis and the disease can be cured with medication," said Ehlinger. "The key is to get more people at risk of infection to get tested and for health care providers to do more screenings. Sexual partners of infected patients need to be tested and treated as well."

There are many risk factors that include multiple partners, drug use, infection with other sexually transmitted diseases and prior syphilis infection.

"All women and their sexual partners can play a vital role in lowering the chances of getting or spreading syphilis," said Ehlinger. "Learning about the symptoms and practicing prevention will make a difference."

Call the Minnesota Family Planning & STD Hotline, 1-800-78-FACTS, for testing sites in your area. Get resources about syphilis for health care providers and consumers on the MDH website: health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/syphilis/index

Candidates Certified, Election Forums Planned for Primary

The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe will hold a primary election April 5 and a general election June 14 to choose elected officials for the six MCT member bands, including Mille Lacs.

The following individuals were certified on February 11, 2016, as candidates for elective office in the 2016 MCT Election:

- Chief Executive (in alphabetical order): Melanie Benjamin, Sheldon Boyd, Clifford Churchill, Lisa Jackson, George LaFave, Michelle Pagel, Wanetta Thompson.
- District I Representative: Sandra Blake, Irene Benjamin, Arlene Weous, Ginger Weyaus, Suzanne Wise.
- District I School Board: Semira Kimpson. District II School Board: No candidates filed. At-large School Board Chair: Kim Kegg.

If any of the candidates receive more than 50 percent of the vote, a general election will not be required. Otherwise, the top two finishers will face each other on June 14.

Election forums

Chief Executive election forums will be held in all districts:

- District I, Nay Ah Shing Community Center, Thursday, March 3, 6-8:30 p.m.
- District II, Minisinaakwaang Community Center, Friday, March 4, 6-8:30 p.m.
- Urban Area, All Nations Church, Saturday, March 5, 12:30-3 p.m.
- District III, Aazhoomog Community Center, Monday, March 7, 6-8:30 p.m.
- District IIa, Chiminising Community Center, Tuesday, March 8, 6-8:30 p.m.

District I Representative election forums will be held in District I and the urban area:

- District I, Nay Ah Shing Community Center, Wednesday, March 9, 6-7:30 p.m.
- Urban, All Nations Church, Saturday, March 5, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Each candidate forum will be conducted in a question-and-answer format. Audience members will submit questions for consideration. Food and beverages will be provided. If you have questions, please contact Katie Draper at 320-515-0846.

Guidelines and Format

The purpose of the election forums is to inform and educate voters about the candidates and the key issues facing the Mille

Lacs Band of Ojibwe; to offer candidates an opportunity to inform voters of their qualifications for office, positions on key issues, and plans should they be elected; and to inform and educate the candidates of the key issues facing the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

- Each candidate will sign in with the moderator.
- Each candidate will receive a number, and numbers will be drawn at random to determine the order of opening statements.
- Each candidate will have three (3) minutes to make an opening statement and three (3) minutes to make a closing statement. A timekeeper will be seated in the front row and will signal the candidate with timing cards when there are 30 seconds remaining, 15 seconds remaining, and when time has expired (stop).
- Following opening statements, the moderator will ask candidates to move to a quiet waiting room while the screening team works with the moderator to coordinate questions for the candidates.
- While the candidates are making their opening statements, constituents in attendance can submit questions in a written format (3" x 5" cards and pens will be provided). Questions can be submitted only during the time that candidates are making their opening statements.
- Constituents must word their questions in a way that is applicable to all candidates. Questions must be respectful and appropriate.
- The cards will be collected and screened by the forum moderator and two members of the audience who volunteer to serve with the moderator on the question screening team. These two audience members must reside in the district in which the forum is being held.
- Screening of questions will be conducted to avoid duplication and to ensure the questions are respectful and appropriate. The moderator will provide the final determination on the appropriateness of each question; candidates and constituents must respect the moderator's decisions.
- Due to time constraints, all questions submitted may not be asked.
- Candidates will be invited back into the forum individually to respond to the set of questions presented by the screening team, and agreed upon by the moderator. Once the candidate finishes answering questions, he/

she will go back to the waiting room while the next candidate responds.

- Each candidate will have one (1) minute to respond to each question. All responses must be respectful and appropriate. The timekeeper will signal the candidate with timing cards when there are 15 seconds remaining and when time has expired (stop).
- At a specified time, the moderator will end the question-and-answer phase, invite candidates back into the forum, and ask each candidate to give his or her closing statement. Closing statements will be in the reverse order of opening statements. The timekeeper will alert the candidate when there are 30 seconds remaining and when time has expired (stop).
- The forum will conclude promptly following the last closing statement.

Additional Rules

- The audience will give each candidate who is speaking an opportunity to be heard. This is not a community meeting, so comments from the audience will not be accepted.
- A table for campaign materials will be provided outside of the candidate forum meeting room. No campaign materials will be allowed in the forum meeting area.
- In deference to our limited time, please hold applause until the end of the evening.
- The moderator has the authority to adjust ground rules to meet unexpected circumstances.
- Timelines and guidelines will be strictly followed.
- Please turn off cell phones and pagers. If you must make a call, please leave the meeting area.
- Child care will not be provided, so please make appropriate arrangements for your children.
- In the interest of fairness to everyone involved, it is vitally important that everyone conduct themselves in a positive and respectful manner during these forums.
- No video or recording of the forums.

School board

Elections for Nay Ah Shing School Board will also be held on June 14, with an April 5 primary. Open school board positions are Chair, District I member and District II member.

See the April issue of the *Inaajimowin* for an election guide. Watch Facebook and millelacsband.com for more updates.

Boxing Commission Gives Opportunities



The Mille Lacs Band Department of Athletic Regulation made headlines recently with a groundbreaking event featuring American Indians. In late March, the Department will take another big step by hosting a summit in Oklahoma City to help other tribes develop athletic commissions.

On Friday, Feb. 5, the Mille Lacs Band hosted a Legacy Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) event at Grand Casino Hinckley. The event featured two Native American referees: Rocky Demier of the Quapaw Tribe and Tyrone Roberts of the Meskwaki Nation.

According to ndnsports.com, it is believed to be the first nationally televised event to feature exclusively Native American refs. DAR Executive Director Matt Roberson said, "I truly believe that we have some of the best fight inspectors in the country, and they are all Band members. We don't bring in outsiders like some might; they are all our people. That gives us an unparalleled sense of pride and satisfaction. We know that

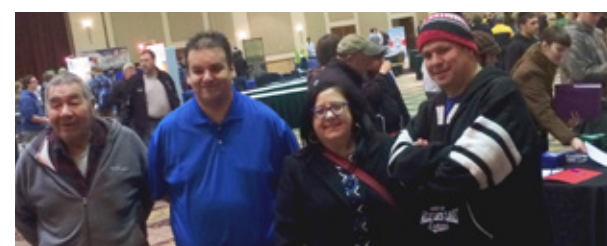
our inspectors are going to do a great job no matter what. So why can't we do that with every position?"

The event also featured an appearance from Dana White, the president of Ultimate Fighting Championship. White's reality TV show, *Lookin' for a Fight*, was also filmed during the visit.

From March 29 to April 1, the DAR will host its 4th Annual Indigenous Athletic Commissions Summit. This year, instead of taking place in Hinckley, the summit will be held at the Band's Embassy Suites hotel at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City.

DAR Chairman Wally St. John said, "We feel that by utilizing our new property in Oklahoma City, this will enable more tribes to attend. A majority of the tribal commissions are located in Oklahoma and Minnesota, so we decided to bring it to them in hopes of making it more affordable for everyone."

This year's topics will include an introduction to "Community Based Athletic Regulation," which the Mille Lacs Band is pioneering. This is the idea that the commission can improve social conditions that impact nearly every tribal community in the United States.



Construct Tomorrow

On Feb. 17, the Band, Central Minnesota Jobs and Training, and Grand Casino Hinckley hosted "Construct Tomorrow," a hands-on opportunity for area high school students and the public to learn about careers in the construction industry. Pictured top: Band members Russell Boyd, Craig Hansen (who helped plan the event), Melanie Benjamin and Rodney Boyd. Bottom: Melanie Benjamin spoke with students and presenters at the Construct Tomorrow event on Feb. 17.

Bahwahung Merrill Comes Full Circle

Brett Larson Staff Writer

Bahwahung Merrill spent much of his childhood in the Sandy Lake community north of McGregor. In the late 1950s, when Bahwahung was a boy, there weren't many other kids around.

"I was pretty much a loner," Bahwahung recalled. "It was just my dog and I."

He was raised by his grandparents and his Aunt Joanne and Uncle Emery. They lived in a tarpaper shack on the edge of a field, "way back in the woods."

"The grass towered over me sometimes when I walked through with my dog," he said. "We had a pot-bellied stove that kept the shack warm, and I'd go out and cut wood with my uncle with an old bow saw."

Even though he was alone, he never felt bored. "We never worried about these modern things kids have today," he said. "I always had the outdoors and my imagination."

Bahwahung and his family used to visit Pete and Rose Ski-naway, elders who lived on a point in Sandy Lake. "They taught me a lot about retaining my Indian ways," he said.

