

# OJBWE INAAJIMOWIN

THE  
STORY  
AS IT'S  
TOLD

MARCH 2017 | VOLUME 19 | NUMBER 03



## PILOT PROJECT

CERTIFICATE CLASS INFORMS BAND MEMBERS  
ON TRIBAL HISTORY, LAW, TREATIES

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# Executive Branch Meetings Gather Ideas from Band Members

Executive Branch Commissioners began hosting community meetings last fall to seek input from Band members about their needs and their ideas for solutions to community problems. In January, meetings were held in Districts I and II; in February, in Districts IIa and III and the Urban area.

Attendance has grown since the first meetings last fall, and Commissioners have compiled hundreds of comments from Band members. They have also invited questions from those in attendance and are using those questions to guide plans for the next meetings.

Commissioners are also asking if Band members would be willing to serve on focus groups, and according to Assistant Commissioner Michele Palomaki, nearly every feedback form indicates willingness to serve.

District III community members last month decided to make their next meeting a potluck.

Following are some of the comments from those who attended recent meetings:

- *More money/programs should be put toward cultural programs — language, culture activities, teaching community members to be responsible community members. In each division, maybe allocated revenue should have a percent designated to language or culture.*
- *For anyone on drugs and those who abuse opiates — has anyone ever asked a user if (s)he would like to go fishing or to a movie, or etc.? We gotta want to care.*
- *Why do some people get to live in a new home more than once? When they destroy one home they get moved to another. There goes the budget.*
- *Why do you never hear back from HR when you send in a fax about a Band member who wants a job and is held back because of a mistake made by Band member? First*



The number of Band members attending Executive Branch meetings has grown since the first round of meetings last fall. Pictured is the January meeting from Minisinaakwaang (District II).

*mean nothing when that Band member needs a second job is prevented from attaining his goal. It makes me very upset when HR comes on strong about hiring Band members and find reasons not to help this Band member.*

- *I just wanted to say thank you for holding that meeting. I think what was a deterrent for me was that many of the complaints were about themselves. Also there wasn't really anything about positive happenings.*
- *I just want to thank the Executive Branch for the opportunity to listen and discuss.*
- *Thank you — Miigwech for coming and informing/educating and for the food.*
- *Let's have more people calling and visiting our El-*

*ders even if it's to just drop by and check on them to see if they're okay or if they need anything from the grocery store.*

To make your voice heard, consider attending an Executive Branch meeting in your community.

March meetings will once again be held in District I on March 14 at Nay Ah Shing Upper School, District II on March 16 at East Lake Community Center, and the Urban Area March 30 at All Nations Church. April meetings will be held in District IIa at Chiminising Community Center April 18 and in District III at Hinckley ALU April 20. Meetings begin at 5:30 p.m.

## Special Division of Powers Presentation

On March 8 and 9, Band members are invited to attend special presentations by Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin and Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu on the Mille Lacs Band's Division of Powers government and how it does comply with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Constitution.

These meetings are in response to efforts that would require the Band to dismantle its current government and return to a Reservation Business Committee so that all six MCT Bands function exactly the same.

The presentation was prepared for the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Tribal Executive Committee meeting in February but was rescheduled for March 15 at Grand Casino Hinckley (see story page 4). Band members and employees are also welcome to attend the March 15 presentation.

March 8, 5:30-8 p.m. District I & II Division of Powers Presentation, Grand Casino Mille Lacs.

March 9, 5:30-8 p.m. District III Division of Powers Presentation, Grand Casino Hinckley.

March 15, Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Tribal Executive Committee presentation, Grand Casino Hinckley 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

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

Friday, March 24, 2017

Grand Casino Mille Lacs

Invocation and Honor Song at Noon

Lunch served at 12:30 pm

Several Informational Booths will be on display such as: Loan Buy Back Program, Enrollment Information, Address Updates, Fishing Licenses, GLIFWC, Indian Land Tenure Foundation and more! Games for Children including Smokey the Bear visit!

Prizes for Adults and Children

Please watch for more information to come.



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](mailto:rachel.shaugobay@millelacsband.com).

# Band Assembly Brings RAP Discussion to Districts

**Brett Larson** Staff Writer

District Representatives, Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu and Commissioner of Finance Adam Valdez came to community meetings last month to share information on the Revenue Allocation Plan (RAP) and take comments on how the plan should be revised.

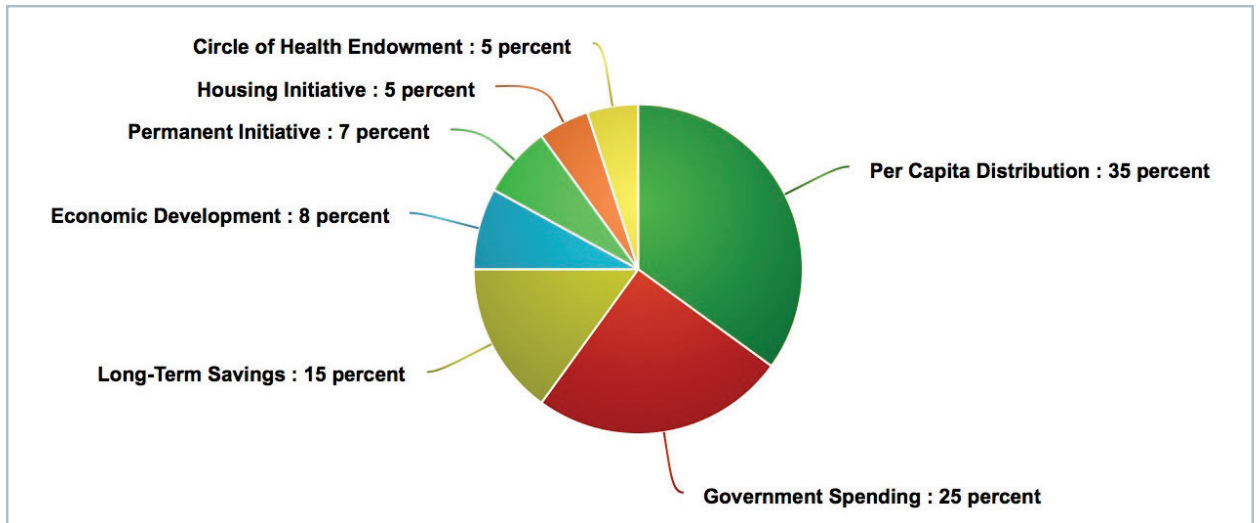
Currently elected leaders are not in favor of reducing per capita amounts. They will look at all options to attempt to maintain current per capita levels.

Band Assembly announced in December its intent to amend the RAP, which defines how the government spends gaming revenues. The RAP is required under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act for tribes that allocate per capita payments to individual members from revenue derived from tribal gaming activities.

Sandi Blake welcomed District I Band members to the community meeting on Feb. 8 and introduced Adam and Carolyn, who gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the RAP and some of the financial trends that may cause changes to the existing RAP.

A couple of items that stood out during the presentation showed the population of the Band increasing by at least 230 new Band members every three years. In addition, since its benchmark year of 2010–11 casino revenue has been on a steady decline. The Band continues to fund the current flat-rate amount of per capita payments. Any excess over the 35 percent limit is covered by drawing from other revenue sources including taxation revenue. The Band cannot pay more than what has been approved for per capita payments under the current RAP.

The current RAP allocates net gaming revenues as follows (see chart): government spending (25%), per capita distributions (35%), long-term savings (15%), economic development (8%), permanent initiative (7%), housing initiative (5%), Circle of Health endowment (5%). The current RAP was approved by the U.S. Department of Interior on September 1, 2010.



Of concern is that the 35 percent of casino revenues no longer covers the per capita payments given to Band members under the flat rate formula. In recent years, the Band has had to allocate money from other revenue sources to meet its funding obligation.

Band member enrollment reflects an increase of 4.5 percent over a three-year period, Carolyn and Adam explained, while casino profits have declined since 2011. Carolyn said most business enterprises use profits to reinvest, expand and create more jobs. Few survive by giving out a large portion of their profits to individuals, so it is not surprising that the Band is facing this problem.

Two critical strategic considerations were also conveyed to the Band member audience:

1. The Band needs to balance present and future needs — deciding how much to focus on immediate needs and how much to provide for long-term survival and sustainability.
2. The Band has to balance individual and collective needs — deciding how much to focus on the needs of individuals, today and tomorrow, and how much to focus on the needs of the Band, now and in the future.

The “critical questions” Carolyn asked Band members to consider are these:

1. How many dollars can the Band afford to distribute to each Band member without a compromise to the long-term success of its enterprises, band government, programs and the Band as a whole.
2. What is an appropriate amount given the Band’s economic, political, social and cultural goals?

