

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

THE
STORY
AS IT'S
TOLD

OCTOBER 2016 | VOLUME 18 | NUMBER 10



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MELANIE
BENJAMIN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



By the time Band Members receive this edition of the Band news, the November elections will only be one month away. As tribal governments, we have friends in the Congress and in the State legislature from both parties whom we support, so we are bipartisan. For this Presidential election, however, the stakes have never been higher for Indian people.

Aaniin, Boozhoo! Looking back on September, the highlight of the month was the trip with Band elders to Niagara Falls for the annual conference of the National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA). I heard from many elders that this was the best NICOA conference they ever attended. Our side trip to see the actual Niagara Falls was an amazing experience; the beauty and power of the water falls was overwhelming!

The theme of water also played out at Standing Rock this past month, where thousands of Indian people have travelled to support those who are fighting to protect their only drinking water source from the Dakota Access Pipeline. I was invited by Marlene Helgemo, of All Nations Indian Church, to join her on a trip to Standing Rock on September 7-8. As we drove into the camp, it was amazing to see our Mille Lacs Band flag flying, along with the flags of so many other Indian Nations. Chairman Archambault even came to meet us in our camp and we had a

great visit. I know many other Band Members have travelled to Standing Rock over the past several weeks, and more plan to go. Seeing so many thousands of Indian tribes and people standing in solidarity with one another was an experience I'll never forget.

With regard to the Sandpiper Pipeline that Enbridge proposed through northern Minnesota, we have temporarily won a reprieve in that fight. Enbridge is delaying its efforts to build the Sandpiper for now, but the battle is not over. Enbridge is still planning to rebuild Line 3, which follows the Sandpiper route. We will continue to do everything we can to stop the pipelines that threaten our lands and waters.

Next week, I am attending the President's annual White House meeting for tribal leaders, and am bringing a position paper on the need to reform the consultation process used by the Army Corps of Engineers, as well as calling for more aggressive action by the Departments of Interior and Justice to intervene and help us protect our trust resources, including land, water and wild rice. I will also be delivering papers calling for more federal support of our efforts to fight the opiate epidemic and to improve and increase federal support for law enforcement.

There were dozens of other meetings that happened in September and work that was done, but I want to use the remainder of my space on what I believe is the most important topic we face this fall. By the time Band Members receive this edition of the Band news, the November elections will only be one month away. As tribal governments, we have friends in the Congress and in the State legislature from both parties whom we support, so we are bipartisan. For this Presidential election, however, the stakes have never been higher for Indian people.

A Donald Trump presidency could be the most devastating turn of events for Indian tribes and people since the termination era, and I want Band Members to be armed with the facts. Trump fought Indian gaming in the early 1990s in order to protect his own gaming monopoly at the time on the east coast. Band elders attended a congressional hearing in D.C. that Trump testified at, where he made racist comments about

Indian people. He has been a loud voice for taxing Indian people and Indian tribes, has alleged that Indian people are not smart enough to do well in business, and has questioned the legitimacy of Indian tribes based on the physical appearance of their members. He has referred to Native people in the most derogatory and racist of terms, and repeatedly refers to Senator Elizabeth Warren as "Pocahontas." He has proposed abolishing agencies we depend upon to protect our people and resources, including the EPA and the Department of Education. Trump would repeal Obama-care, including the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. I firmly believe we must do everything in our power to prevent him from winning the White House.

In contrast, I am convinced that Hillary Clinton is the most qualified person to ever run for the Presidency in the history of the United States, and I know she would be a champion for Indian tribes and people. I serve as Co-Chair of her Native American Policy Work Group, and know she has an outstanding, thoughtful Native American platform including ensuring meaningful tribal consultation and empowerment; protecting tribal assets and resources; strengthening public safety and justice in Indian country; combatting drug and alcohol addiction; increasing opportunity for youth and ensuring high quality education for native youth; ensuring tribal communities have improved health care; and fighting for Indian veterans. From my perspective there is only one clear choice for President, and that is Hillary Clinton.

Whomever you support, please do make sure you vote – and bring a relative or friend as well. Our Ojichidaag fought for our rights, and we owe it to them to exercise our right to vote. Also, many Band Members will have an opportunity to cast their ballot for Band Member Chilah Brown on November 8! Chilah is running for the State Legislature, and if she wins, she will make history as our first Band Member elected to state office. Miigwech to all Band Members for all you do, and please get out the vote on November 8!

Melanie Benjamin



Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin spent time at Standing Rock in September to lend her support to the opposition against the Dakota Access pipeline.

Ground Broken for Hinckley Community Center

Community members, contractors and employees gathered in Hinckley on Aug. 30 to break ground for what will be a state-of-the-art community center.

After a dish was set and prayers said by Skip Churchill, Community Development Commissioner Percy Benjamin introduced District III Rep. Harry Davis and Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin, who thanked the staff and members of the community who participated in the planning process.

Percy gave special thanks to Community Development staff members Mike Moilanen and Ryan Jendro, who were instrumental in developing plans for the facility.

Mike and Ryan talked about the building, which will be a two-story, 45,000 square foot facility with meeting rooms, a fitness center, a gymnasium, an indoor track and an outdoor splash pad.

The brick-and-steel exterior is expected to last for generations, and the floral designs on the gym walls were designed by Band member Steve Premo.

Percy said a high priority for the project is providing District III youth opportunities to participate in healthy activities.



Clockwise from top left: Harry Davis, Melanie Benjamin and Percy Benjamin. Construction of the facility is expected to take about a year. Community members, contractors and government officials took part in the groundbreaking on Aug. 30.

Mille Lacs Band Receives \$20,000 Grant for Integrated Food Systems Project

The Band recently received a \$20,000 grant from the First Nations Development Institute of Longmont, Colorado. This award will support the efforts of the Band's Integrated Food Systems Program.

The Integrated Food Systems Program is a partnership between Band programs and communities to produce healthy foods to eat, share and sell. The First Nations Development Institute grant will fund community food assessment surveys and the identification of top priorities, concerns and barriers to affordable, healthy foods, while measuring community members' interest in participating in an ongoing project. The data gathered will include a feasibility study and strategies to address community concerns. An action plan will be created based on the data, and a follow-up survey will be conducted to determine community satisfaction with the project. The grant is part of the Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative

made possible through support from the NoVo Foundation.

The Band's Administration Department has been working with the Honor The Earth organization to identify best practices, provide comments and feedback on proposed food codes, and develop logical phasing of the project. During the summer of 2016, the program established gardens and developed farming projects in all three districts, distributed gardening boxes and plants to Band members, and worked with Nay Ah Shing Schools and Assisted Living Units to provide healthy food to students and Elders.

Commissioner of Administration Catherine Colstrud expressed her gratitude to First Nations Development Institute and the NoVo Foundation. "This is such a valuable gift given to the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe," said Catherine. "With this grant, we will be able to identify and address the top concerns of our community, as related to food deserts in our communi-



First harvest from one of the newly developed agricultural plots in Mille Lacs Band District I.

ty. Increasing access to healthier food choices will not only help the Mille Lacs Band citizens, but also our neighbors who are working diligently to increase sustainable agriculture right here in our area. The funding provided by the grant will help us determine the next steps and assess the success of our efforts so far. In our language, we say 'Chi miigwech' — many thanks — for supporting this project."

Band Fire Crew Honors Fallen Tribal Firefighters



Two wildland firefighters from the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community — 25-year-old A.J. Swartz and 23-year-old Jimmy Shelifoe — were tragically killed August 28 on their way to fight the Box Canyon forest fires in Utah. They died

when the truck they were riding in went off the road in Blaine, Minn.

On Aug. 30, the Mille Lacs Band fire crew of Dean Staples, Eli Staples, Ernie Boyd and Tyler Rosnau, along with Mille Lacs Band Emergency Manager Monte Fronk, were among those who paid their respects by escorting the fallen back to their homes.

The motorcade from the funeral home in St. Paul to Baraga, Mich., was the longest in the history of the fire service. Normally fallen fighters are flown home and then motorcaded to a church or funeral home.

Mille Lacs Engine 1061 was the only non-official motorcade vehicle to run the entire procession from St. Paul to Baraga.

As the procession left the cities, vehicles pulled off to a rest

area where they met the families and fire crew on a coach bus, who joined the motorcade.

Engines from various agencies such as the Minnesota DNR and Fond Du Lac DNR/BIA parked on overpasses on Interstate 35, and department members saluted and flew flags as the motorcade passed under them.

The Fond Du Lac DNR/BIA joined the procession with Engine 561.

As the procession crossed into Superior, Wisc., all of the towns were crowded with citizens and firefighters flying flags while saluting or standing with hands over hearts.

On the Bad River Reservation, Band members offered tobacco, songs, drumming and jingle dress dancing as the motorcade passed through.

At every stop, the two black vans carrying the fallen firefighters had honor guard firefighters standing watch over them.