He would also visit East Lake, where he remembers playing in pools of water under the old dance hall. He spent time at Mille Lacs, where his mother had friends, including the family of Marge Anderson. He also got to know the Boyds in Minnewawa.

"A lot of people I knew have walked on," said Bahwahung. "Some people around here think I'm an outsider, but I've been here longer than a lot of them. I knew their parents but don't know them."

Bahwahung spent a few years with his mother's family who were St. Croix Band members. In ninth grade he came back to Sandy Lake and attended McGregor High School. During those years he got to know the Aubids, Sam Yankee, Frank and Maggie Misquadace, and his younger cousin, Vince Merrill.

After graduation, Bahwahung joined the Marines to avoid being drafted into the Army. He ended up seeing action in Vietnam, but it's not a part of his life he likes to talk about.

"When I do think about it, it's overwhelming sometimes," he said. "When a person looks behind too much, it can affect their life in the here and now. That's part of my life I don't want to touch on anymore. I thought it was a glamorous thing to do at the time."

As he reflects on the past, Bahwahung said he was out of touch with his "primary emotions." "Once you start suppressing those feelings, your life becomes tangled with lost emotions, and you can't remember where you came from," he said. "You lose who you are, your sense of community."

Bahwahung said it's common to use drugs and alcohol

to suppress those feelings, which he did in his younger days. He finally quit drinking after a close call with the police. He was drinking with a friend who fell and injured his head. Bahwahung put him in the back of his car and was later pulled over. The man was taken to the hospital, and Bahwahung was held in jail.

If the man died, the police said, they'd charge Bahwahung with murder. Bahwahung quit drinking after that experience and has been sober for more than 30 years.

Bahwahung spent years working in loss prevention at Sears Roebuck in Minneapolis. After that he moved to Wisconsin to work for the St. Croix Band's chemical dependency program.

With his background in loss prevention, he ended up taking a job as director of security at the St. Croix casino in the early days of tribal gaming. The St. Croix Band had a contract with a couple of white guys named the Buffalo Brothers, who were later investigated for taking too much profit from the tribe.

After the Buffalo Brothers fired him, Bahwahung and about 60 protesters (including Clyde Bellecourt) locked down the casino to force the tribal council to talk with Band members about their concerns. Eventually the tribe bought out the Buffalo Brothers' contract, but that was the end of Bahwahung's gaming career.

Bahwahung and Celestine, his wife of 40 years, brought up seven children and eventually made the move to Chiminising, where they are raising three of their grandchildren and a great-grandson — a fourth generation under their roof.

"It's fun," he said. "I enjoy it — even though it's frustrating sometimes."

Bahwahung feels like he's repaying a debt to his own grandparents. "They took care of me ever since I was three months old, and now life is repeating itself. I want them to have the same advantages I had, thanks to my grandparents."

"Once you start suppressing those feelings, your life becomes tangled with lost emotions, and you can't remember where you came from," he says. "You lose who you are, your sense of community."



Bahwahung lives in Chiminising with Celestine, his wife of 40 years.

Bob Oswaldson Battles Cancer

Jackie Jensen and Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

Robert Oswaldson, Sr., known by everyone as Bob, is sharing his story about his fight against cancer. Bob has had several types of cancer during his lifetime including skin cancer, lymphoma and colon cancer. He wants to let people know that you can recover. It is important to see your doctor and get regular check-ups and pre-screenings to catch these things early in the game so they are treatable.

About a year ago, Bob wasn't feeling well and decided to make a visit to Dr. Bracken at Mille Lacs Health System.

Much to Bob's surprise, he ended up in the emergency room because he had a fever, stomach and bowel issues and had become dehydrated.

While hospitalized, he underwent several tests, including a PET scan, which is designed to look for cancer. The scan

showed that Bob had colon cancer. He had surgery to remove the cancer and then had to spend time recovering before he could start chemotherapy.

During that time, the Band's public health nurses began making home visits twice a week to monitor his blood pressure, pain level and swelling in his feet. They also spent time teaching him about how to care for himself.

"I get good care from the nurses at Mille Lacs Band Public Health," said Bob, who seems to be cancer-free based on results of PET scan done in January.

Still, he continues with a regimen of oral chemotherapy medications to help prevent the cancer from returning.

Bob wants people to know that it's important to listen to the doctors and to follow their instructions.

"Take all your medications and go to all your appointments

as scheduled," he said. "I have been so lucky that my wife, Jean, and my family have stuck by me through all this. They have been my emotional support."

Throughout his life, Bob said that he always tried to take good care of himself, by staying busy whether it be at work or at home in the yard. Working always made him feel better. He quit smoking several years ago. He gets plenty of sleep and tries to maintain a healthy diet.

"I am glad to be feeling and doing better, but I will continue to see my doctors on a regular basis so I can do what's best for my health," he said.

If he could offer one bit of advice to others it would be to make regular doctor visits, get screened for cancer and take good care of yourself.

Diabetes Diagnosis Was a Life-Changer for Jeff Matrious

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

Long gone are the days when Jeff Matrious could hop on his Harley motorcycle and take a long ride. So too are the days of spending a sunny afternoon out on a golf course trying to get a hole in one.

These days Jeff, 53, spends each day, from the time he wakes up until the time he goes to bed, focusing on his health. He knows that if he doesn't the consequences could be deadly.

Jeff has diabetes, and it has robbed him of 80 percent of his vision, has made him less surefooted when he walks and has made him rely on the daily medicine he must take to keep his disease at bay.

In spite of all of this, Jeff has found a sense of peace with his health condition and how it's impacted his life. But it wasn't easy.

It's hard for Jeff to talk about how his life changed without shedding tears or getting a lump in his throat, but he wanted to share his story as a cautionary tale for others who might need to hear it.

"There's so much that has happened, but if there's one message I want to get out there it's that this can be prevented," said Jeff, on a cloudy Monday afternoon a few weeks ago.

The confirmation that Jeff had diabetes came in 1992. He was working at Grand Casino Hinckley and had been feeling a bit out of sorts that day. His eyes weren't focusing properly and suddenly, while standing at Cherry's Grill, he passed out.

When he awoke almost 10 hours later he learned he had been in a coma, and it was then the doctor told him he was a borderline diabetic. It was shocking news for Jeff, who never interpreted the sore on his foot that never seemed to heal as a sign that he had the disease.

Back then Jeff weighed 300 lbs. He immediately started to focus on losing weight and began drinking six gallons of water each day. It kept the hunger at bay, but he still ate what he wanted.

"I'd go to Burger King and eat two double Whoppers and still lose five pounds," he said. "I didn't take medicine for years, seven years for sure, and I felt fantastic."

It was during this time that even his doctors were amazed. They wondered how he was able to control his diabetes and lower his blood sugar so dramatically. They even asked him to share his story with other medical professionals.

Then, several things started happening that let Jeff know his diabetes was rearing its ugly head.

"The thirst came back and I was always thirsty," he said. "My feet started getting numb and tingly like there were pins and needles in them, and the doctor told me that all that was a sure sign."

"I smoked and drank and in 2007, I felt it come back."

Still, even then he put off going to the doctor.

Jeff had worked as a machinist for 12 years in the Twin Cities before he began working at the Hinckley Casino. He was there for seven years and spent much of that time as the director of grounds. He was also a maintenance manager for two years.

During the time he was the grounds director he was constantly moving around, climbing on ladders and walking frequently. All of those things, including his love of golfing, helped him control the disease. He was also an active member of the community and served as the Chairman of the Hinckley Pow-wow for six years.

In 2005 he married Toni Matrious. The couple shared a love of travel and enjoyed riding their motorcycles before his diabetes came back in 2007.

"We lived. We went on vacations, we had fun and we didn't stop to take care of ourselves," Toni said.



Then, in 2008, a doctor told Jeff to quit smoking and said it would help with the neuropathy (tingling and numbness), but he didn't quit even though he knew his blood sugar was so much higher than it should have been.

"My body was telling me there was something wrong, but I wasn't listening. I didn't heed the warning," he said. "I worked and half-assed took care of myself."

In 2010 he had two strokes. Four years later, in 2014, he lost his sight in his right eye and then later he lost his vision his left eye. He was completely blind for four months, and it rocked his world.

He was depressed and even had feelings of not wanting to live any longer. To date, he's had eight surgeries on both eyes and has only regained about 20 percent of his vision.

"My quality of life has gone down the toilet, and life as I knew it doesn't exist," he said. "I had to quit my job, I can't ride my Harley and I don't travel anymore."

"When it came back, it came with a vengeance and knocked me down," he said. "Since I lost my eyes I've gained 70 pounds because I can't move around like I used to."

His wife said his stability is off, too, because he can't see well.

Still, he walks two or three miles a day so he can keep his body active and stave off as much of the disease as he can. He fears losing that ability and wants to do what he can to avoid amputation.

"Walking is not cardio, and I walk slow," he said. "I do that to keep the neuropathy at bay."

"I quit smoking and drinking 14 months ago when a retinal specialist said he couldn't help me if I wasn't helping myself," he said.

"He told me 'if you want to see again you have to quit smoking and take care of yourself. Watch what you eat and get your diabetes under control,'" said Jeff. "He told me if you don't you'll be blind forever."