Secretary-Treasurer Beaulieu presented pros and cons for adjusting per capita amounts. Although most Band members utilize their per capita distribution in an effective manner, there are some “hidden costs” that tribes making per capita payments have seen:

- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Decline in work ethic
- A “why bother” attitude toward education
- Loss of motivation

Carolyn said Band members have approached Band Assembly with some of these same concerns, which are also being witnessed by other tribes that provide per capita payments.

District I Rep. Sandi Blake also addressed the group, and several Band members, including Joyce Shingobe, Colin Cash, Sher Pewaush and Bob Eagle, asked questions of Carolyn and Adam.

Joe Nayquonabe Jr., Commissioner of Corporate Affairs, responded to a question about the success of the Band’s non-gaming enterprises.

Bob wondered how much the Band has in total long-term savings. To protect the assets of the Band, financial information provided to the public is limited, Adam said. Any Mille Lacs Band members can request a meeting with the Commissioner of Finance or Secretary-Treasurer to discuss and ask questions about the Band’s finances.

Elected officials and Commissioner Valdez also presented at community meetings in Districts II, IIa and III after this issue of *Ojibwe Inaajimowin* went to press. Please see future issues for developments.



Band member Sher Pewaush (left) and others asked questions of Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu (center) and District I Rep. Sandi Blake (right).



### Mille Lacs Band License Plate Contest



**What: A New Design for the Mille Lacs Band Tribal Plate and New Plate for Veterans’**  
**Who: All Mille Lacs Band Members**  
**Deadline: March 01, 2017 at 5PM**  
**Must be submitted to the Legislative or DMV Office no later than the above date/time.**

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR A NEW DESIGN**  
 Please make sure to specify the colors if drawn in pencil.  
 To request an application or if you have questions please call Deanna Sam, Deputy Registrar at 320/532-7498 or Bonnie Matrious, Legislative Office Assistant at 320/532-2006.

**OFFICE HOURS: 8AM-5PM with a lunch closing from 12-1pm**

Regular Band Plate: 1<sup>st</sup> Place \$1,000.00  
 New Veterans' Plate: 1<sup>st</sup> Place \$1,000.00



Band Assembly will be judging the contest.  
Miigwech!



## National News Briefs

**Easement Granted for Dakota Pipeline:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has indicated it will grant the permit needed to set in motion final plans to finish the Dakota Access Pipeline. This issue impacts many Native American communities, and tribes such as the Standing Rock Sioux are ready to challenge the decision based on its potential to desecrate sacred sites and pollute essential water sources. *Source: Bemidji Pioneer*

**Tribes Deprived of Needed Funds:** In a recent news release, the Environmental Protection Agency posted an air pollution notice warning for the Yakama Nation. No lift has been enacted at this time. Additionally, Indian country at large is concerned about a leaked copy of President Trump's transition plan, which mentioned budget reductions that would cut "states and tribal assistance." A reduction would substantially interfere with EPA tribal programs covering water quality, water pollution and water sanitation; indoor and outdoor air standards; environmental health, enforcement, monitoring and assessment; lead, pesticides and toxic substances; hazardous waste, and CERCLA — among other important issues. Mentions of a termination of the annual Tribal Drinking Water Program Fund Allotment were also included. *Source: Indian Country Media Network*

### Trump's Actions Towards Pipeline Activity in Opposition of Former President Obama:

President Trump recently changed the federal government's approach to the environment by clearing the way for two major oil pipelines that had been blocked by former President Obama. President Trump also signed a directive ordering the end of long environmental reviews. Late last year, the Dakota Access Pipeline in North Dakota became the center of protests when the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe objected to its construction so close to the reservation. There was no tribal consultation before President Trump made these decisions. *Source: New York Times*

### Ryan Zinke: Nomination for Interior Secretary:

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources passed Ryan Zinke's nomination to become Interior Secretary. If confirmed, Zinke would lead the agency that manages millions of acres of federal land and natural resources. His nomination is of particular interest for Native Americans because the Department of the Interior oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs. *Source: Washington Post*

### Second Transition Meeting Brought Pressing Issues to Light:

As a follow-up to the December tribal transition meeting, President Trump's transition team held a summit with tribal leaders the day before the new president's inauguration. The meeting offered opportunities for tribal nations to prioritize and strengthen federal policies. Topics included sovereignty, self-determination, fulfillment of trust responsibility and funding parity. Also discussed was the need for U.S. government to respect and interact with tribes as distinct governments, and the failure of the U.S. to fulfill its treaty and trust obligations in terms of healthcare, education, housing and economic development. *Source: Indian Country Today Media Network*

# Record Turnout of Band Members at MCT Tribal Executive Committee Meeting

Brett Larson Staff Writer



Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin spoke to about 50 Band members at the Feb. 8 meeting of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Tribal Executive Committee.

More than 50 Band members traveled to Bois Forte Feb. 7 and 8 for the quarterly meeting of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Tribal Executive Committee (TEC).

On the agenda was a presentation by Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin and Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu about the origins of Mille Lacs' division of powers government; however, the presentation was removed from the agenda after a motion by Bois Forte Chairwoman Cathy Chavers and a second by Melanie.

As the morning meeting began, and the agenda was up for approval, Chairwoman Chavers said she would prefer to see a special meeting designed to provide a more in-depth presentation and discussion with the six MCT bands and other invited guests.

Chief Executive Benjamin said she would be more than willing to host such an event and seconded the motion.

Leech Lake Secretary-Treasurer Archie LaRose said the TEC had questions about the Mille Lacs Band's government, which operates in a different manner than the Reservation Business Committees of the other five MCT bands.

White Earth Secretary-Treasurer Tara Mason expressed interest in learning about the TEC discussions that took place around the time Mille Lacs adopted its division of powers government in the 1980s.

Bois Forte Chairman Kevin Dupuis, who is the president of the TEC, said the discussion should be held by the TEC before it is presented to the general public.

The motion to remove the presentation from the agenda carried.

Melanie gathered Band members together during the lunch break to explain why she had supported the change to the agenda. She said the issue had arisen at a prior TEC meeting when a Band member asked the committee to require that Mille Lacs abandon its division of powers government and return to the reservation business committee (RBC) model outlined in the MCT Constitution and followed by the other five MCT bands.

TEC members did not make that motion but instead request-

ed that Melanie and Carolyn develop a presentation on the topic for the February meeting.

They were prepared to give the presentation, but Melanie said some TEC members thought it was inappropriate for fellow members to question the governmental structure of the Mille Lacs Band, which is why they wanted it removed from the agenda.

She told Band members that Mille Lacs had a constitutional right to develop its own form of government, and asked advisor Tadd Johnson to give a brief summary of the history. Tadd explained that from 1981 to 1983 the Band requested and received approval from the Secretary of Interior to modify the reservation business committee to allow for division of powers between Executive and Legislative branches.

A special meeting of the MCT will be held March 15 at Grand Casino Hinckley for a presentation on the Mille Lacs division of powers government.

### Band member presents

Band members who attended were able to see how the TEC conducts business. TEC members commented on how glad they were to see such a turnout from Mille Lacs. President Dupuis said he hoped all future TEC meetings would have the same level of participation from MCT members.

Among the most significant duties of the MCT are determination of enrollments and management of elections, but the MCT also operates housing, finance, education and environmental protection programs.

The meeting included quarterly reports from those programs as well as discussion with representatives from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council.

The day before the TEC meeting, subcommittees met to discuss education, legislative and natural resource issues, including the Line 3 pipeline that Enbridge Energy wants to run through the District II area.

Band member Bradley Harrington shared his thoughts on the problem of drug abuse and alcoholism plaguing MCT reservations.

# Pilot Project Educates Future Leaders

Fifteen Band members are getting a crash course in Mille Lacs Band history, laws, rights and governing structure in a new certificate class taught by longtime Mille Lacs Band advisor and current university professor, Tadd Johnson.

For the pilot project, 15 Band members were invited to participate. Upon completion they will receive a Certificate in Mille Lacs Band Law and Governance from the Department of Education and Government Affairs.

Shannon Porter, who works in the Office of the Solicitor General, said the class has opened her eyes to how tribal government really works. "Our people don't really know the inner workings of our government and therefore cannot make informed and educated decisions on such things as policy, elections and community issues," said Shannon. "This class should be offered to anyone who works not just in the government center, but anyone who has dealings with the Mille Lacs Band. We have a unique and powerful story. Our past certainly sets the tone for why we are the way we are."

Once the pilot course is finished, it will be offered to other interested Band members free of charge.