The procession started with approximately 20 vehicles, and when it reached Baraga, it was nearly three miles long.

Upon reaching the final destination at a local church, the honor guard gave both fallen firefighters honors, folding the flags that were draped on the caskets and handing the flags over to family members along with honors.

Monte Fronk was one of nine members of the official Honor Guard detail, and he also served as a tribal liaison.

Brooklyn Park Fire Chief Kenneth T. Prillaman gave a special thanks to Monte for his help. "We would have been significantly handicapped without Monte's participation, counsel and wisdom," he said.



Firefighters from various agencies saluted the motorcade as it passed.

National News Briefs

U.S. Suspends Construction on Part of North Dakota Pipeline: The Dakota Access pipeline has been a site of both controversy and solidarity over the past couple of weeks. In a tremendous display of unification for a cause, Native American tribes from all over the country have united in peaceful protest of the 1,170-mile-long oil pipeline that would run through North and South Dakota, Iowa and Illinois. The efforts, led by the Standing Rock Sioux tribe, have finally been heard by the federal government. As of now, the federal Justice Department has temporarily blocked construction of the pipeline. The pipeline is a threat to Native American tribal sovereignty, waters and lands — and serves as a striking reminder of how Native rights continue to be pushed aside in the face of capital interests. In this most recent court development, judges have shed light on the continued miscommunication between government and tribal officials and the need for reform of the legal standards and processes of invasive environmental projects.

Scandal Continues to Hinder Bureau of Indian Education Efforts: Members of Congress and the Bureau of Indian Education are battling over where and how to invest money for tribal education. Earlier this month the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs approved a bill that would allow Indian parents to use BIE funds to send their children to institutions of their choice. Critics say that the federal government should be investing more money in the Bureau of Indian Education if they want to improve achievement levels among Native American students. There has since been division within the bureau and Congress on how to approach the educational opportunities for tribal students. This has resulted in a lawsuit against the Obama administration for its plan, “A Blueprint for Reform.” The outcomes of these court proceedings will have direct impact on how Native American students are educated, and where the funding comes from.

Federal Judge to Issue New Rules for Local Courts on ICWA Cases: In South Dakota, a District Court Judge has received no help from the county in court cases involving Native American children. He found that Indians were denied protections guaranteed under the constitution and the Indian Child Welfare Act. In two lawsuits, he found that Native American parents were denied the right to representation by an attorney. He has been seeking help in getting the federal courts to remedy these violations of the plaintiffs in cases involving Native Americans. Judge Jeffrey Viken continues to work on changing the practices of the local courts and will be appealing his court case to pave the way for better respect to Native Americans in further hearings.

Album Stream: A Tribe Called Red — ‘We Are the Halluci Nation’: The Canadian hip-hop crew “A Tribe Called Red” has produced a new album. The band’s members are of First Nations communities and draw inspiration for their music from their indigenous heritage. The new album is an international, intra-continental blast of electronic futurism, backed by socially conscious rhymes and guest features. Their message is about being and acting in solidarity with like-minded people and understanding how to most effectively thwart oppression in our broken system. On this album, the group collaborated with other Indigenous peoples from across the world.

Reservation Residents Complete Community Leadership Program

Twenty-eight residents of the Mille Lacs, Shakopee, Lower Sioux and Upper Sioux Indian Communities returned August 10 from a two-day leadership workshop. This was the final segment of an intense, seven-day training provided by the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program (BRCLP) which included a five-day retreat held earlier this year.

A program of the Grand Rapids-based Blandin Foundation, BRCLP has provided experiential leadership training for more than 500 community leaders from 11 Minnesotan American Indian Reservations since 2001. This is the sixth time these communities have participated together in the BRCLP leadership program.

The goal of the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program is to strengthen leadership capacity through cultural strengths and assets to build and sustain healthy tribal communities. Topics covered during the retreat included: acknowledging and drawing upon leadership strengths, recognizing and tapping into sources of personal and community resilience, framing community issues and opportunities, building social capital and mobilizing community resources.

“A healthy community depends on leadership engagement of many community members,” said Valerie Shangreaux, director of Blandin leadership programs. “The leadership demonstrated by these participants reflects their deep commitment to their communities, their reservations and the people



living there.”

BRCLP training programs are funded entirely by the Blandin Foundation, whose mission is to strengthen rural Minnesota communities, especially the Grand Rapids area.

Members of the most recent BRCLP training group learned about the nine dimensions of a healthy community and how to use the nine dimensions to create a holistic vision of healthy reservation communities. BRCLP uses a culturally-focused, asset-based approach to training community leaders. Nearly 30 residents from four reservation communities participated in this most recent training, which concluded August 10.

Get Out the Vote

Katie Draper Guest Writer

“Why vote?”

As an employee of the Government Affairs department, our day-to-day operations involve various tasks, but most importantly building relationships with external governments. By government I mean townships, cities, counties, states, and Federal. When working with government at all levels our goal is to have the best possible relationship with the elected officials of those governments. As a sovereign nation, we have our own government and operations, but as dual citizens of the United States of America, external relations with other governments can impact our Tribal government through changes in law and policies.

External governments are not always easy to work with. For example: They may question our sovereignty, boundaries and treaty rights. When faced with these challenges the Band works to find the best possible solution to move beyond those challenges. By voting, we have the power to remove those undesirable people who question our sovereignty, boundaries and treaty rights from public office.

Can you imagine the impact if a Band member were elected into public office? It can happen!

Together, we have the power to do that.

Currently, there are 3,200 Band members who are over the age of 18. That is a lot of votes. Those votes can make a major impact on any election whether it be local, state or federal. For

example, in 2008 Senator Franken (who has been a champion for the Band by standing with us and advocating for our rights) won by a mere 312 votes out of over 2.4 million voters. That narrow margin is too close, and our vote can make the difference!

In order to vote in Minnesota, you must be:

- A U.S. Citizen
- At least 18 years old on Election Day (November 8th, 2016)
- A resident of Minnesota for 20 days
- Finished with all parts of a felony sentence (parole, probation, supervised release)

The Minnesota Secretary of State website (sos.state.mn.us) has an abundance of information about Election Day and voting. You can now register to vote online! It is very easy and takes little time. Please visit the website to explore early voting, absentee voting and other voting options.

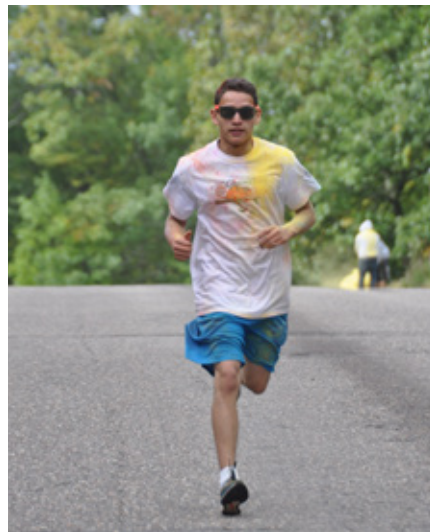
If you have questions about Election Day or are interested in helping with election activities, please contact Katie Draper at 320-515-0846 or Jamie Edwards at 612-850-2124.

Band members are also encouraged to attend a Get Out the Native Vote rally on Friday, Oct. 14, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Grand Casino Mille Lacs Ballroom.



Family fun!

Thirty-two teams took part in the Corporate Ventures Family Golf Outing in Hinckley last month.



Run like a chameleon!

Dozens of kids — and a few adults — participated in the Second Annual Chameleon Run Sept. 17 at the Iskigamizigan Powwow Grounds in District I. The event was started last year by Amy Maske, the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) coordinator with the Public Health Department. Amy has since moved on to a new job, but she volunteered to come back and help organize the run again. Tribal Police officers helped keep runners safe, and staff from the Niigaan Program and Public Health Department set up color stations along the three-kilometer route and served healthy food at the end of the run. Amy said the Chameleon Run originated as a fun way to promote healthy activity.

Standing with Standing Rock

Chad Germann Guest Writer

I've visited the protest at Standing Rock. I traveled there with members of the Mille Lacs Band Corporate Ventures team, bringing nearly 1,000 blankets and other supplies for the cause in large company transportation trucks. Almost nine hours drive from Mille Lacs. And what I want most to share with you — which is what I've been sharing with everyone I talk to since I've returned — is that you should go, too. If you can, you should go. Go right now. And bring supplies. Firewood, apples or band-aids. Bring whatever you can fit in your car when you go. But go.