Now his life is checking his insulin multiple times a day, taking five insulin shots each day along with numerous pills.

He also tries to tell as many people as he can that diabetes is preventable and it's manageable as long as a person is taking care of their body.

"I have to accept what I have for the rest of my life, and I should have done that two years ago. I proved I could do it with

diet and exercise, but then I stopped."

Now, the couple says they are in survival mode. Last fall, Toni was diagnosed with breast cancer.

"I'm his caretaker so that's hard because when I get sick he has to pick it up a little," she said.

Around that same time while having dental work done the dentist found a cyst under Jeff's teeth. They were worried it was cancerous, but the results came back negative.

"We've gone through a lot of stress as a family," said Toni. "He's gone through depression, but now he's saying to people, 'open your eyes.'"

Jeff said he knows a lot of people are affected by diabetes and even his own grandmother, Mary Matrious, had the disease and died from complications related to it. Still he never thought it would happen to him.

To help him cope, Jeff said he had to find a higher spirit so he could seek strength to carry on.

"It's very important to have a relationship with the higher spirit that created us," said Jeff, who also sought doctoring from Band Elder and traditional healer Herb Sam.

Jeff calls diabetes a "mean disease" and says it's a silent killer, but it's one that he wants people to know about and take seriously.

He's thankful that he can still share his story and for the people in his life who continue to boost his spirits, including his auntie Christina Matrious Salay and friend Brad Harrington, who visited him often. He also paid tribute to his cousin, Dave Matrious, who would also visit him and check on him often.

Jeff is also thankful for the Band because having the housing and health assistance that's available to Band members takes away the much of the financial stress.

He is hoping that he can spend more time telling his story with others in public forums. So far, he's talked to people at a couple of clinics for diabetes, but wants to do more.

"I just want people to open their eyes and be aware," he said. "You can't ignore your body's warning signs because they are there for a reason."

"I have a really beautiful bike I can't ride. I miss the fun things in life. I miss my friends, my work, fishing, and golfing and it's all because I didn't take care myself," he said. "I don't want that for anyone else."

Early Ed Program is Home Away from Home

Brett Larson Staff Writer

If you've been a new parent, you know how good it feels to drop your child off in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. Mille Lacs Band members have such an option in all three districts.

Gaylene Spolarich, who has worked for Wewinabi Early Ed in District I for several years, says Band members are fortunate to have such caring and competent teachers for their little ones. Gaylene is on the state Head Start board, so she knows what she's talking about.

"This place is a real asset to the community," said Gaylene. "It's a beautiful facility with strong programs, but just as importantly, Wewinabi promotes family engagement by offering activities, classes and other opportunities."

Wewinabi is a home away from home for 170 children, and the teachers and other staff are a surrogate family.

Tammy Wickstrom has been working for the Mille Lacs Band's early education department for 11 years. She is now the director, overseeing childcare, Early Head Start and Head Start programs in all three districts.

In East Lake, the programs are housed in the Minisinaak-waang Leadership Academy. The Aazhoomog location is next to the Pine Grove Leadership Academy.

The shine hasn't worn off of the District I facility, which sits behind the Community Center.

As the District I Early Ed program began to outgrow its space at Nay Ah Shing Lower School, Tammy and others began advocating for the new facility.

In 2012, their dream came true, and the Wewinabi center is indeed a dream facility — one of the best in the state.

In all, there are 17 classrooms and over 50 staff in the facility. Classrooms are large, quiet and well equipped, and

teacher/child ratios are small: 4 to 1 for babies, infants and toddlers and 10 to 1 for Head Start. The grounds include lots of green space and playground equipment. Students eat in their classrooms and play in a beautiful gymnasium. There is an immersion classroom available, and all students learn from Anishinaabe elders who are fluent speakers.

The Head Start program follows federal guidelines, but those families who don't qualify can still send their children to the program. The Band government picks up the bills that aren't covered by federal and state grants.

"The Band really stepped up," said Tammy, "not just by building this facility, but by helping to fund the programs to ensure that all students receive the same services."

The curriculum follows federal and state guidelines and gets kids ready to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. Students learn motor skills, social/behavioral skills, numeracy, and language and literacy.

Wewinabi Early Ed is also a lot more than just daycare and Head Start. The school hosts a before- and after-school program, family night activities, monthly powwows and ceremonies, fatherhood nights, and reading programs. The facility houses staff from Onamia and Midstate who work with special needs children, and this summer they're planning a summer school program.

Even with the new facility, there is still a waiting list. The program is in such high demand that parents sign up as soon as they learn they're pregnant.

The Early Ed program is always looking for staff. The program provides training and certification for new employees. Applicants need to pass background checks and drug tests. Call 320-532-7590 for information.



Top: Wewinabi hosts many family engagement activities. Family service worker Sarah Cosgrove welcomed visitors to a health fair on Feb. 10. Bottom: Classrooms at Wewinabi are large and well equipped, and the teacher/student ratio is low.

Commissioner Wise Elected Chair of Education Association



Suzanne Wise, right, met with her counterpart, Minnesota Commissioner of Education Brenda Cassellius, at the Safe and Supportive Schools Conference at Hamline University in January.

In January, Commissioner of Education Suzanne Wise was voted chair of the Minnesota Indian Education Association (MIEA). Congratulations to Suzanne!

"It's an honor to be named to this position," said Suzanne. "As far as I know, it's the first time a Mille Lacs Band member has been MIEA chair, and I'm humbled to serve the Band and the Indian students of Minnesota in this capacity."

According to the MIEA website, "The purpose of the organization is to establish and maintain communications and the promotion of quality education and unity for American Indians for the express purpose of continuity of communications and on-going awareness of local and statewide educational activities. This is done in many ways, but specifically it is a contin-

ued awareness and action that supports the unique educational and culturally-relevant needs of American Indian students in our great state."

The Chairperson serves as chief executive officer and presides at all Board of Directors meetings. The Board is composed of 18 members elected at large from the association's membership. It includes three full-time post-secondary students.

The board meets quarterly and holds an annual conference. Among the board's duties are policy-making, planning of programs, and creation of special committees as deemed necessary.



Recipes for Success

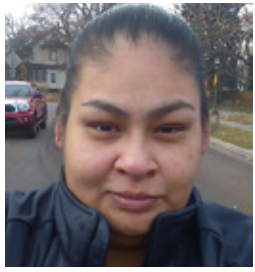
Nay Ah Shing student Ronni Jourdain, right, helped motivational speaker James Anderson demonstrate the power of positive language during a presentation at Nay Ah Shing High School on Tuesday, Feb. 16. James, a member of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band, gave a lively performance focused on "recipes for success," including energy, positive language, believing in yourself, and "love and service." "Success doesn't care about your past," he said. "Success only cares about your future."



Maingan Pride!

The Nay Ah Shing Abinoojyag basketball teams, led by Coach Dominick Polito, played three games in February. On Feb. 10 they were at home against Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig, on Feb. 18 they were at home against Circle of Life, and on Feb. 24 they traveled to Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig. The players had a great time and performed well in front of a crowd of students, staff and community members.

Department of Labor Gotaamigozi Recognition: Wendy Earth



Every month the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Department of Labor (MLBODOL) serves hundreds of Band members and their families. Each of our clients has a unique story of how and why they came to the MLBODOL for assistance.

This month, Wendy Earth has been kind enough to share some thoughts of her experience with the Department of Labor.

What brought you to the MLBODOL?

As a young kid education was a tough subject for me. It made me feel as though there was something horribly wrong with me, so I took refuge in the streets of Minneapolis.

Eventually I took it upon myself to stand up and make an effort to move my life forward. I had dropped out of school in my younger years and eventually went and took basic adult learning classes. I decided that I needed to stop listening to what others thought and went for my GED. To my surprise I achieved my goal.

I then landed a job at a fast food restaurant, where I learned a great deal about myself. This job carried me until a life changing moment took place. I had become pregnant with my first child. I knew I would not be able to provide for my child working where I did.

I recalled a young lady that I had worked for before. She really inspired me and showed me the path. I thought, "If she can do it, I can." I got into school, which was scary but exciting. I had an amazing teacher; he was so brilliant and inspiring. He said, "Showing up is 95 percent of the grade. If you show up, it'll get you far." Mr. Stoltz's words helped me through some very challenging situations. He was right, too.

Eventually I ran into financial problems, and a friend told me "Go down to the Mille Lacs TANF program, they help with everything, and they are for the people. Especially people who are seeking their education."

How did the MLBODOL help you?

When chaos hit my life and I needed guidance and support, I found someone from DOL who would help and make things in my life easier. When a bill was late, there were resources that helped me. My case managers worked closely with me and helped maintain my childcare. If I had a problem with my car or issues with transportation, my worker would help me find solutions. In my darkest hours, I turned to these people and got such passion and support that I am so grateful for.

Thanks DOL and Natchez! Natchez was my first case manager, and the bond we have is great! Once I found a person compassionate enough to care about my well being, life changed. Today, I am a different person, a person that I am proud to be, and DOL was a huge part of my success story.

Do you have any advice to someone considering MLBODOL services?