Shelly Diaz, who works in the Chief Executive's Office, said the class has taught her about the history of the Mille Lacs Band's government as it has developed over time. "I will be using it as a guide in designing our programs and services," said Shelly. "It is also a perfect addition to the online certificate course I am taking on Rebuilding Native Nations."

Mille Lacs Band members, community members and employees will be able to participate in 5-week cohorts, with each cohort including approximately 15 students.

Band employees must obtain permission from their Commissioner to be released from work for participation; however, participation will be considered compensated Educational Release (time worked) on timesheets for Band employees, regardless of full- or part-time status.

Cohort 1 is a demonstration project with a train-the-trainer component, so prospective participants have already been identified; however, subsequent cohorts will be selected via an application process.

The course requires a commitment of about six hours per week for five weeks. In addition, participants are required to attend an Administrative Policy Board Meeting, one session of Tribal Court, a meeting with the Chief Executive, a meeting of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (if during course session) and three Band Assembly meetings (if schedule works out) during this calendar period.

Several of the students in the first cohort traveled to Bois Forte in February for the meeting of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe's Tribal Executive Committee (see page 4).

For Band employees, any travel required for completion of this certificate that is non-local (over 10 miles from the employee's office) will be reimbursed at the approved Band mileage rate, provided the employee's personal vehicle is used.

Participants who are not Band employees will be reimbursed for mileage at the approved Band rate for all meetings attended, and will receive a small stipend since they are not being compensated for work hours as a Band employee. Hotel accommodations necessary for attendance at an MCT meeting will also be covered by the program.

The course was developed by the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Higher Education Department in conjunction with the Office of Government Affairs for Mille Lacs Band community members.

Tadd Johnson serves as the Special Advisor to the Government Affairs Office, and he has been a tribal attorney, tribal judge, and tribal administrator. He also directs the Master of Tribal Administration and Governance program at the University of Minnesota, Duluth. Subject matter experts may be invited as Guest Lecturers on occasion.

# Dakota Access, Line 3 Pipeline Battles Continue

The Des Moines Register reported in February that Energy Transfer Partners and Sunoco, the companies building the Dakota Access Pipeline in North Dakota, have reported 42 spills totaling 200,000 gallons over the last two years.

That didn't stop newly-elected President Trump from fast-tracking the pipeline as one of his first actions after taking office Jan. 20. Trump signed Presidential memoranda to advance the construction of the Dakota Access and Keystone XL pipelines on Jan. 24.

Six days later, on Jan. 30, 600,000 gallons of oil spilled from Enbridge Energy's Seaway Pipeline in Blue Ridge, Texas, the second spill from the pipe since it opened in mid-2016.

The controversial Keystone Pipeline would bring tar sands oil from Alberta through Montana and South Dakota to Steele City Nebraska, and from there to the Gulf of Mexico. President Obama rejected the project in 2015 after six years of review.

Enbridge Energy, which is a co-owner of the Dakota Access and wants to build the Line 3 pipeline through the Mille Lacs Band's District II region, received its permit from the Army Corps of Engineers Feb. 8 to complete the final leg of the Dakota Access pipeline under the Missouri River. This reversed an Army Corps decision in December to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement on the river crossing, according to Thane Maxwell of Honor the Earth.

The Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribes filed lawsuits the next day seeking a restraining order. Arguments were heard on Monday, Feb. 13, but the federal judge let construction proceed.

In the meantime, protests have continued around the world, and cities and tribes have continued to divest from Wells Far-

go, which is helping to finance the Dakota Access project. The cities of Seattle and Davis, Calif., have divested, along with the Nez Perce Tribe in Idaho, the Muckleshoot Tribe in Washington, and the Mille Lacs Band, as reported in last month's *Inaajimowin*.

Water protectors and their allies remain concerned about the prosecution of protesters. Over 700 water protectors face charges, and Red Fawn Fallis is in federal custody facing a possible prison sentence.

## Line 3

While the nation's and world's attention has been focused on Standing Rock, other pipeline battles are looming on the horizon.

Although Enbridge canceled its plan to build the Sandpiper pipeline across northern Minnesota, including the Sandy Lake and Rice Lake watersheds in District II, the company is still seeking a permit to move its Line 3 pipeline into the same corridor.

The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, which includes the Mille Lacs Band and five other bands, has voted to prepare its own Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Line 3 pipeline.

Minnesota's Department of Commerce will release its Draft Environmental Impact Statement on April 3, after which informational meetings and public hearings will be held along the route. A final decision from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission is expected in April of 2018.

*Miigwech to Honor the Earth for much of the information in the article above and for continuing to fight pipelines through Indian Country.*

## Local News Briefs

### Environmental Group Files Suit to Stop

**Polymet Land Swap:** WaterLegacy, an environmental group based in Minnesota, filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn a 6,560-acre land swap and block the federal government's goal to build a copper-nickel mine near Hoyt Lakes. With the fight surrounding copper-nickel mines directly connected to the survival of wild rice beds in Northern Minn., tribal communities are concerned with the stance and work of Polymet. *Source: Virginiamn.com*

### Controversy over Protection of the Gray Wolf:

For years, the gray wolf has been the center of debate over whether or not it should be protected by the Endangered Species Act or delisted. Minnesota has the densest population of wolves in North America, with the state's wolf population exceeding 2,000. Scientists, wildlife managers and some environmental groups say wolves are thriving, and therefore should be removed from the list. Others argue that once wolves are delisted it is likely that they would be hunted. The state's seven Ojibwe bands would likely oppose delisting the wolves again, because wolves are a sacred animal. Many members of the bands feel that the jump to hunting wolves after delisting them was an overreach by state agencies. *Source: MPR News*

### Two New Native Women Elected to Minnesota

**Legislature:** From *The Circle*, Feb. 8: "Rep. Jamie Becker-Finn, an attorney who grew up at Cass Lake on the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe reservation, won the District 42B seat in the Minnesota House of Representatives. She represents Little Canada, Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake and parts of the cities of Roseville and Shoreview in the northern suburbs of St. Paul. Rep. Mary Kelly Kunesh-Podein, a library media specialist for Robbinsdale Area Schools, won a House District 41B seat and represents Columbia Heights, Hilltop, New Brighton and St. Anthony in the northern suburbs of Minneapolis and St. Paul. She descends from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in North Dakota but grew up in Sartell where her father was a St. Cloud city attorney, an assistant Stearns County attorney, and active legal consultant for Northern Minnesota Ojibwe tribes."

### Potential Housing Boom Coming to Otter Tail

**County with New Casino:** The White Earth Nation has unveiled plans for a new resort and casino, which could provide momentum for developing the Star Lake, Dead Lake and Mud Lake area in Otter Tail County. The casino would sit on 15 acres of trust land and another 225 acres of "fee land" that has been purchased by the tribe. This could bring as many as 500 new housing units over the next 25 years — a 42 percent increase over the existing housing stock in the area. *Source: inforum.com*

## Interested in submitting to the *Inaajimowin*?

Send your submissions and birthday announcements to Myles Gorham at [myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com](mailto:myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com) or call 612-465-0653.

*The April issue deadline is March 15.*



MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH

## Winter Traditions

By: Ken Weyaus

*Ken Weyaus Sr. (1941-2011) was a Mille Lacs Band member who worked for many years at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum. This Moccasin Telegraph column was originally printed in the Mille Lacs Messenger.*

I work at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum on the reservation, where a lot of people come to learn about the Ojibwe and our way of life. They learn things at the museum that they never learned from books. We teach visitors about the Ojibwe way of life and our culture. We talk to them about traditions from the beginning of time and about the way the Ojibwe survived through the seasons. Some of these traditions are no different than they were 300 years ago.

Now that it's winter, I'd like to tell you a little bit about what the Ojibwe traditionally did this time of year. In the winter, the Ojibwe would leave their ricing camps near the lakes and go into the deepest part of the forest where the pines would protect them from the big winter winds and it would be warmer.

The women would make a lot of clothing during the winter. And because of the cold weather, the men could hunt bigger animals like bear because the meat wouldn't spoil. The hunters had snow shoes to walk on top of the snow and they had sleds to carry things over the snow. The men pulled these sleds themselves — they didn't have dogs or horses pull them. That is because the Ojibwe didn't believe in taming wild animals and couldn't own any. It's only recently that Ojibwe people could own animals.

The Ojibwe knew how to make their sleds, bows and arrows, toboggans and other things out of wood. They were very good at using wood, adapting to a forest environment and living in the woods. That's why we are called Woodlands Indians.