Why? Because the pipeline protest at Standing Rock is like nothing I've known in my lifetime. And I'll probably never see anything like it again. And as a Native American visiting there, there's a feeling I found inside myself that I've only ever found there. It's hard to describe. Pride is part of it. A feeling of solidarity that comes from stepping in and helping with a cause much bigger than yourself. But both of those feelings — pride and solidarity — have a Native flavor that reminds me of how I feel when I travel to the National Indian Gaming Conventions and find myself surrounded by thousands of Native American business people. All of us doing work together to benefit our communities, building our businesses, our futures. All of us Natives, working together. Makes me so proud to be participating in the Native business community. And it's that feeling, or a version of it, that I felt inside myself when I was at the Standing Rock camp. And believe me, it's an amazingly positive feeling.

When you pull into camp, they meet you at the gate with smoking smudge pots and bless your car as you enter. All day long, people are blessing the cars as they come into camp! All day long, every day. Which is the over-arching feeling that runs through everything at the camp: serious dedication. The Dakota Access Pipeline is a threat that garners serious and dedicated opposition, and the people there seem to be up for the challenge.

The camp is stocked with supplies from all corners of Indian Country. They have a large, open kitchen from which they feed the thousands of campers three meals a day. The food is cooked using open fires, which requires an enormous amount of firewood. Several people were chopping wood all day long, from sun up to sun down, chop, chop, chop. (Someone needs to donate a log-splitter to them ASAP.) Donations are welcomed in, unloaded and quickly dispersed to the proper places. Very systematic, organized.

When we arrived, we were efficiently unloaded and thanked, and as soon as we moved out, other trucks took our place to unload their donated supplies. Donations arrived regularly. A pick-up truck from Oklahoma pulled in after we moved our trucks. They were a family of five, from the Osage Nation, with a truck full of miscellaneous donations. They said they just wanted to come, so they loaded up their truck and came. The pride registered on their faces was an explanation that made perfect sense to me — they wanted to participate.

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State & Local News Briefs

Vainio is 2016 Award Recipient: Every year the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and the McKnight Foundation announce the Virginia McKnight Binger "Unsung Hero" Awards which honor individuals for the significant impact they have had on the state of Minnesota and its communities. This year, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe member Dr. Arne Vainio of Cloquet, MN received the award. Arne is a physician on the Fond du Lac Reservation, serving long hours at the clinic as well as traveling to reservations all across America to discuss Native health, suicide and Native traditions. His passion for health led him to bring his "Mad Dr. Science Project" to many classrooms. Arne hopes to inspire young Native Americans to take up careers in health and science while carrying on the tribal tradition.

Measure Twice, Cut Once: Carpenters and Summit Academy Students: Summit Academy is a program that offers 20-week job training programs that ready students for apprenticeships and internships in the construction trades, or in healthcare and medical-related career positions. Native American students are a small but growing percentage of the program, with potential to increase with the GED preparation program. The program offers a pathway to good jobs for Native Americans who face high unemployment rates and those who've left school before graduating. SAOIC is one of three programs in Minnesota.

Wetterling's Remains Discovered in Western Stearns County: After 27 years, Jacob Wetterling's body was finally discovered in Western Stearns County. Wetterling is the boy who went missing in 1989 after being abducted at gunpoint while riding bike home from a convenience store with his brother and a friend. Wetterling was abducted by Danny Heinrich, a pedophile, who has recently been arrested and convicted, and who has finally come forward with the truth about what happened that day. Wetterling's case is a remarkable one which has prompted Patty Wetterling, Jacob's mother, to spend the last 27 years advocating for children's safety and pushing for legislation. She is currently the Chair of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Wetterling's story reminds us just how important it is to practice communication and safe behavior if you have young children out on their own.

The Busiest-Ever Minnesota State Fair? You Betcha: Those of you who braved the crowds at this year's "Great Minnesota Get-Together" were part of a record-setting attendance. A record 1,943,719 fairgoers visited the Minnesota State Fair this year. Single day attendance records were also broken on the Fair's two Fridays as Minnesotans flocked to St. Paul for great weather and delicious foods. Fair coordinators claim that by spreading things out and coordinating traffic they avoided congestion and were able to successfully accommodate larger crowds.

Minnesota Athletes Get Set for Paralympics in Rio: Governor Mark Dayton and Lieutenant Governor Tina Smith recognized the 11 Minnesota native athletes who competed in Rio at the Paralympics, which ran until September 18. Rose Hollerman from Elysian, Minn. competed in women's wheelchair basketball, Lexi Shifflett of Waseca competed in sitting volleyball, and Chuck Aoki from Minneapolis competed in men's wheelchair rugby.

Standing with Standing Rock continued from page 5.

Because the cause is so very just and good. And you are helping other Natives who are backed against the wall. A people whose rights are being trashed. Again. (The same story, right? As always.) And so helping, being a part of the fight, just feels right and good and makes you so very proud.

That's exactly how I felt when I watched Joe Nayquonabe Jr. shake hands with the chairman of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, David Archambault II. The chairman says "thank you," Joe smiles. And I know he feels like I felt — that we are helping, we are making a difference in this very important Native American fight for our rights. So very proud to participate.

Having said that, I can't imagine staying there for long.

Tanya Aubid has been there from the beginning. She fought the pipeline that threatens our Mille Lacs Band waters here in

Minnesota, and when the oil company shifted to Standing Rock, she went west to help. She's been staying at the camp on and off for several weeks. Her tent — soon to be a wigwam (when she can get all the supplies for building a proper wigwam) — is in a part of the camp called the "Red Warriors Camp," which is where the most serious water protectors reside. Tanya's been arrested, as have many others, and when I talked to her she was fresh from her visit to town where she met the local judge presiding over her case and set a date for her hearing, requesting a trial from him. "The more publicity the better," she says.

I love her dedication, which is echoed by so many others throughout the camp, but I fear for them just the same. The cold winter weather is right around the corner. Although I didn't yet feel it on the night I camped there, I do know it's coming. And I can't help but wonder how their open kitchen will function in the

snow. Will all the campers manage to keep warm? I know they are Indians and their ancestors made it work. But how many of us modern Indians have that fortitude? I don't think I do.

I can't predict the future. The oil companies are strong. They own the politicians outright. But the Native people seem resolved to stand and fight. Truly, nothing could be more important on those grassy plains than a good, clean supply of water. But I don't know what will happen. History, which hasn't been kind to Natives, suggests we won't win out.

Whatever happens there, win or lose, I am glad I participated, if only for a day. When you are there, you forget the bad run we've had and you feel like History will turn and this one we will win. I hope so. I want very much for us to win this. Our turn to win one of these fights must come, eventually.



Band Moves Forward on Four Winds Transition

In her 2015 State of the Band address, Chief Melanie Benjamin gave a strong directive to the Health and Human Services Department (HHS) to develop improvements in addiction treatment services. Since then, the HHS Department under Commissioner Sam Moose has been implementing a multi-dimensional Opiate Response Plan, including improvement of residential treatment options.

In late 2014, HHS approached the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) about the Mille Lacs Band Department of Health and Human Services taking over the ownership and management of the Four Winds CARE program in Brainerd. (It has been the long-range plan for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe to provide inpatient chemical dependence treatment services.)

The Four Winds program has operated as a culturally specific Native American program providing addiction treatment services to Minnesota's Indian community for many years.

The State of Minnesota has made a decision to change the structure of their State Operated Services CARE programs which will substantially reduce the access that Minnesota's Indian community has to culturally specific drug and alcohol addiction treatment.

"We have been exploring ways to develop a stronger component of inpatient or residential treatment services that can provide care to the neediest members of our communities who struggle with addiction," said HHS Executive Director Jeff Larson. "Our research on this process looked at developing strategic partnerships with existing treatment programs as well

as looking at ways we might establish our own programs. Taking over the Four Winds program seems like the best way to achieve quick results to address our communities' needs and to continue to provide services to people from other tribes in Minnesota."

After months of discussion, HHS moved ahead in early 2016 with a letter of intent to take over the program at the end of the year. The Band approached the Minnesota Legislature with the support of Governor Dayton to secure funding to assist with the transition, but the Legislature did not act on the request.

Since May, HHS staff have been working with the state to secure an alternate source of funding to assist with the anticipated shortfall during the initial transition of ownership. In August, the state informed the Band that they had identified a source of funding to assist in the transition, and talks were back on track.

"We have been working with several teams jointly made up of state and MLBO HHS staff to develop a transition plan," said Commissioner Sam Moose. "The goal would be to create a space that is welcoming, healing, and reflective of Anishinaabe values and of our way of life."

Moose and his staff plan to develop the former Four Winds site into a center serving the needs of American Indians from around Minnesota with a culturally specific model of care that fully integrates cultural programming, addiction recovery programming, and fully integrated care for co-occurring mental health conditions.

The transition of the program from DHS to the Mille Lacs

Band of Ojibwe will include the rebranding of the program with a new name and identity that is reflective of the culture of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and is rooted in our traditions and values.

Moose said the Transition Plan has been developed in collaboration with the DHS along with some investment from the State of Minnesota to repurpose and reprogram the Four Winds program. "I'm extremely excited about what the addition of inpatient treatment services means to the Tribe and our Opiate Response Plan!" Moose said.