Work your program and remember that your case manager is human just like you. Paperwork is tedious, but it has to be done. If you are uncertain about things in your life, talk to your worker. If you have the right support team, anything is achievable. Whenever I find someone who is like me and needs help, I tell them about this program because it is really there to help you.

I have a four-year degree in Business Administration and a job that I love at 2020 Brand Solutions. DOL gave me a chance to show my hard work and prove myself.

You are given so much time on this Earth — choose how you spend it well. Life can be challenging, but there are people here willing to help. You are not alone. Use your resources.

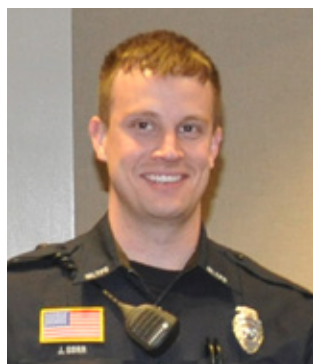
Congratulations Wendy, from everyone at the Department of Labor.

The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Department of Labor provides assistance, support, and training to promote employment and the self-sufficiency of low-income Native Americans living within one of the Minnesota townships of Aitkin, Benton, Crow Wing, Mille Lacs, Morrison or Pine counties, or within one of the urban Minnesota counties of Hennepin, Anoka, and Ramsey.

New Officers Join Tribal Police Force

These new police officers were sworn in recently and are now serving our communities as members of the Mille Lacs Tribal Police. Welcome!

Jeff Dorr



I graduated from Rogers High School. I received my BA from Hamline University, where I majored in Criminal Justice and Legal Studies.

Before coming here, I was a Police Reserve for Elk River Police Department.

I like to spend my free time doing outdoor activities and spending time with my family.

I am excited to be working for the Mille Lacs Tribal Police Department because I am now able to give back to the community that has helped me so much.

and especially enjoy Minnesota sports.

I want to thank the Mille Lacs Tribal Police Department for giving me the opportunity to work for this community. The Department offers numerous career advancements, training and the strong senior leadership I was looking for. I am happy with my career decision and look forward to being a part of a highly trained, highly motivated department.

Dusty Burton



I graduated from Grand Rapids High School and went to Itasca Community College, where I graduated with an Associates of Applied Science in Natural Resource Management. From there I moved on to Hibbing Community and Technical College to obtain a Professional Police Officer Certification.

I started my law enforcement career at Wright County Sheriffs Office as a full-time deputy. I moved to Benson Police Department for 8 years, obtaining positions as a K9 Handler and SWAT Operator.

I fish and hunt almost every day I can. I enjoy 4 wheeling and camping, and pretty much any shooting sport there is.

I love working in the department. The energy and ambition everyone has is very positive. The administration is active in providing the best leadership and training for me to provide the best service I can. I am glad I made the decision to come to MLTPD for my career and life off duty.

Ashley Stavish



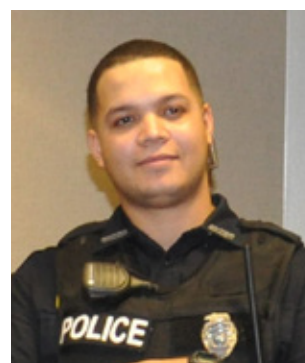
I graduated from Little Falls High School. That fall I joined the Army National Guard and went to training. I then attended and graduated from Ridgewater College in Willmar with a criminal justice degree. In the summer of 2014, I attended SKILLS at Alexandria Technology College.

That fall I was hired part time by Benson and Starbuck Police Department, where I worked for about 9 months. Then I was hired full time by Mille Lacs Tribal Police Department.

When I'm not working, I like to hang out with friends and family. I also like to go hunting and fishing.

I love working with Mille Lacs Tribal because it's a great place to work. Chief Rosati is a great boss, and my coworkers are fun to work with.

Julian Walker



I grew up in Minneapolis and graduated from Minneapolis South High School, Minneapolis Community and Technical College and Hennepin Technical College. I've worked and lived in the Native Community for several years prior to being hired at Mille Lacs Tribal Police. My hobbies and interests are weightlifting and spending time with my family. I'm very proud to be a Mille Lacs Tribal Police Officer and I plan on spending many years with this department.

Brian Murphy



I graduated from Anoka High School and then from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. I then attended my SKILLS training at the Center for Criminal Justice Law Enforcement and graduated in 2008.

I have over 3.5 years of Law Enforcement experience with the Upper Sioux Police Department, Foley Police Department and the Anoka Police Department.

I enjoy the outdoors, hunting, fishing and camping. One of my favorite hobbies is duck hunting. I'm also a sports fan

Akwa'waawin — Spearing through the Ice

Bradley E. Harrington Staff Writer

Dabwaa-akwa'waad a'aw inini booch gii-zhakamodawind iniw giigoonyan noomaya gaa-tebibijigaazonijin weweni da-doo-dawindwaa ingiw manidoog. Mii iw gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amaa-goowiziyang anishinaabewiyang wanitaasoyang.

Like all harvesting, spearing starts out by getting spoon-fed and offering tobacco to a'aw Manidoo imaa Misi-zaaga'iganing — the spirit of the lake. So, the hunt begins...

When the fish are not spawning, they are hiding in vegetation like bulrush or weeds. But when they are starting to spawn before the ice breaks, you can spear where you would set your net.

It is very crucial you choose your spot wisely because you will put a lot of work in preparing your site to spear through the ice.



This photo from 1911 shows a traditional spearing house made of saplings and covered with blankets.

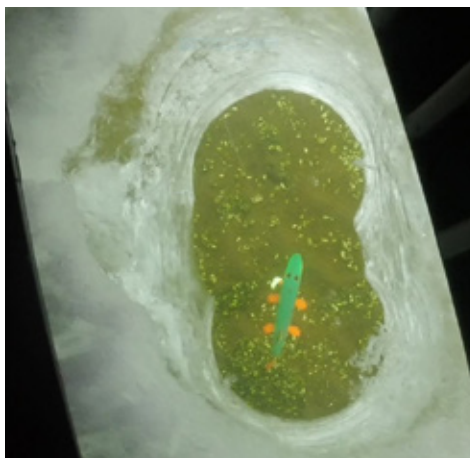
Kyle Cash remembers when he was a young man learning the ways. Art Gahbow, his step-dad, taught him how to spear through the ice when he was 17 years old.

"It was very different back then," Kyle said, "we had to get fish just to eat."

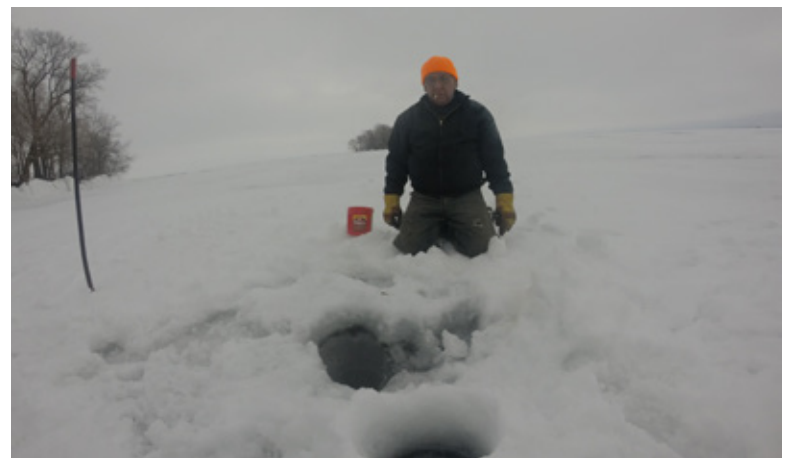
Sneaking out to avoid detection by the State DNR was very common until the late '90s. Harvesters used white sheets to camouflage their houses, which were built out of any bendable saplings from the shore. They would get as many fish as they could and deliver them to those who were unable to fish on their own.

"Everyone took care of each other," he added, "unlike today, when most seem to be out for themselves."

They would also use the fish to set dishes and take to the



Decoys don't need to be "fancy." They just need to do the job.



Kyle Cash learned to spear from his step-dad, the late Art Gahbow.

dance hall.

Good techniques would include using any decoy — fanciness doesn't matter. Scratching the rocks with your spear would also draw in the curious fish. Miizay (eelpout) were a favorite, but Kyle believes the northerns and muskies wiped them out.

They also boiled northern heads, which contain a lot of meat.

Today, there are pop-up houses, nice spears and fiberglass decoys. "There aren't too many that go spearing through the ice nowadays," Kyle said.

Ojibwe people valued the effort it took in order to feed or care for their family. The further we get away from these values, the more we won't value what it takes to live. Miigwech.

Free Smoke Detectors Available

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

There's no doubt that smoke alarms save lives because they allow people the precious minutes they need to escape a fire in their homes.

According to the National Fire Prevention Association, almost two-thirds of deaths related to home fires occurred because of the absence of smoke alarms or non-working smoke alarms. That means having fire alarms that work can cut the chances of dying in a fire in half.

Thanks to a partnership between the Mille Lacs Band Tribal Police Emergency Management Department and the American Red Cross, more Band members can get free fire alarms installed in their homes.