A lot of people have the idea that the Ojibwe lived in tipis and that we rode on horseback all the time. But that's not true. The Ojibwe lived in wigwams or long houses. Tipis were used more by the Dakota. Indian tribes out on the Great Plains were the ones who rode horses a lot. Here in the forests, you probably couldn't have gotten a horse to pull stuff through such thick trees, at least not until after the logging companies came in and started cutting the trees.

There was not a lot of activity in the winter, so there was plenty of time for teaching children. Grownups would tell the children stories because they didn't have books back then. They would tell the children about wild ricing in the fall, gathering maple sap in the spring, and many other things.

Of course, the children didn't just learn about these activities by hearing about them. All through the year, the children would do these things hands-on along with the grownups. They would learn by doing how to tan a deer hide or which berries are good to pick and which are bad.

Each year, the Ojibwe would change locations for their winter homes to be good conservationists. This let the animals in the area replenish themselves so there would always be enough game. The Ojibwe also moved their summer berrying camps and their fall ricing camps each year. But in the spring, they gathered maple sap in the same place each year because that's where the trees were.

# Geyaabi Aadizookewag Omaa Misizaaga'iganing

## They Still Tell Wenabozho Stories Here at Mille Lacs

**Baabitaw Boyd** Guest Writer



**Baabitaw Boyd (right center) helped organize the event where David 'Niib' Aubid (top) and Larry 'Amik' Smallwood shared Wenabozho stories.**

For the past several years I have made the trip up to the University of Minnesota-Duluth to witness a tradition that is nearly endangered — Aadizookewin. Over the course of my personal language development, I can understand more and more of what the Ayaadizookejig (Storytellers) say, and as that excitement grows, I begin to wish for the same experience for my fellow Anishinaabe here at home.

So, a few of us decided to organize an event at the Grand Makwa Cinema for the evening of January 26. Like our Elders did as children, we can now enjoy the very human emotions and lessons that Wenabozho was supposed to teach us as Anishinaabe — lessons about anger, selfishness, hunger, greed, self-pity, loneliness and joy.

For generations, Anishinaabe wisdom has been drawn from our Oral History. When we are listening to a story, we transcend time and space. While listening to the stories that are being told, we are in the Aadizookaan with the storytellers as if they were telling a first-hand account of the information — almost like they knew Wenabozho themselves.

When the Aadizookaanag are talked about among native Ojibwe speakers, they are described as animate beings that are alive. I think that speaks to the power that they hold — that there's a life force there. The Old Men talk about when they were children and heard their relatives telling the Aadizookaanag, they were told to pay attention and stay awake so that they could be given a gift or a blessing of some kind. What a wonderful tradition to regain!

About 110 participants came out that night to wait for a blessing! Our fellow Band member and District II Rep. David 'Niib' Aubid told stories in Ojibwemowin (the Ojibwe language) as Vince Merrill, who shares the Anishinaabe name 'Niib' and is also a native speaker, translated the story into English. There were many hilarious moments as Niib told how Wenabozho outsmarted a Wiindigoo and followed with another fun and meaningful story.

Amik told a series of tales about Wenabozho, and then told the entire story in English. We learned how the red dogwood became red and how the helldiver got its red eyes. Amik explained that we all see Wenabozho when we look in the mirror because he's so much like us: good sometimes, bad sometimes, a success, a failure, funny, serious, a truth-teller, a liar.

Migizi was the final storyteller, with a strange tale about Wenabozho posing as a woman and his friend Waabizheshi (marten) pretending to be his baby. Audience members will never forget about the caribou spleen!

I'd like to thank Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures for sponsoring the event. The staff at the Makwa Cinema worked very hard helping us out. Miigwech to the Elders and community members who came. And also a special Miigwech to the children and staff from Waadookodaading Ojibwe Immersion Institute. It was an incredible sight to see so many people enjoying our Ojibwemowin and our heritage. Niib, Niib (eko-niizhing), Amik and Migizi did an outstanding job sharing their talents for storytelling! We are very fortunate!

## Food Program Hours and Locations

Last month's story on the diabetes program had some confusing information about the Band's food distribution and food shelf programs.

The food distribution program ("commods") makes deliveries the third week of the month. Deliveries are made on Monday to Isle and Wahkon, on Tuesday to East Lake, on Wednesday to Lake Lena, and on Thursday to Hinckley. If Monday of the delivery week is a holiday, then the backup day for Isle/Wahkon is Friday of the same week.

The food shelf does not deliver. There are three food shelf satellites: DI, DII, and DIII.

The clerks are as follows: District I, Bobby Wind; District II, Tara Kangas; District III, Jeff Aubele.

The food shelf will do same-day application processing. Band members can fill out an application to receive full services.

Call 320-532-7880 for more information on food programs.

## Band to Operate Four Winds Program

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe have reached a historic agreement that will preserve culturally relevant substance abuse and addiction treatment services for American Indians throughout the state.

Under the agreement, DHS will officially close Four Winds, its Community Addiction Recovery Enterprise program in Brainerd, Minn., and the Mille Lacs Band will open a new, licensed program in the same facility. The Band, which will lease the facility from the state, expects to have the new program up and running by March 1, 2017. DHS will provide a one-time grant of up to \$800,000 to help offset the transition costs.

While the new program will be operated by the Mille Lacs Band, it will be open to individuals from all of Minnesota's tribal nations.

"There is extraordinary need in Minnesota for programs serving Indian people that focus on our traditions, spirituality and culture within the recovery and treatment journey," said Band Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin. "Two years ago, we made it our goal to be able to offer a program like this to Band members, so this opportunity to take over this facility was a priority."

The agreement was prompted by the fact that if Four Winds remained a state-operated facility, the program could serve only clients who are civilly committed for substance abuse treatment.

Minnesota Human Services Commissioner Emily Piper said, "The Mille Lacs Band stepped up as a leader and a dedicated partner during an uncertain time."

Four Winds is the only state-operated program with a specific focus on American Indian traditional healing and recovery practices. Placing the program in tribal hands will sharpen that

focus, since the Mille Lacs Band has a greater likelihood of hiring and retaining American Indian staff with knowledge and experience in traditional practices.

The transition may include rebranding the program with a new name and a new identity that is reflective of the culture of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, said Sam Moose, the Band's Health and Human Services Commissioner.

The new program will serve American Indians from throughout Minnesota with a model of care that includes cultural programming, addiction recovery programming, and fully integrated care for co-occurring mental health conditions.

"The goal is to create a space that is welcoming, healing and reflective of Anishinaabe values and of our way of life," said Moose. "I'm extremely excited about what the addition of inpatient treatment services means to the tribe."

The Mille Lacs Band had been exploring ways to develop stronger inpatient or residential treatment services for those who struggle with addiction, said Moose. Taking over established operations and treatment programming at Four Winds is an opportunity to achieve results quickly.

Experts on chemical dependency treatment among American Indians welcomed news of the agreement.

"It has been a long-shared vision to have a special place to address substance use disorders in Minnesota," said Richard Wright, a member of the Leech Lake Nation, a respected authority on substance abuse among American Indians and a member of the state's American Indian Advisory Council on Chemical Dependency (AIACCD).

In addition to leadership from the Mille Lacs Band and DHS, the move had strong support from leaders of Minnesota's other Indian bands, said Wright.

## Commissioner Moose Lobbies Senate

National Indian Health Board fears financial impact on Indian Country if Obamacare is repealed

Commissioner Sam Moose traveled to Washington DC in January with other members of the National Indian Health Board (NIHB) to advocate for the health of Tribal nations. Their message to Senate Appropriations staff from the Committee on Indian Affairs was clear: "Preserve permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act."

The Indian Healthcare Improvement Act has been around for decades but expired in 2000. It was reauthorized in 2010 as part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) bill.

NIHB is concerned about the possible repeal of the ACA (Obamacare) by the Republican Congress and Trump Administration. The NIHB has said the elimination of the Indian Healthcare Improvement Act funding would be "catastrophic."

### New officers

Commissioner Moose is the representative of the Bemidji Area on the NIHB and was elected Treasurer of the Executive Committee last year. Commissioner Moose said he is honored to serve on the Executive Committee and enjoys advocating for Indian people as a member of the NIHB.

At their meeting in Washington on January 25, the members of the NIHB chose a new chair, vice chair, secretary and member-at-large.

The new officers are Chairman Vinton Hawley of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, who represents the Phoenix area on the NIHB, Vice Chairman Lincoln Bean of the Tlingit Nation, who represents the Alaska area, Secretary Lisa Elgin of the Manchester Band of Pomo Indians, who represents the California Area and Member-at-Large Marty Wafford of the Chickasaw Nation, who represents the Oklahoma Area.