The department is also considering a withdrawal management program which could include a sobering up center which would provide an alternative for Band members rather than being sent to detox programs in the Twin Cities or St. Cloud. Additionally, these services could be billed to neighboring counties who have detox responsibility.

Finally, HHS has been meeting with other organizations to develop potential partnerships for technical assistance and/or transition consulting to develop Four Winds into a successful Tribal Treatment Model. Bringing in support from organizations that have experience in running successful and sustainable treatment models will help to make this project a success. "We have some good possibilities for implementation and ongoing management for this project, which will help to ensure that the program starts off on the right foot with a solid foundation for the future," Moose said.

HHS Seeks Input on District I, District II Clinics

Commissioner of Health and Human Services Sam Moose has been visiting with community members in Districts I and II regarding plans for new health clinics.

Phase I of planning for the District II Minisinaakwaang Clinic included service providers, professionals and auxiliary staff of the Department of Health and Human Services. The first phase identified the space needs and departmental needs for each HHS department: health services, family services, public health, behavioral health and community support services.

Architects from Seven Generations Architecture and Engineering (7Gen) were on hand to answer questions and take comments. The Michigan firm is owned by the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and understands the needs of tribal communities as well as the requirements of the Indian Health Service.

Community members expressed gratitude and support for the new clinic plan. 7Gen staff said they are focused on creating an atmosphere of healing and wellness, with exam room interiors that are warm, durable and culturally appropriate to the community.

Three sites are being considered for the new Minisinaakwaang Clinic: (1.) South of the existing East Lake Community Center on the other side of the parking lot; (2.) North of the community center between the center and the Assisted Living Unit site; (3.) South of the new District II powwow grounds.

Sites 1 and 3 would utilize existing parking spaces and utility services. Site 2 would also be able to utilize utility services but would need a more comprehensive parking complex for staff and patients/clientele.

The current plan for internal office space, as described by 7Gen, includes the following: six exam rooms, two multipur-

pose rooms for behavioral health integrated services, lab services with separate draw room for blood work and other fluids, full x-ray services, two dental treatment rooms, a traditional healer space, public health offices, behavioral health offices, medical storage, community support offices and an administration office.

The Health and Human Services Department is looking for Mille Lacs Band community members to help design the new District I Health and Human Services Building and District II Minisinaakwaang Clinic. As a facility user and community member, we feel your input to the design process would be very helpful in designing buildings the community will use and enjoy.

If you have any questions or are interested in being on either the District I or District II HHS design committees, please contact Jeff Larson or Michelle Beaulieu at 320-532-4163.



Left: HHS Commissioner Sam Moose has been meeting with community and staff members about the design of new clinics in DI and II. Right: The DI clinic (top) and DI HHS building (bottom) were designed by Seven Generations Architecture and Engineering, a Michigan firm owned by the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians.

Language Revitalization at Band Schools Continues to be a Top Priority

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

Revitalizing the Ojibwe language and ensuring it continues to thrive has been one of LeAnn Biidaana Benjamin's personal goals since she was in high school.

"I wanted everyone to learn the language," said LeAnn, who graduated from Nay Ah Shing and had Millie Zhaawin Benjamin as her first language teacher.

Now, decades later, as the language coordinator for the Band's schools, LeAnn is in the right position to help make her goals a reality.

LeAnn has been in her job for less than two months but has hit the ground running, not just to better learn her role, but because there's long been a universal push attached to language acquisition.

"Language is vitally important, especially as we're losing our first speakers," said LeAnn, adding that she is grateful for those who share her passion of keeping language at the forefront of their work.

Besides finding new ways of growing the avenues in which Ojibwe has been taught, LeAnn wants to build on the work that has already been done.

"The immersion room at Wewinabi has been really successful," she said. "There's nothing but Ojibwe language spoken there, and it really benefits the kids."

One idea, which she hopes becomes a reality sooner rather than later, is to have more immersion rooms at both the lower and high school.

"I'm hoping by next year we'll have more in place."

Her ultimate dream, though, is to have an immersion school where Ojibwe is taught and spoken throughout all grades. As exciting as the idea is to LeAnn, she's realistic and knows that will take some time.

"We need staff committed to learning the language, and we're starting that through a teacher training program offered by the Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College," she said. "Then as people continue learning the language they can bring it back here."

The language program's staff of 12 is also working on their own skills both inside and outside of school. They participate in language tables and/or study sessions each week as one way to build on their own knowledge and ability.

Language tables give learners the opportunity to work on their skills together. They are offered weekly in the urban area and in Aazhoomog (District III).

In her role as the language coordinator, LeAnn oversees the work at Wewinabi, Pine Grove Academy and Nay Ah Shing upper and lower schools. Before assuming this role, LeAnn was a peacemaker at Nay Ah Shing.

One thing that can happen during this academic year is that Ojibwe language will be used more frequently in the classroom. She already sees some of that happening with the work of the students who are studying for the Ojibwe Knowledge Bowl, which will be held in November.

"This year we have a team made up of all males, and that excites me," said LeAnn, adding that there has only been a female team in the past years.

"Besides needing more staff who are or want to become language teachers, we need more male teachers and/or assistants within the classrooms at each school," LeAnn said.

LeAnn is also excited by other ideas that she hopes come to fruition soon, including the creation of an Ojibwe culture newsletter that would be sent home monthly for students and their families, and the inclusion of Ojibwe words in the yearbook, specifically the students' Indian names — an idea shared by her colleague, Greg Rutter.

In the meantime, families can also help by attending language tables together, practicing at home and being deliberate in their efforts to learn the language. Families are more than welcome to come in and help at the school in the classrooms and language tables.

"At home, emphasize the language as much as possible. Even the basics like using yes 'e'ya' or no 'gaawiin'," she said. "Families can also label items in their homes in Ojibwe and that can help."

"I want to do that at the school, too, by putting labels on doors, rooms, chairs and other things."

"I'm here to keep the language going, and we plan to do whatever we can to keep it alive," she said.

Artists Perform at Community Center, Nay Ah Shing

Hiphop performers Thomas Barrett and DJAO and visual artist Wesley May made two appearances in District I in September to inspire Mille Lacs Band members with their talents and stories.

The community center staff and Niigaan program hosted a performance on Thursday, Sept. 8. Thomas rapped about growing up on the Red Lake reservation, playing basketball, the Ojibwe language, and the Standing Rock protests, while Wesley created a painting with help from kids in the audience.

At Nay Ah Shing Upper School gymnasium on Friday, Sept. 9, they got the large crowd of students dancing, chanting and painting.

Thomas started the event by sharing his story. He said he was devastated by the loss of friends in the Red Lake school shooting in 2005.

From there he started college, but he was held back by an

unhealthy lifestyle of addiction for seven years. "It drove me down until I hit rock bottom," Thomas said, "But I used rock bottom as my launching pad and said, 'All right, I'm going up from here.'"

He said he had recently finished his college education and told the students that no matter what they're going through, they can overcome obstacles.

Thomas said hip-hop music helped him in his recovery process. "For me, hip-hop changed my life and saves a lot of people. When you're feeling down, you throw on a song to get you through tough times. Music is power. Art is power."

Now he's using his music to help others connect to their heritage and learn to express themselves. "In Native country, we're very hesitant to express ourselves," he said. "We're 'Indian-ish' — very shy. It's okay because we were raised that way, but whatever it is you love, do it with passion. It's how

you express yourself. That was how I rose above everything that was in front of me."

Thomas also got political in his performance, encouraging the kids to stand, pump their fists and chant, "I stand with Standing Rock," while rapping about the oil pipeline protests in North Dakota.

His partners Wesley and DJAO recorded the students' chants and photographed their anti-pipeline posters to share with the protesters. As the music played, Wesley, with help from students, created a painting dedicated to the pipeline protesters.

Principal Noah Johnson told the District I community on Sept. 14 that the performance was part of a series of 16 experiential learning opportunities Nay Ah Shing students will participate in this year.



Thomas Barrett, DJAO and Wesley May performed in District I Sept. 8 and 9.

Manoomin Season Features Parade, Ricing Classes

Even in a year with a mediocre wild rice crop, manoomin is still the focal point of late summer and early fall in District II.

This year, ricing season included an appearance by Band members at the Wild Rice Days community festival in McGregor.

District II Rep. David 'Niib' Aubid was honored as Grand Marshal of the Wild Rice Days parade on Sept. 4. Riding in the back of a DNR pickup driven by John Aubid, and pulling a birch bark canoe, Niib was joined by three of the royalty from the Gii-Ishkonigewag Powwow that took place in July in East Lake.

After the parade, Niib chatted with passersby about the canoe, which he had helped to build at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College.

The District II community has participated in Wild Rice Days in the past, giving demonstrations on traditional wild rice processing — manoominike.