The Emergency Management Department will install smoke detectors for Band members who own their own homes. Those who live in Band-owned homes already have the integrated smoke alarm system in their homes. Contact the administrators for each of the District offices and the Urban Office to sign up to have alarms installed.

Barb Benjamin-Robertson, the Site Director for the urban office, said she is excited about the program and how it will help keep families safe if a fire should occur in their homes.

Smoke detector installation takes about 20-minutes, and the homeowner will receive fire prevention materials. Smoke detectors for those who are hearing-impaired are available and can be requested from the Band's Emergency Management Department.

Smoke detectors should be installed in every bedroom, outside of each sleeping area and on every level of your home. They should be tested monthly and replaced every 10 years.

According to the Red Cross, fires are one of the biggest disaster threats in the country. The organization recommends two easy steps to help protect homes and surviving a fire: create and practice a fire escape plan and install and maintain smoke alarms.

Home fire plans should include at least two ways to escape from every room of your home. Families should select a meeting spot at a safe distance from their home where family members can meet after a fire. The plan should be discussed with everyone in the household and should be practiced twice a year until everyone can escape in less than two minutes.

Cooking is the leading cause of home fires across the country, according to a survey conducted by the Red Cross. The survey showed that one in five Americans (17 percent) have left food cooking unattended.

The Red Cross encourages people to avoid cooking fires by doing the following:

- Clean and clear the area around the stove before turning on the heat.
- Move things away from the stove that can burn.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the stove.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing or dangling sleeves while cooking.
- Turn pot handles to the back of the stove so no one bumps them or pulls them over.
- Stay in the kitchen and never leave cooking food unattended.
- When frying food, turn the burner off if you see smoke or if the grease starts to boil.
- Keep a pan lid or a cookie sheet nearby. Use it to cover the pan if it catches on fire.

Download the Red Cross First Aid App for access to life-saving information on what to do for common, everyday first aid emergencies including burns. The app is available in your smartphone's app store.

The American Red Cross contributed information to this article.

National Nutrition Month

March is National Nutrition month. With all the changes in the nutrition guidelines, the easiest way to check in is to use the My Plate Recommendations. The food pyramid is a thing of the past.

It is now recommended to have half your plate filled with fruits and vegetables. Both variety and color are important when considering which fruits and veggies to choose. The more variety of color you consume, the more minerals and vitamins you'll get! Eating the whole fruit or vegetable is recommended — over just the juice of them — for the extra fiber.

One fourth of your plate should be protein. Lean proteins are recommended; great examples are fish, eggs, poultry, lentils and beans. Consuming protein at meals is a great way to help us feel fuller longer.

Another one fourth of your plate should be grains. Whole grains are recommended, such as brown rice. Stay away from white processed grains.

Last but not least is dairy, another important component to a well-balanced diet. A great way to get your calcium is by choosing skim milk and low-fat yogurt. Cheese should be consumed in moderation.

A well-balanced diet is important to living a healthier life. You have control over how you fuel your body, and you deserve to be healthy! Making healthy eating choices is a great way to ensure you feel your best.

Wii Du Program Gives Youth Experience, Inspiration

Department of Labor offers two youth programs

The Mille Lacs Band's WiiDu (Wiidanokiindiwig or "We all work together") Youth Program offers regular meetings and activities designed to inspire and motivate youth to achieve their goals and dreams. The program currently serves 200 youth across all three districts.

The Mille Lacs Band Department of Labor offers two youth programming tracks youth can be involved in:

The WiiDu Healthy Circles Youth Activities Program: This program has regularly scheduled meetings and activities designed to inspire and motivate our youth to embrace a traditions-based, pro-social lifestyle free of chemicals, anti-social or risky behavior, promiscuity and dependency. This program is year-round, and curriculum is developed by youth work program mentors.

To be eligible for WiiDu Healthy Circles the following documentation is needed:

- Completed WiiDu Application, which will also include a W-9 & School Verification Form
- A Tribal Identification Card or an official Enrollments Office document stating the participant is an enrolled tribal member, or, for the Mille Lacs Band, a first generation descendant.

Youth Career Exploration: This is a work training program targeted to youth between the ages of sixteen (16) through twenty (20). This program offers youth the chance to gain work experience in hourly job placements. Participants are paid the state minimum wage for actual hours worked. Work experience placements will be based on worksite needs in terms of the nature of the work and the number of hours worked per week. Allowable worksites and scheduled hours must conform to State and Federal work rules and law.

To be eligible for WiiDu Career Exploration, the following documentation is needed:

- Completed WiiDu Application, which will also include a W-9 & School Verification Form
- Income verification of last six months of household income (income must be below 200% of the current Federal Poverty Guideline)
- A Tribal Identification Card or an official Enrollments Office document stating the participant is an enrolled member, or, for the Mille Lacs Band, a first generation descendant
- A Social Security Card or a Social Security number and a Birth Certificate or Valid Driver's License or Valid State ID
- If male and over the age of eighteen, proof of Selective Service Registration

Please note that Healthy Circles does not require income requirements, but Career Exploration does — you must fall below 200% of the current Federal Poverty Guideline.

Mille Lacs Band Member Michael Fahey (Youth Program

Manager) directs the program from his office in the Department of Labor in the District I government center. He oversees staff in all three districts: Naomi Long (District I), Jackson Pratt (District IIa), Mary Greene and Shane Earth (District II), Lawrence Staples and Mardell Thomas (District III).

Since taking on the role more than a year ago, Michael has been emphasizing the academic aspects of the program in addition to work experience.

The program helps students find work experience in the tribal government and the private sector, paying the wages of the students in return for job training. Career Exploration Participants have worked at Dairy Queen, Grand Market, Subway and other businesses.

The WiiDu program rewards active participants for academic success and achievement during the school year for mainstream students. This incentive program recognizes participants for earning honor roll status, perfect attendance and improvement of grades on a quarterly basis.

A-Honor Roll = \$100 Cash Incentive, B-Honor Roll = \$50 Cash Incentive, Improvement of Grades = \$25 Cash Incentive, and Perfect Attendance = \$25 Cash Incentive.

WiiDu also offers cash incentives and awards for attendance, improvement and grades. Students who come to the program are exposed to a variety of activities and resources. One day the focus may be on culture and language; the next day it may be on homework help, drug awareness, teen pregnancy or CPR training.

"We're trying to open as many doors as possible," said Michael. "It's about getting them ready for adulthood, giving them an idea what they'll be interested in. In the future we want to do more internships and job shadowing."

In Chiminising (District IIa), the WiiDu program is closely aligned with Niigaan, the Band's after-school youth program.

The groups from different districts also come together for field trips. They've been to Timberwolves games, waterparks, the aquarium at Mall of America, Spirit Mountain, the Science Museum and various Minnesota Historical Sites.

In District III, WiiDu staff members Lawrence Staples and Mardell Thomas hold group at the teen center in Hinckley. Monday through Thursday afternoons and evenings, 15 to 40 youth may be found playing ping pong and pool, studying, watching TV or just hanging out together in a safe and healthy environment.

Parent Micheala Leecy is a big fan of the center. "This place is great," she said. "It helps my son stay focused. Before this, the kids didn't have anywhere to go. He comes every day it's open."

Youth Work Program Mentors:

District I: Naomi Long (320) 292-0474, District IIa – Jackson Pratt 320-362-1363 District II: Mary Greene 320-630-6898 & Shane Earth 320-362-0609

District III: Lawrence Staples 320-630-6613 & Mardell Thomas 320-362-0369



On Jan. 8 the Wii Du program brought students to a Minnesota Timberwolves game. It was an incentive trip for participants in all four programs. Incentives are provided for those who are not failing any classes and have good school attendance, good group attendance and group participation. Eight trips are offered each year during mid-quarter and at the end of each quarter when grades are obtained from the schools.

Hinckley Teen Center Welcomes LIEPC

On a Thursday evening in January, the Hinckley WiiDu group hosted the Hinckley-Finlayson School District's Local Indian Education Parent Committee (LIEPC) at the Hinckley teen center.

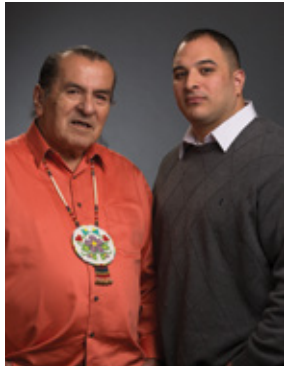
District personnel had kind words for Lawrence Staples and Mardell Thomas, the District III WiiDu staff. Sandy Korf, school social worker and Indian ed coordinator, said they're often at the schools facilitating communication between students and staff. "I think this is our best year ever," she said. "It's really going in the right direction. You guys are lucky to have them."

Superintendent Rob Prater agreed. He said Hinckley-Finlayson schools lag behind the state in many categories, but in the "achievement gap" between white and Native American students, the district outperforms the state as a whole. He also gave credit to the WiiDu staff: "Since Larry's been in the schools, we have a different relationship with the Mille Lacs Band."

The WiiDu program is equally impressed with Hinckley-Finlayson. Michael Fahey, the Youth Program Manager for Mille Lacs Band – Department of Labor, told the LIEPC members in attendance, "I work with numerous schools throughout the four different WiiDu programs and Hinckley is the model for collaboration." He also had advice for the students at the center. "Take advantage of the people who care about you, because some of the schools are very hard to communicate with. You can always communicate with Larry and Mardell, and they can advocate for you."