NIHB Executive Director Stacy A. Bohlen said, "I look for-



Health and Human Services Commissioner Sam Moose

ward to working with Chairman Hawley and the other members of the NIHB Executive Board. They bring many decades of experience and wisdom to guide the critically important work we do to advance our mission to lift up 'One Voice affirming and empowering American Indian and Alaska Native peoples to protect and improve health and reduce health disparities.'"

Commissioner Moose was appointed Mille Lacs Band Commissioner of Health and Human Services originally in 2001. He held the post until 2009 and was reappointed in 2012.

Commissioner Moose oversees the Band's three clinic locations and other services in the areas of public health, behavioral health, family services, and community support services. He previously served as Commissioner of Community Development and was in charge of the Band's public works and facilities departments and housing development initiatives. He has also served as the Band's director of housing.

## Band Halfway House Helps Men on Road to Recovery

By: Toya Stewart Downey

Helping people remain sober is one of the top goals of the halfway house that the Band operates for adult males. But, it's not the only one.

During the 90-day stay the program works with its clients to take care of unmet needs such as getting a driver's license, finding a job or finding housing.

The seven-bed house, located in District I, is designed for adults who have been referred to the program while on their road to recovery.

"When people leave, it means they have taken steps and are ready to be self-sustained," said Mark Watters, the Band's Clinical Supervisor for Chemical Health. "If people request more time, we try to work with them to make it happen.

"With more time, people have better outcomes," Mark continued. "It gives us more time to work with the men and deal with other needs."

The men who live at the halfway house are referred from in-patient residential facilities and must complete a "Rule 25" chemical assessment that is required by state statute. They are also interviewed so the staff knows what services they need.

Most of the men, approximately 85 percent, are on probation. The Band's program is one of the steps in putting their lives back together.

During their stay, each week the men need to participate in 15 hours of support groups including Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous and cultural groups. The men are assigned household roles and rotate through them so they are sharing in the upkeep of the property.

They also attend ceremonies, including Big Drum, and participate in sweat lodges. The treatment approach, White Bison, Red Road, is also culturally appropriate, Mark said.

"The program is not just for Band members, but for Native Americans, so we focus on culture because the biggest focus as far as staying sober is culture," Mark said.

The wraparound program strives to teach men that they can live a sober life and improve their lives.

"We do whatever we can do to help people meet their needs — medical, physical health, family therapy. We want to help them stay sober."

## Reservation Faces Syphilis Outbreak — Get Tested

As reported in the January *Inaajimowin*, Mille Lacs Band communities are seeing increases in syphilis and hepatitis as a side effect of the nationwide opioid epidemic.

Ne-la-Shing Clinic is encouraging all sexually active Band members to get tested for infectious diseases.

Several patients at Ne-la-Shing have tested positive for the diseases, and some of them have not complied with Minnesota Department of Health requests for information about sexual partners.

It is very likely that individuals in Mille Lacs Band communities have been infected without their knowledge and are spreading infections to others.

Many who test positive for syphilis also test positive for hepatitis C and other infections. To schedule an appointment in District I call 320-532-4163, in District II call 218-768-3311 and in District III call 320-384-0149.

## EDUCATION

# Strong Focus on Learning Sets Tone for Niigaan Program

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

There aren't many youth programs that offer a year-round approach that goes from the classroom to the community and also infuses family along the way. But, that's exactly what the Band's Niigaan program is striving to do.

Designed for youth from kindergarten through high school, the program is relationship-based and provides a consistent presence in school, after school and then in the community.

Adapting a year-round approach to learning has been one of the cornerstones of Niigaan. The main focuses of learning are on science, technology, engineering, arts and math — also known as STEM or STEAM.

"We have made a big push for an in-school and out-of-school model that builds relationships," said Byron Ninham, the program director for Niigaan. "In the last five months we've rolled out a 'check and connect' model at schools."

Then, in the after-school programming offered at the community centers, Niigaan has made science-based learning a focus, he added.

"STEM or STEAM will be the leg up our kids need in in-

quiry-based learning," said Byron. "We're really advocating for this in all of our Niigaan programs, and we're getting the kids to think about all of the cool activities they can do with science, technology, engineering and math."

"We are not 'teaching to the test' but are there for the long haul to help our students succeed."

Besides building relationships with the students, the program staff works to strengthen the partnerships it has with schools. Throughout the districts the staff spends time in schools and works with the school employees to help with the students' success.

"The benefit of our presence in schools is that we already have relationships with the students and their families and loved ones."

On average, there are about 300 students who interact with the 20 Niigaan staffers through "check and connect" at schools, during the after-school program and then in the summer programming. All of the activities are free for all youth.

"There's a lot of face time and a lot of opportunity, and be-

cause we're there on a daily basis it makes a difference," said Byron. "The more of a reach we have, the better, because we can be the first ones to see if students need help at schools."

The tenets of the Niigaan program apply to all students regardless of where they are: be respectful, be accountable and be a leader.

The youth also participate in cultural activities from drumming and dancing to ricing and sugar-bushing — depending on the district.

In the summer, youth can participate in language and cultural camps. Niigaan will host the camps at the immersion grounds and at the community centers. The program will also take advantage of the natural resources in the area such as the state parks so it can continue its focus on STEAM-based learning.

"We want to use things that don't cost a dime, but are priceless because of the learning that can happen."

# Band's Higher Education Program Help Students Reach Goals

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

One of the long-term goals of the Band's Higher Education Department has been to see an increase in the number of Band members who attend college or pursue technical training.

Last fall there were approximately 146 Band members and descendants who enrolled in programs and applied for scholarships. While the number may not seem great to some, it's one that makes Joyce Shingobe, the Band's Executive Director of Education, very happy.

"I've seen the numbers increase over the years," she said. "I enjoy seeing people succeed. Pursuing a higher education, getting a certificate or completing a technical program can help them succeed."

So, too, can the program.

Besides offering scholarships, tutoring services are offered four days a week for Ojibwe classes, composition and math through the Anishinaabe Tribal College. The tutoring schedule is typically from 5 to 8 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. On Sundays tutoring is offered from 11 a.m.

to 2 p.m.

The college has increased its marketing and enrollment efforts through creation of a Facebook page and continuation of its newsletter.

In recent years the Band has partnered with Fond du Lac Tribal College and offers classes through ITV — an interactive method that uses television monitors and phone lines to allow students and instructors to interact without being in the same room. That method allows more accessibility to students so they don't have to travel as far to a campus.

Two of the program tracks offered are a teaching program that has a Native American focus and an associate of arts program. Students can then transfer to Winona State University to complete their last two years of college, Joyce said.

Joyce said a future goal of the higher ed program is to have a building again and to be a fully functioning tribal college. The college was originally located in Wahkon but then moved to Nay Ah Shing Schools. Once space became tight at the school,

the college moved to its current location at the District I Community Center.

During her tenure Joyce has seen students of many different ages, from many different backgrounds and from many parts of the country work through the Higher Education program to attain their goals.

"I've seen non-traditional students, single parents, older students and transfer students come through our program," she said. "I always encourage people to try one class to see if it's right for them."

"I know they can be successful if they stick it out, and I know they will enjoy their time learning new things," she said. "It's really gratifying to me to help people move forward toward their goals."

## Contact

Joycelyn Shingobe, *Executive Director*: 320-532-7831

Camille Smith, *Scholarships*: 320-532-4775

Scholarship Front Office: 320-532-4795



## Supporting Our Students

The Onamia LIEPC (Local Indian Education Parent Committee) held their monthly meeting at the Rolf Olsen Center in Onamia on Feb. 9. See next month's *Inaajimowin* for more information on LIEPC and how to get involved on your local committee.



## Thanks for Your Service!

The Mille Lacs Band School Board meets regularly to discuss the educational needs of Band members. The current board is composed of (back) Semira Kimpson, Kim Keggs, Sami Thomas, (front) Joe Nayquonabe and Rick Dunkley.



## Stars in Their Eyes

Wewinabi Early Ed students had a chance to learn about outer space, stars and constellations on Jan. 25 thanks to a visit from Red Lake Reservation's Starlab.



# Tribal Historic Preservation Office Protects Cultural Resources

**NATURAL RESOURCES** Brett Larson Staff Writer

When many people think of “historic preservation” they imagine restoration and protection of old buildings or historic sites: classic architecture, battlefields, forts, log cabins, etc.

But in Indian Country, historic preservation is much more than that, according to John Reynolds, the new Compliance Officer in the Mille Lacs Band’s Tribal Historic Preservation Office.

“The conventional understanding of cultural resources includes archaeological sites and features of past human experience,” said John. “But a tribe or an indigenous group looks at cultural resources as the land around them — wildlife, rice, water, lakes — and also language.”