Down the road at Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy, students kicked off the year with a manoomin harvest. Staff members Branden Sargent, Amber Buckanaga, and others taught the kids to make knocking sticks in the wigwam behind

the school.

On the lawn, they learned the techniques of poling the canoe and knocking the rice.

Finally, they hit the water and returned with enough rice to learn the next steps in manoominike: parching, jiggling and winnowing.

According to Amber Buckanaga, learning cultural skills like ricing is an important part of the Minisinaakwaang curriculum.



Electrofishing Study Helps Estimate Walleye Population

Brett Larson Staff Writer

Electrofishing is nothing new to Mille Lacs fisheries biologist Carl Klimah. He participated in many electrofishing surveys in estuaries along Alabama's gulf coast as a graduate student.

Still, the electrofishing surveys at Mille Lacs he assisted on in the spring and fall of this year weren't easy.

"It was brutal," he said.

Carl and other biologists went out after dark several times last month and stayed out most of the night to conduct a survey of the entire shoreline of Mille Lacs. The data they collected helps them learn about the population of walleyes in Mille Lacs, which has been declining in recent years primarily due to poor survival of juvenile walleyes — although the reasons for poor survival are not understood.

"It might be partly due to invasive species, climate change or competition from other fish species," said Carl.

Electrofishing involves sending an electrical current into the water to temporarily stun fish so they can be collected, measured and released unharmed. The current is adjusted to concentrate on fish that are less than 15 inches.

As the boats travel slowly at one to three miles per hour, stunned fish are collected in nets and placed in holding tanks on the boats. They are handled with care by the boat crews, who take precautions to minimize stress on sampled fish.

Every 30 to 60 minutes, fish in the holding tanks are measured to the nearest tenth of an inch. Scale and spine samples are taken from different sized fish to determine their age and growth rates. Water temperatures and clarity are also recorded.

The data collected are compared with previous samples and analyzed using computer models.

The results will help scientists estimate the walleye population, the strength of each year-class and the survival rates of various year-classes.

DNR Executive Director Susan Klapel said the surveys are part of the Band's commitment to protecting natural resources.

"Fisheries has been an exciting addition to the Band's natural resources department," said Susan. "Everything we are looking at is how we can preserve our resources for generations to come. We are working toward some more research, another great hatch in the spring and components that will give Band members the opportunities to work with us. Hopefully seeing some of the work we are doing will encourage some of our members to pursue biology in school and come work with us."

Bassmasters Tourney Spreads Good News about Mille Lacs

Brett Larson Staff Writer

The leadership of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures knew the renowned Bassmasters fishing tournament would give a shot in the arm to the local economy, but few could have foreseen the extent of the positive coverage the event brought to Mille Lacs.

Make no mistake: The Mille Lacs Band made the event possible; no other venue on the lake had the space or the staff to host such a major event. Grand Casino made a substantial financial commitment to host the tournament.

Other local businesses also clearly benefitted from the event. During the weigh-ins, professional anglers gave shout-outs to local businesses from McQuoid's to Twin Pines to Lyback's — in addition to thanking their sponsors.

But the economic impact of the tournament was not limited to one weekend. Sarah Barten of Grand Casino, who worked hard to help bring the tourney to Mille Lacs, thinks the best is yet to come.

"This week was great for the local businesses, but the benefits will be ongoing as more people learn about the lake," said Sarah. "When the TV version of this tournament airs next month, a lot of people are going to get excited about booking a trip to Mille Lacs."

The anglers who participated agreed wholeheartedly. Social media blew up during the tournament, as the pros tweeted and blogged about the spectacular bass fishing.

At "Bassmasters University" presentations and the daily weigh-ins, they raved about the lake:

Skeet Reese: "I've been all around the world chasing fish, and I've never seen a smallmouth fishery that kicks out this many five-pound smallmouth. Your secret fishing hole is now a community fishing hole. These guys will be coming back. I'll be coming back."

Casey Ashley: "This is the best smallmouth fishery I've ever seen in my life."

Brett Hite: "This place is phenomenal. We go to a lot of largemouth factories and don't catch this many fish."

Jacob Powroznik: "I'd like to come back time and time and time again."

Kevin VanDam: "I guarantee you we'll be back. There's not many places on the planet like this."

Tommy Biffle: "This has got to be the number one smallmouth lake in the country."

James Elam: "I'm gonna leave this tournament knowing I'll never experience smallmouth fishing like this ever again."

Boyd Duckett: "You can lose here and still have a good time."

Takahiro Omori: "This is one of the best places I ever fished in my life."

Brandon Ploinick: "You guys truly have the best smallmouth bass fishery in the world right now."

Gary Klein: "It is truly the smallmouth capital of the world."

Bill Lowen: "It's better than we're all saying. You can go out there and catch the smallmouth of a lifetime."

Kelly Jordan: "I hope we come back. This is truly the best smallmouth fishery I've ever seen."

You get the idea. Guys who do this for a living had never experienced anything like it.

The highlight for the spectators might've been when Minnesota angler Seth Feider brought his final bag to the scale on Sunday afternoon. The five fish weighed in at 26 pounds, 2 ounces, to bring his three-day total to 76 pounds, five ounces — more than six pounds better than the nearest competitor. Seth's average of over 5 pounds per fish on three straight days is unheard of even in the most renowned largemouth waters.

But it wasn't just the fishing that had anglers raving; they also were clearly impressed by the large crowds that turned out for the event, indicating that the Bassmasters will likely return to the lake for another tournament.

Thousands filed through the tents to talk with anglers, learn about the latest gear, or shop for a wide array of products. There was something for everyone, including kids and "fishing widows." Eddy's and Grand Casino served food, and vendors sold arts and crafts, clothing, automotive products, household cleaners — you name it.

Saturday and Sunday the Grand Casino parking lots were full, and during the final weigh-in, cars also lined the roads and filled the government center parking lot.

At a lake where positive press about fishing is hard to come by, the Band's pursuit of the Bassmasters helped make possible the best news story in years.



Casino employees Nicole Mitchell, Robbie Sawyer, Sarah Barten and Tracy Sam (pictured with grandson Noah Sablan) were in good spirits on Saturday.



A fish pond and other activities kept kids busy, and the expo had something for everyone — not just fishing accessories, but also clothing, household products, arts, crafts and food.



The highlight of the tournament was the victory of Minnesota native Seth Feider, who caught over 75 pounds of smallmouth bass during the three-day tournament — an average of five fish per day weighing more than five pounds each.



Casino Employees Help Feed the Hungry

Roughly 2,000 volunteers — including many from Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures and Grand Casino — filled Target Field on Friday, Sept. 16 for a Feed My Starving Children event hosted by the Minnesota Twins. Pack at the Park volunteers hand-packed an estimated 500,000 meals for hungry children around the world, which is enough food to feed approximately 1,500 children for a year.

MIGA 25th ANNIVERSARY

Photos by Chad Germann

Minnesota Native American tribes celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Minnesota Indian Gaming Association on September 15. The event was hosted by the Mille Lacs Band at the InterContinental St. Paul Riverfront. Top: Michele Palomaki, Adam Valdez and Tracy Sam. Bottom: Jamie Edwards, Kelly Sam, Joe Nayquonabe Jr.



District I Community Receives Update on Education

District I Rep. Sandi Blake invited a number of guest speakers to the District I community meeting on Sept. 14 to provide updates on education and truancy.

After a meal of beef stew, Sandi introduced Onamia School District Indian Education Coordinator Chris Clitso-Nayquonabe, who introduced herself in Ojibwe and also her staff members. She said the department has hosted powwows, meet-and-greets and teacher trainings. "We're making a lot of steps toward improving Indian education in the district," she concluded. The Indian Ed program is funded through state grants, Title 7 and Johnson O'Malley funds provided by the Band.

Onamia principal and interim superintendent J.J. Vold spoke next about rising enrollment, school spirit, a new crop of dedicated teachers, and improved scores on the Minnesota Multiple Measure Rating. He said Onamia had one of the highest scores in the region. "We're working a lot of mindset," J.J. said, "making sure all staff believe in all kids, and all kids believe in themselves."

Bradley Harrington of the Local Indian Ed Parent Committee encouraged parents to get involved in the school and the LIEPC, which meets the first Tuesday of every month at noon at the Rolf Olsen Center in Onamia. He said they are considering changes of time and location of the meetings. He praised the Indian Ed program, including the Ojibwe Knowledge Bowl program, and talked about the importance of parental involvement to make sure students and staff are learning about Native history, treaties and government. "If you'd like to take part, or know any parents who would, please come and join us," he said.

Nay Ah Shing Abinooyiyag acting principal Lehtitia Weiss was up next. She didn't want to say how long she'd been teaching at the school, but she did say, "When I look out in the crowd I see a lot of my former students, and those students now have children I am now teaching." She encouraged parents and community members to get involved at the school, and she praised Education Commissioner Ed Minnema for the work he's done since his appointment. "With him as the leader, I feel like many good things will come to Nay Ah Shing."