As evidence of the open communication in the district, two District III youth shared some difficult questions and concerns about being unfairly treated due to their skin color. District personnel listened intently and promised to help.

One of the parents showed his appreciation to the Committee for holding a meeting at the teen center. "Just by you guys showing up here, it says to me who cares about Indian students," he said.



Amanisod Awiya When Someone is Spooked

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

Moozhag iko nimbi-noondaan amanisod endaad a'aw Anishinaabe noongom. Ishke dash mii imaa wendingang a'aw Anishinaabe ganawaabandang i'iw mezinaatesenig. Ishke a'aw chi-mookomaan nebowa imaa odatoon ge-zegi'igod ge-ni-ganawaabandang a'aw bemaadizid.

Nowadays I often hear about Anishinaabe people being spooked in their homes. A lot of this results from what Anishinaabe watch on television and in the movies. The white man puts things in these movies that can scare people.

Ishke bezhig i'iw genawaabandang a'aw bemaadizid imaa mazinaatesijiganing, mii imaa ani-mazinaakizowaad ingiw gaa-nibojig gaa-ishkwaa-ayaajig. Mii-go wawaaj mazinaakizondwaa ingiw gaa-nibojig gaa-aabiziishingig waabamindwaa babaamosewaad omaa akiing bimidaabaadamowaad bezhig okaadiwaan megwaa babaamosewaad. Mii dash imaa wendingang a'aw Anishinaabe ani-zegendang gegoo imaa noondang wenjida niibaa-dibik.

One of the television programs that a lot of people watch focuses on people who have passed on or ghosts. Some of these programs even go on to show people that have died and come back to life who are able to walk on the earth and drag one of their legs as they walk, zombie like. It is from there that the Anishinaabe has his fears when he hears something at night.

Ishke mii imaa wenjikaamagak gaye inigaanaapinemind a'aw gookooko'oo ganawaabanjigaadeg i'iw mazinaatesijigan, biinish gaye ani-gikino'omawind a'aw bemaadizid ani-mazinaakizond a'aw gookooko'oo naadamaaged da-zegi'ind a'aw bemaadizid i'iw jibayi-giizhik ezhiwiinjigaadeg. Mii imaa wendingang a'aw Anishinaabe wenda-gosaad.

It is also from these television programs and movies that uncomplimentary things are said about the owl. People are also taught in these movies that it is the owl that helps scare people at Halloween. It is from watching all of this that the Anishinaabe is scared of the owl.

Ishke geget a'aw gookooko'oo manidoowaadizi a'aw binesi. Ishke mii a'aw binesi gaa-nakodang wii-naadamawaad inow Anishinaaben nising medewinijin. Gaawiin odaa-gosaasiin awiya. Ishke a'aw Anishinaabe nebowa ogii-pi-gotaan gegoo. Ishke mii a'aw gookooko'oo gaa-anaamimind da-bimiwidood i'iw maji-mashkiki awiya wii-maazhi-doodawaad inow owiiji-anishinaabeman. Namanj i'iw wenji-izhiwebizid a'aw Anishinaabe, mii naakonaa gegoo ani-gotang. Maagizha mii imaa wenjikaamagak gii-inigaachigaazod ishkweyaang a'aw Anishinaabe.

The owl is viewed as being sacred in our community. It is the bird that consented to help our Anishinaabe who are third-degree Midewin. There are no reasons to fear the owl. A lot of our Anishinaabe have fear-based thinking. The owl was considered to be a carrier of bad-medicine so that Anishinaabe could hurt their fellow man in this manner. I do not know why it happens, but it seems like Anishinaabe is scared of a lot of things. Maybe this is all a result of historical trauma.

Ishke a'aw Anishinaabe gegoo ani-noondang ani-amanisod imaa endaad, gaawiin memwech maji-ayi'iwanzinoon nwaandamowaad, wayaabandamowaad, miinawaa inow wayaabamaawaajin, nwaandawaawaajin imaa endaawaad. Ozhawenimigowaan inow Manidoon eni-waawaabamaawaajin imaa, mii imaa wenji-dazhitaawaad gaye wiinawaa imaa endaad a'aw Anishinaabe. Ozhawenimigowaan onadamaagowaan inow Manidoon.

When Anishinaabe hears anything in his house, it does not necessarily mean that it is something bad. He could be hearing things and seeing things that are not necessarily bad. These could be Manidoog that intend to help them and assist them, which is the reason that they hang around their homes. What they have to offer is good.

Ishke gaye ayaawag ingiw emanisodawaajig inow Anishinaaben. Gaawiin wenaajiwang obimiwidoosiinaawaa ogigishkanziinaawaa. Ishke dash a'aw Anishinaabe giishpin apane ani-maji-inendang, ani-maji-inaad inow owiiji-bimaadiziiman, miinawaa meji-ayi'iwwang imaa endaad, mii iw waakobinigowaad ingiw baandigejig imaa waakaa'iganing ani-amanisod a'aw Anishinaabe. Mii-go dibishkoo gaye ani-aabajitoowaad i'iw minikwewin naa anooj enigaa'igod a'aw Anishinaabe ani-ayaamagak imaa endaad, mii-go imaa da-biindigemagak i'iw mayaanaadak. Ishke mii eta-go mayaanaadak ge-ayaamagak imaa endaad a'aw Anishinaabe, mii-go imaa ani-maajaawaad ingiw Manidoog zhevenimaajig inow Anishinaaben nayaadamawaajig.

There are also other spirits that they may hear in their house. These are the spirits that carry that which is bad. If Anishinaabe should always have bad thoughts, talk bad about their fellow man, and have a lot of negativity in their house, it is that negativity that draws in the bad spirits into the homes of Anishinaabe. The same applies also if alcohol or drugs are always being used in the house, that will also draw in the bad spirits. There will only be bad spirits within the house when this happens, then those Manidoog who have love and compassion for the Anishinaabe will leave that home.

Ishke dash a'aw Anishinaabe ge-izhichiged ani-oshki-biindigegezid imaa waakaa'iganing, odaa-zagaswe'iwe inow asemaan naa wiisiniwin da-atood da-nandodamaaged eta-go imaa wenaajiwang da-ayaamagak imaa biindig i'iw waakaa'igan baandigegezid. Mii gaye imaa da-abaabasigaadeg i'iw waakaa'igan da-nandodamaageng da-maajaamagak imaa gishpin meji-ayi'iwwang eyaamagak.

When the Anishinaabe first moves into a home he needs to do a feast, offering food and tobacco asking that only that which is good and positive is in the home. It is also at that time that the house can be smudged removing anything negative if it were to exist.

Ishke ingiw nwaandawinjig imaa waakaa'iganing, mii iw ezhi-misiwendamowaad wiisiniwin asemaan da-ininamawindwaa. Ishke gaye aanind gaawiin weweni gii-maajaa'aasiwag apii gii-ishkwaa-ayaawaad. Mii iw wenji-noondawindwaa wenji-waabamindwaa omisawendaanaawaa da-maajaa'indwaa da-ni-izhaawaad iwidi eni-izhaad gidinawemaaganinaan gaa-gwiiniwaabaminaagozid omaa akiing. Ishke nebowa a'aw gidanishinaabeminaan gaagiiwozhitoo, gaawiin ingoji gii-izhaasiin bakaan akeyaa gii-izhi-maajaa'ind a'aw Anishinaabe.

Those spirits that are heard in the house usually make themselves known for a reason; they want to be remembered with food and tobacco. A lot of those spirits were not sent off in a proper way when they died. This is a reason why a lot of them are seen or heard within the house, they want to be sent off so they can go to where our people go when they are no longer seen on this earth. A lot of the spirits of our Anishinaabe are stuck and have not gone anywhere, because they were not sent off in a proper traditional Anishinaabe funeral.

Ishke dash giishpin geyaabi ani-zegi'ikwaa ingiw Manidoog eyaajig imaa endayaan, enigok gidaa-biibaagimaag da-ikwanaazha'wadwaa imaa ayaayan. Ishke giishpin eta-go bizaan nanaamadabiyan gegoo inaasiwadwaa eshkam giga-ni-zegendam giga-ni-nishwanaadendam gidinendamowining. Bangi-go noondaman gegoo mii imaa da-zegiziyambam.

If there are bad spirits in your home that continue to scare you in your home, you will want to take control of the situation, and holler at them to leave you alone and to go away. If you just sit there in your paranoia, your mind is going to play tricks on you and you will be scared. The slightest noise you hear will trigger your fears.



Chili Cook-off

Sixteen departments entered the chili cook-off in January sponsored by SHIP (Statewide Health Improvement Program) and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). Participants were given crock pots to use, and those crock pots were either donated to the Minobimaadiziwin Hotel or the women's shelter or given to the departments so they could continue to cook healthy meals in the office. Winners were District II Elder Services (left), followed by District III Elder Services and the DNR. SHIP coordinator Amy Maske said, "It was a great event for the community. We received lots of positive feedback."