That’s why the Mille Lacs THPO (often pronounced ‘tippo’) has been involved in the Band’s fight against proposed pipelines in the District II area. The wild rice beds, waters and animals threatened by pipeline projects are considered cultural and historic resources that need protection.

John joined the staff Jan. 23 after completing his Master’s coursework at St. Cloud State University in Cultural Resource Management Archaeology.

His interest in preserving cultural resources began when he took classes at his tribal college, Sinte Gleska University in Mission, South Dakota.

John is an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux tribe and studied his native language as an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota, where he majored in American Indian Studies: Dakota language focus.

John works with Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Natalie Weyaus and Assistant Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Terry Kemper in the Mille Lacs THPO, which is part of the DNR.

“The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has one of the better THPOs in the Midwest,” John said. “They do a good job of understanding what our resources are — the archaeological sites as well as natural resources and language — to preserve them from the effects of development and sustain them for

future generations.”

Although he is new to the job, John is not new to Mille Lacs; he completed a graduate internship in the Mille Lacs THPO in the spring of 2016, then received a temporary seasonal contract last summer.

As an intern, John sat in on a consultation meeting for an airport expansion taking place in Detroit Lakes. He attended two meetings in person, read archaeological reports, and provided information to Natalie.

He also helped organize data from a 2011 National Park Service grant the Band received to do research and record significant cultural sites. John studied transcriptions of taped interviews to identify sites and visited the sites to record their locations using GPS technology.

In his role as compliance officer, John works with state and federal agencies to ensure that the Band’s resources are protected and laws are followed. “Basically my job is to be aware of significant archaeological sites in the area, and then we help manage and preserve those sites if construction or development is going to take place,” said John.

It’s appropriate that a member of a Sioux tribe is working in the Mille Lacs THPO, since many of the cultural sites in the area date back to the Dakota era. “Mille Lacs is called ‘Bde Wakan,’ or Sacred Lake. All Dakota people have a connection to this area.” John’s thesis project is about a Dakota archaeo-



The Mille Lacs THPO is staffed by Natalie Weyaus (Center), Terry Kemper and John Reynolds.

logical site on Ogechie Lake.

“I like working with tribes; that was the reason I decided to go back to grad school,” said John. “I like working here in Mille Lacs because almost every single day I learn something new about archaeological sites and how tribes seek to manage them.”

# Gikendandaa i’iw Ojibwemowin — Learn the Ojibwe Language

**LANGUAGE & CULTURE** Makwasaagimensag

Reprinted from *Portage Lake: Memories of an Ojibwe Childhood*, by Maude Kegg, edited and transcribed by John D. Nichols. University of Minnesota Press.

Miinawaa aabiding mewinzha mikwendamaan ganawaa-bamag a’aw inzhishenh ozhitawid iniw makwasaagimensan, izhinikaazowag ingiw aagimaw, wawaawiyeziwag. Imaa namadabiyaan ganawaabamag, waa niminwendam, niminwendam. Enda-gichi-zoogipon agwajjiing. Miish i’iw ekidod inzhishenh, “Booch gaye niyawen’ ji-biizikawadwaa giizhi’agwaa ji-gojichigeyan,” mii gaa-izhid. Miish imaa minik miinawaa gekendamaan imaa.

Gaa-izhi-zaaga’amaan, gichi-zoogipon, gaa-izhi-zaaga’amowaanen, gii-maajaawaanen. Baanimaa-sh igo miinawaa gekendamaan, dibikad; namadabiyaan niwenda-giikaj. Enda-baatayinowag ingiw gichi-mookomaanag gaa-ayaawaagwen. “Aandi dash gaa-izhaayan?” indigoo.

“Oonh, waasa iwidi eko-gisinaag ingii-paa-izhaa,” indinaag. Ezhi-mawid a’aw mindimooyen, maagizhaa gaye ingoji gaa-wanishinowaanen, amanj iidog.

## The Little Bear-Paw Snowshoes

Again I remember once long ago watching my uncle making me some *makwasaagimensag*, as those little bear-paw snowshoes were called; they were round. I was really happy sitting there watching him. It was really snowing hard outside. Then my uncle said, “Namesake, you’ll have to put them on for a test

when I’m done with them. “That’s what he told me. That’s all I remember of that.

When I went outside, it was snowing just hard, and I must have gone out and taken off. Then I remember later that it was night; I was sitting down, just cold. There were a lot of people there, they must have been white people. “There did you go?” I was asked.

“Oh, I went around way up north,” I told them. As the old lady was crying, I guess I must have been lost.

## Vocabulary/Matching

Use the translation or a dictionary to match the Ojibwe and English words:

miinawaa	I am happy.
Inzhishenh	later, after a while
Namadabiyaan	snowing
Zoogipon	where
makwasaagimensan	sitting
niminwendam	my namesake
niyawen’enh	bear-paw snowshoes
baanimaa	over there
iwidi	my uncle
aandi	also, and, again

## Grammar

Sometimes we need to talk about doing two things at once: “I

am verbing while I verb” OR “I verb when I’m verbing.” To do this we use “A-form” and “B-form” inflections (prefixes and suffixes). Note the prefixes and suffixes in the sentences below. The first word is in “A-Form.” The person marker “ni” is located on the front and is similar to the first person pronoun “I” in English. The second word is “B-form”— the person marker “aan” is at the end of the word.

Nijiibaakwe bakadayaan. I cook when I’m hungry.

Nibiinichige minwendamaan. I clean when I’m happy.

Ninagam giziibiigazheyaan. I sing when I take a bath.

Nimaazhimaagoz gagwejiyaan. I smell bad when I work out.

Nimaajibatoo zegiziyaan. I run away when I am frightened.

In the *Makwasaagimensag* story above, look for “A-form” prefixes as in “niminwendam” and “B-form” suffixes as in “mikwendamaan.”

Need help with pronunciation? Use the Ojibwe People’s Dictionary at <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu>.

*Miigwech to Baabitaw (Melissa Boyd) for help with this lesson.*

# Bassmaster Championship Will Return to Mille Lacs in 2017

Tournament will once again highlight the beauty, fishing and fun of the Mille Lacs Lake region to a worldwide audience

## CORPORATE AFFAIRS

Last month, Bass Angler Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S.) and Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures (MLCV) announced that Grand Casino Mille Lacs will host the prestigious 2017 Bassmaster Angler of the Year tournament — one of the bass fishing world's biggest.

The Mille Lacs Band helped to lure the big tourney to Mille Lacs in 2016 by making a significant investment as host. Grand Casino General Manager Tracy Sam and Sarah Barten of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, who is a member of the Mille Lacs Area Tourism Council, took the lead in negotiations with Bassmasters.

According to Sarah, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures seeks to sponsor events that will also bring new people to the region, help with tourism and have a positive economic impact.

Tracy said Grand Casino's philosophy is simple when it comes to investments: "We've always believed that if the Mille Lacs area is successful, we'll be successful, and vice versa."

She said that if last year was a test of the region's ability to host a major league fishing tournament, this year is about showcasing the Mille Lacs Lake Region to new visitors.

"Now is a great time for Mille Lacs area businesses to show the unique offerings and experiences that visitors and vacationers can only get here," Tracy said. "We will all roll out the welcome mats for first-time visitors and regulars alike, because we know that tournaments like this create more awareness and extend the reach of our marketing efforts so we can attract new 'regulars' who appreciate what we have here."

The 2016 event brought an army of anglers, Bassmaster officials, and support staff to Mille Lacs for several days of pre-fishing as well as the three-day tournament. Thousands of spectators descended on the Grand Casino parking lot for daily weigh-ins, vendor booths and "Bassmaster University" seminars given by tournament participants.

The final weigh-in, which was recorded by ESPN and broadcast later, drew a standing-room-only crowd, who heard angler praise Mille Lacs as the "smallmouth capital of the world" — and still a great walleye lake as well.

Eric Lopez, director of event operations at B.A.S.S., said,



Daily weigh-ins, vendor exhibits and "Bassmaster University" brought spectators from near and far to Grand Casino at the 2016 Angler of the Year tournament.

"The 2016 Bassmaster Angler of the Year Championship couldn't have gone better. From the amazing event coordination by the local business community, to the heartfelt hospitality we were shown, and of course the outstanding bass fishing, we couldn't be more pleased to bring Bassmaster back to Mille Lacs."

The 2017 Bassmaster Angler of the Year tournament will run from September 14-17, 2017. The Top 50 anglers on the Bassmaster Elite Series tour will compete for the title of Angler of the Year.