Nay Ah Shing Upper School Principal Noah Johnson thanked Sandi for her support of the schools before giving a detailed update on changes at Nay Ah Shing. He said the theme of the year is STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math. Students will be working on robotics, pottery and a new life skills curriculum in a remodeled Home Economics room. They will also be using Chrome Books in grades 4 and 7, taking kids on a variety of field trips, and offering drum and dance classes and a Quiz Bowl team. Joe Nayquonabe Sr. will also be working in the school doing staff mentoring and a boys' talking circle. "Staff are extremely excited to have him in the school and work on their own language and culture," Noah said. "We want you to come to the schools, we really do. Come and spend time with your child."

Officer Charles Scott provided an update on what the Band is doing to solve the truancy problem, including a rewrite of the truancy statute to streamline the process and make it more efficient. He said it's important for parents to call the school when kids are sick, so they don't have an officer showing up at their doors. "I'm charming, and I have a great personality, but people still don't like to see me at 8 o'clock in the morning," he joked. "The goal is to get children back to school, and it's working." **Pictured left, top to bottom: Sandi Blake, Chris Clitso-Nayquonabe, J.J. Vold, Lehtitia Weiss.**



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Summary of Expenditures and Financing Uses:	Approved Budget for FY 2016	Expenditures through 8/31/2016	% of Budget Expended
Administration (1)	16,222,603	12,640,049	77.92%
Department of Labor	21,296,699	6,063,555	28.47%
Judicial	1,384,116	942,714	68.11%
Department of Justice	6,153,639	4,738,646	77.01%
Education	19,996,036	15,710,390	78.57%
Health and Human Services	25,715,411	17,304,000	67.29%
Circle of Health Insurance	9,976,600	6,318,083	63.33%
Natural Resources	8,019,894	6,424,151	80.10%
Community Development	87,776,727	26,035,162	29.66%
Gaming Authority	5,265,965	3,912,087	74.29%
Economic Supplemental Distribution	6,189,601	5,394,485	87.15%
Bonus Distribution	44,191,045	42,065,610	95.19%
Economic Stimulus Distribution	3,171,000	3,171,000	100.00%
Total	255,359,336	150,719,932	59.02%

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

Gikendandaa i'iw Ojibwemowin

Bradley E. Harrington Nazhike Awaasanang

VTIs — Verb Transitive Inanimate

VTI — Verb Transitive Inanimate is a verb with a transitive, an inanimate object and a characteristic set of inflections. (Ojibwe Peoples Dictionary)

This month's Ojibwe Language Lesson will focus on the VTI type verbs which describe the "ITs" (inanimate objects). Transitive describes the action taking place. In other words, a person is doing something to it whether it being use it, find it, eat it, like it, see it, play with it. The key to these verbs is the object; there must be an object and it must be inanimate. All the words of this type of verb are found in the Dictionary in its command form, but you can add who and when to conjugate the word to say what you want to say.

Verb	Command	I am – Ni, Nind, Nim	You are – Gi, Gid	S/he is – O, Od
Use it	Aabajitoo	Nindaabajitoo	Gidaabajitoo	Odaabajitoo
Find it	Mikan	Nimikaan	Gimikaan	Omikaan
Eat it	Miijin	Nimiijin	Gimiijin	Omiijin
Like it	Minwendaan	Niminwendaan	Giminwendaan	Ominwendaan
See it	Waabandan	Niwaabandaan	Giwaabandaan	Owaabandaan
Play with it	Odaminaawaandan	Indoodaminaawaandan	Gidoodaminaawaandan	Odoodaminaawaandan

Adding a tense marker allows you to express when a VTI takes place
Tense markers: ga(will), gii(did), wii(want to), daa(should)

Gagwejitoo (Try/test it!)
Nind-aabajitoo = _____
Ogii-miijin = _____
Giga-minwendaan = _____
Nindaa-mikaan = _____
Giwii-waabandaan ina? = _____?

To add the object use i'iw for things out of reach and o'ow for things within reach.

Nindaa-aabajitoo i'iw moozhwaagan.
Giwii-odaminaawaandan ina o'ow X-Makak?

Command form — telling someone to do something.
ina initiates a Yes/No question.
Moozhwaagan – scissors
X-Makak – X-Box

Band Youth Excel in the Mille Lacs Raider Cross Country Team

Bradley Harrington Guest Writer

The sun is shining bright but the cool fall air gives a slight nip to your face. The wind makes its presence known while remaining subtle enough to be unnoticeable. Looking over the rolling hills of Spring Brook Golf Course in Mora on Tuesday, September 13, the girls of the Mille Lacs Raiders Cross Country Team are focused but playful due to their special bond as long distance runners.

"This year's team could be the best yet," proudly stated Coach Jeff Walz. Onamia 7th graders Molly Saboo and Aiyanna Mitchell, along with Isle 7th grader Kami Smith, have finished in the awards every race, while the Mille Lacs team has finished 1st or 2nd three times in the first four meets of the year. They have confidently raced against many of the larger schools in Central Minnesota.

In order to compete as a team, you have to have five or more runners. "To be successful, it is important to have strong runners in the 4 and 5 spot," Coach Walz says. "Braelyn Har-

ington, Mikayla Anderson, Neveah Merrill, and Bella Nayquonabe have filled these positions nicely."

These young athletes' success has been because of their work ethic, having to run 4 to 5 miles every day in practice — and they push each other hard. "The key to having a talented varsity team down the road will ride on their shoulders," boasts Walz. "The future looks bright."

The girls ran with everything they had on this course which was new to them and a quarter mile longer than what they were used to. At the end of the day the Jr. High Team of the Mille Lacs Raiders finished 4th.



Left to right: Molly Saboo, Aiyanna Mitchell, Neveah Merrill, Braelyn Harrington, Bella Nayquonabe, Mikayla Anderson, Kami Smith.

Onamia School District Teachers Learn About Indian Issues

Staff members in the Onamia School District spent one of their fall workshop days learning about Indian law, history and culture. Nearly half of the district's students are Native American, and the administration has recognized the need to ensure that teachers and other staff have a solid understanding of the student body.

Commissioner of Education Ed Minnema gave a thorough presentation on federal Indian policy on the morning of Aug. 31. He provided background information on tribes in Minnesota, who are the state's sixth-largest employer, and he defined terms like "tribe," "Indian" and "Indian Country."

He also defined and explained the Constitutional basis for

sovereignty and the federal trust responsibility toward tribes. He spoke about important Supreme Court cases like the "Marshall trilogy," about gaming compacts between states and tribes, Public Law 280, the Indian Civil Rights Act and the Indian Child Welfare Act.

Ed devoted a large part of his talk to boarding schools and their negative impact on tribes and tribal members. He also discussed the time periods of Indian history, from the pre-colonial period through relocation, allotments and assimilation, to Indian reorganization, termination and finally tribal self-determination.

After lunch, staff members made a visit to the Mille Lacs

Indian Museum to learn even more about Anishinaabe culture and history.

Faculty members commented afterwards that they found the day informative and helpful. Much of the information was new to many of the teachers.

The week before Ed's presentation to the entire faculty, Indian Ed Coordinator Chris Clitso-Nayquonabe gave a presentation to new teachers. She spoke about her own Navaho culture as well as the Anishinaabe culture of her husband's family. She attempted to dispel some myths and provide new teachers with an understanding of issues that may affect their relationships with students.

Hope for Youth in the Songs of the Elders

Brett Larson Staff Writer

Anishinaabe culture places a high value on Elders, but sometimes forgotten are those adults who will be Elders soon, and whose responsibility it will be to pass knowledge on to the next generations.

Tom Benjamin of East Lake takes that responsibility seriously, and he's preparing for the day when he will be one of the essential connections to the wisdom and teachings of the past.

Tom felt singled out at a young age, and that experience has helped him learn the old ways, especially the music of the drums. "I started learning about my culture and language when I was 5 years old, right here at the old ceremonial building," Tom recalled. "When I heard the drum, it fascinated me. Instead of going outside with the other kids, I wanted to stay inside."

Tom had a gift for singing. People used to ask his mom to bring Tom over, just so they could hear him sing. "There weren't many my age who were singing the traditional songs," he said.

Among those who noticed Tom's passion for the drums and talent for singing were former Chief Executive Art Gahbow, who adopted Tom in a traditional ceremony, and spiritual leader Albert Churchill. Tom spent many hours listening in on conversations they had with other Elders.

Albert's son Buzz, another father figure to Tom, was the one who invited him to sing at the drum for the first time. "One night, Buzz came and got me off the bench and brought me to the drum, handed me a stick," Tom said. But he was afraid to sing.