Gikendandaa i'iw Ojibwemowin

John P. Benjamin Waabishkigaabaw

Learning Ojibwe Lesson 2: Verbs and Prefixes

The Ojibwe language is built around verbs with prefixes and suffixes to show who is doing the action or receiving the action, and when it's happening. Different types of verbs have different rules associated with them.

VAI verbs are "animate intransitive," meaning they have animate subjects and usually don't take a direct object. Any VAI verb in the dictionary is translated as s/he is doing whatever the VAI word means.

VAI Word List	English
Biinichige	s/he cleans
Bakade	s/he is hungry
Bagida'waa	s/he sets a net
Bagoshi'iwe	s/he begs for food, waits for someone to feed h/
Biigoshkaa	s/he is broke (no money)
Bakwekamiga'ige	s/he golfs
Bawaajige	s/he dreams
Bazhiba'ige	s/he spears
Bimoode	s/he crawls
Biindige	s/he comes inside, goes inside

To show first person singular (I), you add the prefix "Ni" for present tense, "Niwii-" for future tense and "Ningii-" for past tense. (Remember, in the double-vowel alphabet, "ii" makes the "ee" sound.) For second person singular (you), add "Gi-," "Giwii-" or "Gigii-." For third person singular, you just add the tense prefix: "Wii" for future or "Gii" for past.

Prefix	Meaning	Tense
Ni	I am...	Present Tense
Niwii	I'm gonna..., I want to...	Future Tense
Ningii	I did..., I was...	Past Tense
Gi	you are...	Present Tense
Giwii	you're gonna..., you want to...	Future Tense
Gigii	you were...	Past Tense
	s/he is...	Present Tense
Wii	s/he is gonna..., s/he wants to...	Future Tense
Gii	s/he was...	Past Tense

Boodawe vai – s/he builds a fire

Niboodawe - I am building a fire

Niwii-boodawe - I'm gonna build a fire, I want to build a fire

Ningii-boodawe - I did build a fire, I was building a fire, I built a fire

Review: All consonants and vowels will always make their own sound. The letter "g" will never make the "j" sound. "Zh" is like the "s" in "measure."

Vowel Sound Chart

a (uh)	aa (ah)	e (ay)	i (ih)	ii (ee)	o (oh)	oo (ooh)
Cup	All	Pay	Win	Week	Bingo	Boot

Misizaaga'igan – Mille Lacs Lake

(Mrs. Zah Guy a gun)

Fifth Annual Mille Lacs Polar Bear Plunge

On Saturday, March 12, Grand Casino Mille Lacs will sponsor the fifth annual Mille Lacs Polar Bear Plunge on the shores near Eddy's Resort to raise money for Special Olympics Minnesota. So far, 82 individuals have registered to participate, as of January 11, 2016.

Our goal this year is to exceed the number of plungers from last year — that's more than 300 brave individuals! Are you ready for the challenge? Grab a friend, family member, or co-worker and register today.

At the plunge, Grand Casino Mille Lacs will provide changing facilities and warming tents for plungers as well as concessions and other entertainment for spectators.

Area law enforcement, fire departments, search and rescue teams, the Mille Lacs Band DNR and Grand Casino Mille Lacs staff will oversee the event.

If you would like to participate or donate to a team or individual, visit plungemn.org and choose the Mille Lacs plunge location. Participants need to raise a minimum of \$75 to plunge. Donations will be accepted on the day of the plunge, and anyone interested in participating can register on the day of the event at the registration table. Registration opens at 11 a.m. with the plunge following at 1 p.m.



Maggie Kegg, left, celebrated her 88th birthday on Feb. 18 at Wewinabi Early Ed, with Elders Joe Nayquonabe, Susan Shingobe, Elfreda Sam and Carol Nickaboine. At 88, Maggie still goes to work in the Elders Room at Wewinabi.

TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

Happy March Birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Ramona Anne Applegate
Debra Rose Barge
Nancy Mae Bearheart
Cynthia Eileen Beaulieu
Marie Ann Bengtson
Larry Benjamin
Laurie Marie Benjamin
Randy Elmer Benjamin
Robert Patrick Benjamin
Patricia Lorayne Christofferson
Curtis Anthony Cody
Francis Charles Colton
Dean Russell Davis
Laureen Gay Davis
James Joseph Dorr
Robert Allen Dorr
Bonnie Elaine Dumlér
Robina Lou Eagle
Mary Flores
Terry Duane Frye
Cheryl Darlene Garbow
Donald Anson Graves
Marie Jane Gudim
Kathleen June Hill
Leslie Roger Karsjens
Sandra Arlene Kegg
Jeffrey Jay Keller
Barbara Jane LaBlanc
Lorelei Lee LaFave
Mert Elaine Liebgott
Anita Ann Misquadace
Wanda Kay Misquadace
Linda Helen Moose
Pauline Moose
Wanda Roxane Navarro

Lester Lee Nelson
Victoria Marie Nichols
Marie Esther Paschke
Marlene Ruth Poukka
George Wilbur Premo
Debra Jo Sam
Douglas Sam
Fred L. Sam
Kathryn Mary Sam
Francis Dean Schaaf
Susanna Lee Schaaf
Thomas William Schleeve
Roy Alden Shabaiash
Russell Shabaiash
Edward Skinaway Jr.
Merle Lee Skinaway Jr.
David Smith Jr.
Terrance Lee Smith
Gloria Ann Starkey
Sami Thomas
Robert Tibbetts Jr.
Carol Ann Towle
Marlene Wakanabo
Bernard Leroy Weyaus
Barbara Marie White

Happy March Birthdays:

Happy birthday **Bear Moose** on 3/2. From, Ruggz & Marebear.
• Happy birthday **Leroy Sam** on 3/2 turning 10 years old. From: Grandma June, Grandpa Gush, Chuck, Hunter, Sunshine and Elvis. • Happy Birthday to **Tasha** on 3/2, with love from Auntie Anna and family! •

Happy 7th birthday, **Twindians, Jayden & Jordan Sayers** on 3/3. From, Grandma Sami, Dad, & Auntie Chilah. • Happy birthday **Hunter** on 3/3, turning 16 years old. From: Grandma June, Grandpa Gush, Chuck, Sunshine and Elvis. • Happy birthday **Nae Nae** on 3/12, love the Harrington Family. • Happy birthday **Keith Benjamin** on 3/13. From: Grandma June, Grandpa Gush, Chuck, Hunter and Elvis. • Happy 5th Birthday to **Cici Bugg** on 3/14, with love from: Mommy, Daddy, Grandma Tammy, Grandma Joyce, Poose, Putin, and all your cousin's, aunties & uncles. • Happy Birthday to **Old Man Ray** on 3/14, from Deanna & Family!
• Happy birthday, **Marcus "Poose" Bugg Jr.** turning 4 on 3/16. Love, Auntie Kelly, Uncle T & Ella Marie. • Happy birthday, **Jayla** on 3/18. Love Dad, Lileah, Grannie Kim, Papa Kyle, Papa Brad, Val, Pie, Kev, Randi, Rachel, Jay, Guy, Taylor, Brad, Melissa, Braelyn, Payton, Eric, Waase, Wesley, Brynley, and Bianca. • Happy birthday, **Bruce** on 3/19. Love Jayla, Lileah, Mom, Kyle, Dad, Val, Pie,

Kev, Randi, Rachel, Jay, Guy, Taylor, Brad, Melissa, Braelyn, Payton, Eric, Waase, Wesley, Brynley, and Bianca. • Happy 1st birthday, **Ella Marie Flores** on 3/21. Love you so much, Mom & Dad. • Happy birthday, **Marcus Bugg Sr.** on 3/21. Love, Kelly, Terrence & Ella Marie. • Happy birthday, **David Smith Jr.** on 3/22. From: June, Elliot, Manny, Liz, Lydia, Amber, Sam, Dan, Chuck, Hunter, Elvis, Sunshine, Keith, Grand Kids, Sebastian, Mallory, Dillon Jr., Leroy, Jasmine, Tyrese, Ethan, Brody, Great Grandkids, Emma, Lily Ann, Andreyah, Christopher, Caden and Carter.
• Happy 24th Birthday to my son, **Waylon James** on 3/23! I love you very much, Mom!
• Happy birthday, **Tawnya Stewart** on 3/24. Much love from Sheila and Penny's children and grandchildren. • Happy birthday, **Grandma Mary** on 3/26. Love, Ella Marie. • Happy Birthday, **Mary Flores** on 3/26. Love, Terrence & Kelly. • Happy birthday, **Mary** on 3/28. From Selena, Dante, Maysun, Shawsha, Soul, Dayfronco, Rachel, Joe, Simone, Sheila,

Joey, Simon, Stoner, D.Rose, Frankee, Derek, and Bruce.
• Happy birthday, Marissa Robertson on 3/28. From, Mary and the kids.

Happy Belated Birthdays:

Happy belated birthday to **Amber Shingobe** on 2/23, from: Grandma & Grandpa.

Other Announcements:

"From the family of the late Hildred Thomas, Chi Miigwetch to the Mille Lacs Band for all the plants that were sent in her honor. Chi Miigwetch to all the relatives and friends for their financial support, love and prayers."