Gerald Swindle of Guntersville, Ala., clinched his second Angler of the Year title at last year's event, but the highlight for many locals was seeing Minnesota angler Seth Feider win the weekend tournament with a huge total of more than 75 pounds over three days — an average of over five pounds for the 15 fish he weighed in. "It's really a dream come true," he said at the time, "and I'm very proud of Minnesota for showing off the best smallmouth bass fishery in the world."

Thanks in part to the Mille Lacs Band and Grand Casino staff, a repeat performance is on the calendar.

## Partnership Combines Higher Education with Professional Development

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer

In a first of its kind partnership, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures (MLCV) and St. Cloud State University offered a unique opportunity for professional growth for Band members and those who work for MLCV.

The Business Leadership Series offered through both MLCV and the university's continuing education program happened throughout January and attracted 40 participants from both the corporate side and government offices. The class met for four weeks at the campus.

"It was a really great introductory program to business leadership," said Tawnya Stewart, Chief People and Cultural Officer. "It was a success, and we are looking at the possibility of offering it again."

All participants earned continuing education units and some will be able to get a college credit from the university — which was paid for by MLCV. But, all of them walked away with skills that could help them in their current roles in their personal lives, Tawnya said.

The next steps for the participants will be to meet with the Dean of continuing education, and each of those who participated will create a professional development plan.

The participants had broad work backgrounds that included early education, table games and learning and development.

Some skills the classes focused on were teambuilding, problem solving, business law and finance. They also learned techniques to make themselves competitive in the job market.

"It was a great partnership and created exposure about business leadership and provided development opportunities for Band members and MLCV associates," Tawnya said.

# New Roads Garage Open in District I

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Brett Larson Staff Writer

The old roads garage near the powwow grounds in District I had a leaky floor, no outdoor storage, and no working bathrooms. It also cost \$3,000 per month to heat.

Roads Supervisor Tony Pike and his crew are now settling into a new facility on Timber Trail Road that will provide improved service to Band members and protect the Band's investments.

The building was dedicated on Jan. 20 with a dish ceremony and invocation by Joe Nayquonabe Sr. followed by tours and a barbecued lunch open to the public and served up by Community Development staff.

Percy Benjamin, Commissioner of Community Development, thanked Joe, the staff and the elected officials who made it all happen.

"Miigwech to all our employees who work for the department," said Percy. "Our vision is to have infrastructure that will be here for future generations to come. These types of investments show we are dedicated to providing the best service possible."

Roads Supervisor Tony Pike echoed his sentiments and talked about the dramatic improvements of the new garage



Left: A bird's eye view of roads garage. Right: Commissioner of Community Development Percy Benjamin and Roads Supervisor Tony Pike thanked their staff at a dedication ceremony on Jan. 20.

compared to the old one.

The new building is huge, with plenty of room to do repairs on snowplows and other Band vehicles, resulting in cost savings not just for the Community Development department but potentially for DNR, Tribal Police, Labor and other departments as well.

A row of offices allows Community Development person-

nel to work more closely with their colleagues. The building is eco-friendly with LED lights and motion sensors. An adjacent cold storage building means equipment can stay out of the elements and last longer.

The building also has a couple Big Ass fans. (No, really. That's the brand name. And they're big.)

# Truancy Is a Persistent Problem for Cops, Courts, Schools

**Brett Larson** Staff Writer



In this year's State of the Judiciary report delivered by District Court Judge David Christensen, Chief Justice Rayna Churchill reported that truancy is having a negative impact on the community, and a coordinated response is needed to provide

programming, resources and legislation to address the issue.

In 2016, it was reported, 127 Tribal Court hearings were held to address truancy. Fifty-five Band member children have been involved in 39 cases filed.

The financial costs to the Band are tremendous. Each of those cases requires investment of time and resources from schools, tribal police, Band solicitors, family services and courts.

The social costs are equally important, or even more so, as children who are habitually truant are at greater risk for addiction, criminal activity and dependence on services later in life.

The State of the Judiciary report also called for a "three-branch plan of action" to address addiction and mental health in the community, which is contributing to most of the cases filed in Tribal Court.

The Band has done a lot to address truancy over the years, including hiring parent liaisons and placing Tribal Police resource officers in the schools, but the problem is persistent, and most agree that more needs to be done.

In 2015 a Truancy Response Team was put together to bring the Courts together with Family Services, the Office of the So-

licitor General, the Tribal Police and local schools to reduce truancy.

The Office of the Solicitor General is heading up the Truancy Response Team and is currently drafting a new Truancy ordinance that the Team hopes will support anti-truancy programs and provide additional deterrents.

Josh Hemsworth of the Tribal Police Department is the School Resource Officer working in Nay Ah Shing schools. Josh said he was surprised by the extent of the truancy problem in comparison with the Brainerd district where he formerly worked.

Especially surprising is the number of elementary students who are truant. Kids of that age are not responsible enough to get up and get ready for school on their own; they need help from their parents and guardians, and some aren't getting it.

Josh also pointed out that some high school students who show up for school most days are actually truant because they are habitually late, or they leave class, or they wander the halls. "You can be truant within the walls of the high school," he said.

The Tribal Police Department is trying to take a proactive approach to truancy, so schools and parents are welcome to call the Police Department with their concerns.

Josh works closely with Ace Collie, the parent liaison at Nay Ah Shing Schools. Ace explained the school policy on absenteeism, which requires that a letter be sent to parents or guardians after a child has accumulated three unexcused absences.

After five unexcused absences, Ace sends a certified letter to the parent or guardian requesting them to appear before the school board or a designated representative. They also have to meet with the school's crisis management team to develop a plan to improve attendance.

Excused absences require approval of the parent/guardian and the school and include illness, death of a close relative or friend, verified medical and dental appointments, approved cultural related activities and court-ordered placement.

After seven unexcused absences, a child is deemed "habitually truant."

At that point, his or her name is brought up to the Police Department, an ICR (Initial Complaint Report) is created, and it goes to Office of the Solicitor General, where a truancy petition is filed and a court hearing is scheduled.

Parents face educational neglect charges and can face fines and contempt of court charges if they don't show up or violate a court order for their child to attend school regularly without additional unexcused absences or tardies.

Truancy is not just a problem in District I. District III is in Pine County, which is putting together a Truancy Task Force to deal with the issue. Truancy is a concern throughout the county and the state, not just in Indian communities.

Bottom line: Kids need to be in school for their own sake and the sake of their community, and parents or guardians have a responsibility to make sure they're attending school.

## Band, State Statutes Require School Attendance

Truancy is covered in Title 8 and Title 9 of Mille Lacs Band Statutes. In Title 8, Children and Families, "Neglect" is defined as "the failure of the parent, guardian or custodian to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, **education** or supervision for the child's health and well-being."

Title 9, Education, requires school attendance: "Every child between the chronological age of six (6) and sixteen (16) years of age shall attend a Band School or Public School of the State of Minnesota, during the entire time that the school is in session during the school year."

The statute requires that students age 16 to 18 who seek to withdraw must have their parent or guardian meet with school personnel and sign a form giving permission for the student to withdraw.

The School Board is given authority to determine legitimacy of absences and is required to notify parents or guardians of students who are unexpectedly absent. On the fifth day of unexcused absence, the Board must notify the parents by registered mail of a formal hearing to discuss the matter. If parents or guardians fail to appear, it goes to the appropriate

Social Service agency to file a Child Protection Petition.

The parents or guardians are liable for the truancy of minors and can be fined if found guilty or charged with contempt of court and additional fines if they fail to show up for court.

Minnesota law is similar. A child can be considered "in need of protection or services" if the parent or guardian fails to provide "food, clothing, shelter, **education**, or other required care for the child's physical or mental health or morals" or the child is "a habitual truant."

"Habitual truant" in Minnesota law "means a child under the age of 17 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days per school year if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days per school year if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school or a child who is 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days per school year and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school."

## Tribal Police Honored

Members of the Mille Lacs Tribal Police Department were honored Feb. 2 with blankets and lunch at Eddy's Resort in District I. Officers have been working under difficult circumstances since the summer of 2016, when Mille Lacs County revoked its law enforcement agreement with the Band. Chief Executive

Melanie Benjamin told the officers that community Elders had asked her to show their appreciation. Timber Trails played an Honor Song, and Joe Nayquonabe Sr. gave an invocation. Joe talked about the significance of tobacco, the drum, and the gift of blankets, which were given to warriors when they left for

battle. Joe said the community looks on the police as protectors, similar to traditional warriors. "We got your back," Joe said. "And you got ours." Melanie also presented a blanket to Solicitor General Todd Matha. The County and Band are in the early stages of a mediation process.