"Sing it!" Buzz said. "You sang it to me at home."

"That's at home!" Tom replied. "There's a bunch of people here!"

"Just hit that drum and feel it here," Buzz told him, putting a hand to his chest. "Feel it in your heart."

Tom did, and he's been singing at Big Drum ceremonies ever since. "Once you sing like that, it's amazing what happens to you — your whole body, mind and soul," Tom said. "I felt it, I heard it, and I sang it. I was so numb, but I sang it with all my heart. Once they got me out of my turtle shell, I just kept going and never stopped."

At every opportunity, Tom would go see the Elders, just to listen to them talk, he said. "They had a lot of stories to tell, about the hardships back in the day when we lived in wigwams, or tar paper shacks."

Albert taught Tom about the value of a nickel, and about the respect that people should have for each other, and for themselves. Central to many of the teachings was the importance of asemaa, of asking for help and expressing gratitude. "Everything we do is oriented around tobacco, always," said Tom. "Singing the songs, the Drum. That was the main thing that I was always strictly told to do."

When he was 25, Tom was asked to be a Drumkeeper, joining Tim Jackson, who was taking care of a drum once cared for by Archie Moose, Sam Yankee and Sam's wife Ada. When Ada died at age 94, Tom was asked to take her place.

"It's one of the greatest honors that can be offered to you, to take care of a drum as a Drumkeeper," Tom said. "To take that responsibility was overwhelming, something that I never dreamed of, but they had confidence and respect to see me sit there. It's almost beyond words, how you feel to be asked."

Tom admits that he didn't always stay on a good path, even with a strong foundation in his culture. The death of his parents affected him deeply, and he used alcohol to hide from his grief.

"People on the reservation weren't mad; they were concerned," he said. "They knew I was on the wrong path. That was an eye opener for me. I let people down that were concerned, and I burned a couple bridges."

Eventually he remembered the teachings of the old ones, and it helped him recover. "They talked about their days of drinking alcohol, the problems they had with it. A lot of the Elders that I talked to said they more or less wised up. They realized the white people were conquering the Indian people because of the alcohol, and they didn't want to be defeated. That was their story to me. They knew what the white people were doing to them, and how foolish they looked. They didn't want to be like that anymore, so that was why they could push the alcohol away."

Now that he's back on the good path, Tom would like to help the younger men who are going through struggles. He wants to pass down the knowledge his Elders passed on to him: teachings about respect, and asemaa, and dewe'igan — the Drum.

It bothers Tom that some Anishinaabe people are afraid to come to ceremonial dances. "They think they might do something wrong, or feel like they don't belong there, but we welcome all those to come in," he said. "Never push anybody away who's willing to listen to you and learn from you. That's



"That's what the drums are there for, to help all Anishinaabe with whatever they need in their lives."

one of the things I was always taught."

He also knows how important it is not to judge, another lesson he learned from Albert and the other Elders. "Nobody's above anybody else," he said. "We're all the same. Have pity and compassion for those who are judgmental. We're not here on this earth for that. We're here to be all one people. No one's better than any other. We all offer tobacco the same. Nobody's clan is bigger or better. Praise what you've got and be in harmony with everybody else."

"As long as we abide by our old teachings, we'll all be okay. If we can teach that to those younger ones that are struggling, life would be a little bit easier for all of us. We are here for them, and we have those teachings. If you want to learn, just offer tobacco and ask. That's what the drums are there for, to help all Anishinaabe with whatever they need in their lives."

Tom and Tim's ceremonial dance will be held November 11 and 12 at the East Lake Ceremonial Building. All Anishinaabe are encouraged to attend as many Big Drum ceremonies as they can. For a complete schedule of this fall's ceremonies, see page 15.



Left: Tom Benjamin (right) was always fascinated with drums and singing. Right: Tom attended Wild Rice Days in McGregor Sept. 4 with his daughter and grandkids.

TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

Happy October Birthdays to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Diana Marie Anderson
Mary Ann Bedausky
Sheldon Ray Boyd
Vivian Ann Bruce
Marvin Ray Bruneau
Donna Marie Dorr Cartwright
Archie Dahl Cash
Albert Abner Churchill Jr.
Steven Lawrence Churchill
Ervin Wayne Crown
Harold William Davis
Darlene Marie Day-Beaulieu
James F Dowell Jr.
Joycelyn Marie Drumbeater
Ronda Leigh Dunfee
Jack Leo Dunkley

Gary Richard Garbow
Helena Graikowski
Lucy May Hansen
Marene Hedstrom
Delores Mae Hegland
William Robert Hemming
Steven Blane Hensley
Sherry Lynn Herrick
Charles Allen Houle Jr.
Robert Lee Kegg
Doreen Lorraine Knutson
Valerie Marie LaFave
Terrance Steven Leyk
Joan Littlewolf
Marcella Jean Maurice
Jacqueline Applegate McRae
Betty Mae Mondeng
Brenda Joyce Moose
Beverly Marie Nayquonabe

Linda Jean Nickaboine
Teresa Lynn Packard
Bernice Pewaush
Dorothy Sam
Ruth Anne Sam
Virginia Louise Sam
James Robert Schroeder
Merle Skinaway
Beverly Jean Smith
Charlene Marie Smith
Nancy Jean Spittel
Montgomery Jay Staples
Jay Star
Russell Ernest Towle
Jill Marie Valentino
Darlene Almeda Warren
Earl Ellsworth Whitney
Nancy Marie Zeleznik

Happy October Birthdays:

Happy 1st birthday to **Aliyana Joy** on 10/6! Love, Mom, Dad, Rhea, CJ, Jordan, and Michaela. • Happy 71st Birthday **Grandma Joyce** on 10/13! We Love You So Much! Lots of Love, Kelly, Terrence & EllaMarie. • Happy birthday to **Eric** on 10/25! Love Dad, Melissa, Braelyn, Payton, Wes, Brynley, Waase, Bianca, Henry, Papa Brad, Grannie Kim, Papa Kyle, Auntie Val, Pie, Kev, Auntie Randi, Uncle Bruce, Jayla, Lileah, Auntie Rachel, Waylon, Rory, Uncle Jay, Taylor and Adam. • Happy

birthday to **Melodie** on 10/31, our Halloween baby! Love the Harrington Family. • Happy birthday **Melodie Brownie** on 10/31! From, her mom, Rueben, Grandma, Papa, Benjamin Family, Pendegayosh Family and from her Weh-eh.

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 **612-465-0853**.

The deadline for the November issue is October 15.

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.

Open Gym

Mondays – Thursdays, 5:30 – 9 p.m.

District I Community Center

Elders Beading Group

Mondays, 5 – 8 p.m.

District I Assisted Living Unit

UPCOMING EVENTS

Community Health Fairs

Mark your calendar! Community Health Fairs will be held on the following days: District III, Oct. 25; District II, Oct. 26; District I, Oct. 27; District IIa, Oct. 28. The theme this year is "Community Health Journey." See page 11 for more.

Commissioners and Staff on Call

All Commissioners carry a phone and are reachable during the evening and weekends. Commissioners' cell phone numbers are provided below and will continue to be included in future newsletters.

Susan Klapel, <i>DNR Executive Director</i>	320-362-1756
Ed Minnema, <i>Commissioner of Education</i>	320-630-0674
Sam Moose, <i>Commissioner of Health & Human Services</i>	320-630-2607
Percy Benjamin, <i>Commissioner of Community Development</i>	320-630-2496
Michele Palomaki, <i>Assistant Commissioner of Administration</i>	320-630-7415
Catherine Colstrud, <i>Commissioner of Administration</i>	320-292-0258

MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE HEALTH FAIR PLANNING COMMITTEE



MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE HEALTH FAIRS 2016

Tuesday, October 25
10 A.M. - 3 P.M.
(District 3)
Aazhoomog Community Center
45471 Grace Lake Rd
Sandstone, MN 55072

Wednesday, October 26
10 A.M. - 3 P.M.
(District 2)
East Lake Community Center
46666 State Hwy 65
McGregor, MN 55760

Thursday, October 27
10 A.M. - 3 P.M.
(District 1)
Mille Lacs Community Center
43500 Virgo Rd
Onamia, MN 56359

Friday, October 28
10 A.M. - 1 P.M.
(District 2A)
Chiminising Community Center
2605 Chiminising Drive
Isle, MN 56342

**Healthy food provided
BRING THE FAMILY!**

30+ booths promoting health & wellness

- Flu Shots available
- Mammogram Mobile Unit
- Blood Typing
- Scavenger Hunt
- Coloring Contest
- Drunken Goggles/Safe & Sober
- Blood Pressure
- Diabetes Screening
- Fire Truck Tours
- Door Prizes

Contact:
Darla Roache, SHIP Coordinator 320-532-7760

"HOW ARE YOU STEERING YOUR FAMILY'S LIFE?"