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 612-465-0653. The deadline for the April issue is March 15.

Hosted by the MLB's



A chance to Win:
10.6 Cubic Ft. Chest Freezers (x2)
Kids Rain Gear (x2)
Handheld 2-way Radios (1 set)
Can Crushers (x3)
And more...
Must be Present to win

If you have any questions or would like more information to become a vendor at this event, please contact Rachel Shaugobay at (320) 532-7439 ext. 7443. Email address is rachel.shaugobay@millelacsband.com.

Join us for our annual Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe TREATY RIGHTS CELEBRATION

Friday, March 25, 2016

District 1 Community Center

Invocation at Noon
Honor Song by Timber Trails

Lunch served at 12:30 pm

Vendor Booths
Arts & Crafts Booths
Door prizes
Games for Adults and Kids



Band members participated as judges, singers and contestants at the Feb. 20 Hand Drum and Traditional Skirt contest. The host drum was Little Otter, and Amik was master of ceremonies. For more photos and results, see millelacsband.com.

Election Forum Information

Chief Executive election forums will be held in all districts:

- District I, Nay Ah Shing Community Center, Thursday, March 3, 6-8:30 p.m.
- District II, Minisinaakwaang Community Center, Friday, March 4, 6-8:30 p.m.
- Urban Area, All Nations Church, Saturday, March 5, 12:30-3 p.m.
- District III, Aazhoomog Community Center, Monday, March 7, 6-8:30 p.m.
- District IIa, Chiminising Community Center, Tuesday, March 8, 6-8:30 p.m.

District I Representative election forums will be held in District I and the urban area:

- District I, Nay Ah Shing Community Center, Wednesday, March 9, 6-7:30 p.m.
- Urban, All Nations Church, Saturday, March 5, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Want your event here? Email myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com or call 612-465-0653.</p> <p>Visit millelacsband.com/calendar for additional Mille Lacs Band events</p> <p>Also see below for recurring events.</p>		<p>1 Band Assembly Meeting 10 a.m. Aazhoomog</p>	<p>2 Band Assembly Meeting 10 a.m. Hinckley Powwow Committee Meeting 6 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>3 Circle of Health Staff at Urban Office 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Band Assembly Meeting Hinckley Election Forum 6–8:30 p.m. District I</p>	<p>4 Election Forum 6–8:30 p.m. District II</p>	<p>5 Kids Crafts 12–3 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum Election Forum 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. 12:30–3 p.m. Urban Area</p>
<p>6 <i>Aaniin ezhi ayaayan?</i> (How are you?) <i>Nimino-ayaa</i> (I am fine.) <i>Gimino-ayaa, ina?</i> (Are you fine?)</p>	<p>7 Election Forum 6–8:30 p.m. District III</p>	<p>8 Band Assembly Meeting 10 a.m. Minisinaakwaang Election Forum 6–8:30 p.m. District Ila</p>	<p>9 Election Forum 6–7:30 p.m. District I</p>	<p>10 Band Assembly Meeting 10 a.m. Chiminising Circle of Health Outreach 1–4 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>11 <i>Friday in Ojibwe is "naano-giizhigad" or "day five."</i></p>	<p>12 Chiminising Ziigwan Youth Powwow See p.16 Polar Plunge See p.13 Language Table</p>
<p>13 <i>13: ashi-niswi.</i></p>	<p>14 <i>"Nitam-anokiigiizhigad" means "It is Monday."</i></p>	<p>15 Band Assembly Meeting 10 a.m. DI</p>	<p>16 Aazhoomog Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Event Center Grand Casino Hinckley</p>	<p>17 All District Elder Meeting 11:30 a.m. East Lake ALU Band Assembly Meeting Casino</p>	<p>18 <i>"Ziigwan" means "It is spring."</i></p>	<p>19 Ojibwe Moccasin Workshop 12–4 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum Maple Sap Demonstration 12–3 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum</p>
<p>20 Ojibwe Moccasin Workshop 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum</p>	<p>21 East Lake Community Center's Sobriety Feast 5 p.m. Topic: Refusal Skills</p>	<p>22 Band Assembly Meeting 10 a.m. Aazhoomog</p>	<p>23 DIIa Legislative Meeting 2 p.m.</p>	<p>24 Band Assembly Meeting 10 a.m. Hinckley</p>	<p>25 Treaty Day Noon closing for Band offices</p>	<p>26 <i>"Iskigamizigan" (the name of the District I powwow grounds) means "sugar bush."</i></p>
<p>27 <i>Yesterday: Bijiinaago Today, now: Noongom Tomorrow, dawn: Waaban</i></p>	<p>28 <i>Lion: Mishibizhii, mishiibizhiw Lamb: Maanishtaan-ishens</i></p>	<p>29 Band Assembly Meeting 10 a.m. Minisinaakwaang</p>	<p>30 DIIa Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>31 Band Assembly Meeting 10 a.m. Chiminising</p>	<p>Band Assembly meeting dates and times are subject to change.</p> <p>See page 5 for more information about the April 5 primary election and the election forums.</p>	

RECURRING EVENTS

Healer Herb Sam is Available in the Urban Area

Fridays, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
Call 612-799-2698 or stop by the Powwow Grounds, 1414 E. Franklin Ave., Mpls.

Ojibwe Language Tables

- District I Community Center
Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.
- Aazhoomog Community Center
Tuesdays, 6 p.m.
- Hinckley Corporate Building
Thursdays, 6 p.m.
- Division of Indian Work, 1001 East Lake St., Mpls., Saturdays, 10 a.m.

The First Gift Moccasin Making

Mondays, 4 p.m.–8 p.m.
Mpls Am Indian Center - Two Rivers Gallery
Seeking community members to join others in creating baby moccasins for Am Indian families at Children's hospitals & clinics of MN. Call 612-879-1700.

Open Gym

Mondays – Thursdays, 5:30–9 p.m.
District I Community Center

Tabata Workout Sessions

Mondays & Wednesdays, 6–7 p.m.
Chiminising Community Center

UPCOMING EVENTS

Informational meeting on MND-OT/Tribal/Cement Mason Union Pre-Apprenticeship Training

March 8
10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Building,
1308 E. Franklin Ave.

MNDOT/Tribal/Cement Mason Union Pre-Apprenticeship Mandatory Pre-Screenings

March 17–18
10 a.m.–3 p.m.
MCT Building-Mpls

Urban Elder Luncheon Meeting

April 9
11 a.m.–2 p.m.
All Nations Indian Church

Mark you calendar!

Community cleanup dates are as follows: District I, April 30-May 6. District II and Ila, May 14-20. District III, May 7-13. See the April and May Inaajimowin for more information.

Breathe Free Support Group

The MLB Public Health Dept. Smoking Cessation Program will be hosting monthly support groups for individuals interested in quitting smoking!

This is available for MLB band members, community members, and employees. Place: Public Health bldg. Date: Weds. March 16 Time: Noon – 1:00 p.m.

A Healthy Lunch will be provided. If interested, please sign up with Amy Maske, SHIP Coordinator: 532-7760 amy.maske@hhs.millelacs band-nsn.gov

Ceremonial Dance Dates

Spring 2016

- Merlin & Mick — Mille Lacs — April 1 & 2, 2016
- Ralph & Andy — Mille Lacs — April 8 & 9, 2016
- Niib & Iyawbance — East Lake — April 15 & 16, 2016
- Lynda & Joyce — Mille Lacs — April 22 & 23, 2016
- Skip — Lake Lena — May 6 & 7, 2016
- Elmer & AJ — Mille Lacs — May 6 & 7, 2016
- Lee & Lary — Lake Lena — May 12 & 14, 2016
- Dale & Vincent — East Lake — May 13 & 14, 2016
- Joe & George — Mille Lacs — May 20 & 21, 2016
- Tim & Tom — East Lake — May 27 & 28, 2016
- Bob & Perry — Mille Lacs — June 3 & 4, 2016
- Maabin — Round Lake, WI — March 4 & 5, 2016
- Terry & Vince — White Earth — March 18 & 19, 2016
- Frank & Adrian — White Earth — March 25 & 26, 2016
- Jim & Louis — LCO — April 8, 9, & 10, 2016

Interested in submitting to the *Inaajimowin*?

Send your submissions and birthday announcements to Myles Gorham at myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com or call 612-465-0653.

The April issue deadline is March 15.



First Annual Chiminising Ziigwan Youth Powwow

March 12, 2016 | 11 a.m.

Chiminising Community Center

2605 Chiminising Drive | Isle, MN 56342

- Grand Entry: 1 p.m. & 7 p.m.
- MC: Erik Gahbow
- Arena Director: Thomas Benjamin Sr.
- Host Drum: Swamp Nation
- Drum Groups Contact: Corrina Moose 320-364-9965
- Head Dancers: Tony Pike & Trina Fasthorse
- First 10 drums to register with a minimum of 5 singers will receive an honorarium
- All dancers in full regalia will be paid
- First annual Brave & Royalty contest
- DIIa Powwow Committee: Chilah Brown 320-290-6823
- Royalty contact info: Sami Thomas 320-279-3232

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Heating, Water, and Maintenance Problems?

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

Free Hearing Evaluations

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

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