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 page 14 for recurring events.</p>						<p>1 Kid Crafts: Dream Catchers 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum</p>
<p>2 <i>Aniibiish: a leaf, tea</i></p>	<p>3 Urban Area Firearms Safety Class 6 p.m. MCT Building</p>	<p>4 <i>Wiigobiibag: a basswood leaf</i> <i>Wiigwaasibag: a birch leaf</i></p>	<p>5 Urban Area Firearms Safety Class 6 p.m. MCT Building</p>	<p>6 Circle of Health 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Urban Office</p>	<p>7 Ceremonial Dances DI Community Center Urban Area Firearms Safety Class 6 p.m. MCT Building</p>	<p>8 Ceremonial Dances DI Community Center</p>
<p>9 <i>Ininaatigobag: a maple leaf</i></p>	<p>10 Indigenous Peoples Day</p>	<p>11 DII Firearms Safety Class 6 p.m. MCT Building</p>	<p>12 DII Firearms Safety Class 6 p.m. MCT Building</p>	<p>13 Circle of Health 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. DII Community Center</p>	<p>14 Ceremonial Dances DII Community Center DII Firearms Safety Class 6 p.m. MCT Building</p>	<p>15 Ceremonial Dances DII Community Center</p>
<p>16 <i>Waatebagaa: There are bright leaves.</i></p>	<p>17 <i>Ashkibagaa: There are green leaves.</i></p>	<p>18 <i>Miskobagaa: There are red leaves.</i></p>	<p>19 DIII Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley Event Center</p>	<p>20 11th Annual Operation Community Connect Milaca Public School Gym 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.</p>	<p>21 Ceremonial Dances DII Community Center Circle of Health 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. DIII Community Center</p>	<p>22 Ceremonial Dances DII Community Center</p>
<p>23 <i>Ozaawibagaa: There are yellow/brown leaves.</i></p>	<p>24 <i>Aniibiishikaa: There are many leaves.</i></p>	<p>25 Community Health Fairs DIII Healthy Heart Class 12 – 1 p.m. DI Community Center Sobriety Feast DI Community Center</p>	<p>26 Community Health Fairs DII DIII Firearms Safety Class 6 p.m. MCT Building DIIa Community Meeting</p>	<p>27 Community Health Fairs DII Urban Area Community Meeting 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. All Nations Indian Church DII Community Meeting</p>	<p>28 Community Health Fairs DIIa Ceremonial Dances DI Community Center DIII Firearms Safety Class 6 p.m. MCT Building</p>	<p>29 Ceremonial Dances DI Community Center Beading 101 12 – 4 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum</p>
<p>30 DIII Firearms Safety Class 6 p.m. MCT Building Beading 101 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum</p>	<p>31 <i>Zaagibagaa: It buds; the leaves come out.</i></p>	 <p>GET OUT THE NATIVE VOTE RALLY!</p>		<p>FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14 1 – 4 p.m. GRAND CASINO MILLE LACS BALLROOM</p>		

CEREMONIAL DANCE DATES

Merlin & Mick: Mille Lacs, October 7 & 8, 2016
 Ralph & Andy: Mille Lacs, October 14 & 15
 Niib: East Lake, October 14 & 15
 Vince & Dale: East Lake, October 21 & 22
 Lynda & Joyce: Mille Lacs, October 28 & 29
 Skip: Lake Lena, November 4 & 5

Elmer & AJ: Mille Lacs, November 4 & 5
 Tim & Tom: East Lake, November 11 & 12
 Joe & George: Mille Lacs, November 18 & 19
 Lee & Larry: Lake Lena, November 24 & 25
 Bob & Perry: Mille Lacs, December 2 & 3

Child Support Check Distribution for the Month of November

Due to a holiday on November 11th the Child Support office will be distributing Per Capita Child Support checks on November 9th, 2016 from 12 – 5 p.m. and November 10th, 2016 from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Checks not picked up by 1:30 pm on the 10th will be mailed out unless a client has called to have it held or are on the Do Not Mail List.

Due to a noon closing, wage checks will be distributed on November 23rd, 2016 from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Checks not picked up by noon will be mailed out.

If you have any questions or concerns with your case, please contact your Case Manager below:

- Vacant — Contact Rachel L. Sablan
District I Case Manager — 320-532-7461
- Tammy Smith — District II, III and
Urban Case Manager: 320-532-7752

The Child Support office will be closed at noon on November 4th and November 23rd, 2016.

The Child Support office will be closed all day on November 11th, November 24th and November 25th.

If you have any questions or concerns contact our office directly at 320-532-7755.

Minor Trust Training Scheduled for October 18

High school age Band members should sign up now to participate.

On October 18, a Financial Education training session and workshop will be presented to the invited youth of Mille Lacs Band. The material covered is authored by the National Endowment for Financial Education with the stated goal: "... to help young people develop smart spending and saving habits that lead to self-sufficiency".

The participating youth generally will be of high school age, looking to plan for the next step in education or workplace on their own. The informal format will be discussion based, looking to assist with individual planning.

Topics include, "Smart Spending and Saving Habits," "Identifying Values, Beliefs, and Traditions," "Creating a Spending Plan," and similar strategies designed to take some of the mystery out of the financial landscape.

This event is sponsored by the Band Assembly and coordinated by the Commissioner of Finance, Adam Valdez, with

coordination of Jana Sam, Minor Trust/Per Capita office.

These non-commercial educational sessions are offered without cost to participants and are facilitated by experienced financial professionals.

The course will be led by William White, his wife Loran and Leisa Nash. William is a senior vice president and financial advisor with Morgan Stanley Wealth Management in Rapid City, S.D. Loran is a retired teacher and former Morgan Stanley employee who helped her husband develop the course eight years ago and also helps deliver it. Leisa is also a financial advisor with Morgan Stanley.

"Our favorite part of the session is the chance to interact with the participants one-on-one," said William. "Sharing ideas and keeping the discussions personalized adds to self-confidence and understanding in dealing with the ever-changing financial landscape."

He said the course will cover some basic concepts and strategies easily incorporated into everyday existence. "One or two tools used on the road to becoming financially responsible and self-sufficient can make managing finances less stressful," he said.

For further information please contact:

Jana Sam — Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Office: 320-532-7466

Woodlands Honored by SBA

The Small Business Administration honored Woodlands National Bank and 10 other lenders throughout Minnesota for commitment to helping small businesses succeed.

"SBA's lenders work hard every day to help small businesses start, grow and succeed," said Nancy Libersky, SBA's Minnesota district director, in a news release. "We guarantee the loans, but it is the banks, credit unions and our incredibly strong community-based lenders, who put money in the hands of business owners. These dollars are creating new businesses and new jobs in the state every day."

Woodlands National Bank, which is owned by the Mille Lacs Band, was chosen Minnesota's 2016 SBA Community Lender based on the growth of its small business loan portfolio, the positive impact of its commitment to small business lending in the communities it serves, and its pledge to giving back to the community. Woodlands National Bank serves small businesses in eastern Minnesota from just south of Duluth to the greater metro area and into Minneapolis.

Anishinaabe Strong

Adrienne Benjamin Guest Writer



Deilyah Dexter

I want to write about an important part of the Anishinaabe Strong Conference that was overlooked in last month's Inaajimowin. The youth from the Ge-niigaanizijig program who so bravely stood up were given no mention.

They delivered a powerful message about their own viewpoints and feelings

towards the drug epidemic in our communities, and they should be praised and celebrated.

I, as well as others in attendance, was moved to tears by the honesty and emotion of Deilyah Dexter. What she said was what needs to be said and talked about: the harsh reality and terrible effects of this issue in the community and not the sugar-coated version. She called out the community as a whole, asking why there weren't more people in attendance. She talked about babies being born, some in her own family, addicted and shaking uncontrollably. She was angered that our young people are having to bear witness to these consequences that are not of their own doing. She asked if it was ever thought about how these are the examples that are being set forth for our young people, not only by those with addictions, but the way we as a community respond to them.

She spoke with such poise and displayed leadership beyond her years. When she had trouble continuing her speech because she was becoming overrun with emotion, her fellow youth joined her on stage and comforted her. Was that ever a sight to see. It made me feel so good about our future here in Mille Lacs, to watch such a display of love and real leadership from those youth. Our youth are too often overlooked and their opinions are not asked about big issues, and they feel unimportant and undervalued.

I hope that the youth who got up and spoke truly understand how amazing and brave that was, even if you weren't one of the ones that spoke. Please know that you were still noticed and just as important in your support of your fellow youth's message. Who knows, you all might have changed someone's life that day. I know for certain that you all constantly make mine brighter and full of hope.

Miigwech to you. Miigwech to Bradley Harrington Jr. for asking the youth to be a part of the conference. Mii'iw.

Heating, Water, and Maintenance Problems?

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

Free Hearing Evaluations

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

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

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