# Help Yourself and Your Family by Filing Past-Due Tax Returns

**Adam Valdez** Commissioner of Finance

Most Band members voluntarily file their tax returns each year and pay their fair share of taxes. Unfortunately, American Indians are not exempt from the federal taxation. There are a few exceptions where American Indians are not subject to taxation, but these are very limited exceptions. Generally, wages, casino per capita payments and interest and dividends are subject to taxation. This list is not exhaustive.

Further, depending where you live and the source of your income, the State of Minnesota may impose state taxation on income received from the reservation. There are a few rules to follow to see if you qualify for the state income tax exemption. Your tax professional should be able to guide you in making this determination.

Some Band members fail to file their returns. IRS research suggests that people sometimes do not file in years where their actual filing status changes due to a death of loved one or a divorce. Emotional and financial stress may also cause a person to not file their tax return. Others plainly procrastinate or refuse to file a tax return.

Many legal arguments have been made that Indians are not required to pay taxes. This view is simply not true. Taking this stance causes a lot of problems for Band members who end up with the IRS levying against the Band member's wages and per capita payments. This act alone puts a tremendous amount of financial pressure onto a person's or family's budget. Once OMB receives the IRS garnishment order, our hands are tied and we are obligated to execute the garnishment. The garnishment order is a legal one.

Your need to file a tax return depends largely on your age, filing status, and the gross income being reported on a calendar year basis. Check with your tax preparer or professional to confirm your obligation to file.

## Why am I required to file a tax return?

Taxpayers are required to file a tax return for any year in which a filing requirement exists — plain and simple. Mere avoidance of the filing is a recipe for financial disaster. The IRS eventually catches up to the out-of-compliance individual. By then, the amount of penalties and interest assessed by the IRS generally exceeds the original amount of tax owed on the return. If you owe tax on your return, it is wise to go ahead and file the return, and then work with the IRS on a payment plan.

The filing of a return impacts your future, especially in terms of social security retirement and disability benefits as well as Medicare. Reportable income is also a source for state benefits such as unemployment compensation.

The IRS does impose a wide range of civil and criminal sanctions on persons who fail to file returns.

If you owe taxes and your return was not filed by the due date of the return, including extensions, you may be subject to a failure-to-file penalty, unless you have a reasonable cause for not filing the return on time. If you filed and did not pay your taxes with the filing of the return, extensions do not count in this scenario. You may also be subject to a failure-to-pay penalty, unless you can demonstrate a reasonable cause for not paying your tax liability on time. On top of these penalties, the IRS charges interest on the taxes not paid by the due date as well as on the penalties they have assessed for not filing or paying your taxes on time. These penalties and interest charges add up quickly.

Remember, the tax man always comes calling. Sometimes, you may not hear from the IRS for several years, and you think you are out of the woods. The IRS will send a series of letters explaining the actions they are taking against you leading up to a garnishment or levy. They will go as far as preparing a substitute tax return on your behalf, and base their collection efforts on this return. The Band government through the Office of Management and Budgets transmits earnings data to the federal and state governments, and the Social Security Administration. These agencies receive the same W-2 and 1099 information you receive in the U.S. mail.

The IRS is quite aware of who is being paid and how much. Just because you have not filed your returns does not mean the IRS has not identified you in their system. They have a high-tech way of tracking people who have a filing requirement, but who have failed to voluntarily file a return.

## What should you do?

We recommend that you file your missing tax returns as soon as possible regardless of the reason for not filing in the first place. You should contact a tax professional or the IRS to assist you with filing delinquent tax returns.

If you are not able to pay the full amount of the tax you owe on the late returns, do not let this keep you from filing, as payment options with the IRS may be available. However, negotiating a payment option is a one-on-one negotiation with the IRS, and the final outcome is not guaranteed. You still may be issued a garnishment order.

Unfortunately, Indians must pay federal taxes on the income they earn or receive from the Band. Failing to file returns can and will jeopardize a family's financial security and future.

The State of Minnesota has similar rules for noncompliance

## When Are My Taxes Due in 2017?

**Adam Valdez** Commissioner of Finance

The U.S. individual income tax returns for Band members are due on April 18, 2017. Generally, the normal due date falls on April 15th of each year. Because the due date this year falls on a Saturday (weekend), the IRS pushes the filing date to the next business day, Monday. Fortunately, Washington D.C. is celebrating Emancipation Day, and most governmental offices in the D.C. area are closed on Monday, April 17, 2017. Therefore, Band members get an extra day (Tuesday) to file their tax returns. Federal tax payments for the 2016 tax year are also due on April 18, 2017.

## What if I need more time to file my taxes?

Sometimes because of events beyond our control, we cannot meet the initial filing deadline. Some of the tax forms get lost in the mail or your tax professional is so bogged down preparing tax returns. You should file for an automatic extension (IRS Form 4868) that gives you until October 16, 2017, to file your return.

However, the automatic extension does not extend the time to pay the taxes you would have owed, had you filed your tax return by April 18, 2017. For this reason alone, it is important to do a quick calculation and make an estimated tax payment if you are going to owe taxes before the April 18, 2017, filing deadline. Otherwise, you may be subject to penalties or interest on the unpaid tax balance.

With regards to the tax liability and the late payment penalty, the IRS requires that at least 90% of your tax liability be paid on or before the regular due date of your return through regular withholdings, estimated tax payments or payments made with the filing of Form 4868.

Please contact OMB immediately if you have not received your W-2 or 1099s. We will provide duplicate copies.

in filing a state tax return or paying state taxes, if applicable. Both governments can take legal action to collect on those unpaid taxes, penalties, and interest.

## Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures Offers Tax Help

We are excited to announce that VITA (Voluntary Income Tax Assistance Program) is back at Grand Casino Mille Lacs! The VITA hotline (**320-532-8500**) was activated on Monday, January 30, to begin taking appointments for the following week. Our VITA site opened this year on Monday, February 6. We don't have the resources to attend the VITA hotline full time, so if someone doesn't answer when you call, please leave a message including a phone number and the best time to contact you, and your call will be returned by the next business day.

**Call soon, because this service will end on March 31.**

### ATTENTION ALL VITA CLIENTS:

WE HAVE NEW SOFTWARE THIS YEAR, IT WILL BE IMPERATIVE THAT YOU COME PREPARED. WE WILL NEED SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS FOR EVERYONE ON YOUR RETURN OR A COPY OF YOUR PRIOR YEAR RETURN. WE DON'T HAVE THE

BENEFIT THIS YEAR OF INFORMATION ROLLING FORWARD FROM PRIOR YEARS.

Due to the sheer volume, all walk in-tax clients will be asked to schedule an appointment.

Please come prepared to your scheduled tax appointment. You should bring the following:

- Prior year tax return
- All W-2's (must be printed prior to your tax appointment or you will be asked to reschedule), 1099's, other wage/income forms
- Proof of valid social security number for taxpayer and/or spouse
- Social Security cards & birthdates for dependents
- Bank routing number/account number if you want direct deposit of your refund
- Daycare tax identification number if filing for dependent

care credit

If you think you may qualify to itemize your deductions rather than take the standard deduction, you should bring the following:

- Home Mortgage statement (1098)
- Property tax statement if not paid through your escrow
- Out-of-pocket Medical and Dental expenses
- Unreimbursed employee expenses (uniforms, tools, etc.)
- Charitable contribution information

If you had a sale of stock during the year, you must bring your stock information such as when it was originally purchased, how much you paid, sale date and amount.

If you are not able to provide this information at the time of your appointment, you may be asked to reschedule. If you have questions about what to bring please call the VITA hotline.

# County/Band Conflicts Date Back More Than a Century

## Part 1 of 2

*Note: Band member Donivon Boyd's recent letter to the editor in the Mille Lacs Messenger (see sidebar) inspired Inaajimowin staff to delve into the history of forced removals on the Mille Lacs Reservation. This article covers the destruction of a village in 1901. See next month's Inaajimowin for another story on this topic.*

Oral traditions in the Mille Lacs area tell of several incidents when Mille Lacs Band members were forcibly removed from their homes on the 1855 Reservation.

But it's not just oral history; the newspapers of the day also told the story of the destruction of Indian villages at Mille Lacs.

In 1901, both the *Minneapolis Journal* and *St. Paul Globe* reported that Indian buildings in Isle were burned by Mille Lacs County Sheriff E.D. Claggett (called "Laggett" in some sources)

on behalf of a settler named Kennedy.

The *St. Paul* paper reported that the Chief of the village was "May-jwou-ay-be," which was probably a misspelling of "Nayquonabe," who was a chief in the area at the time. Archaeologist Jacob Brower, who surveyed the region in 1900, talked about meeting Chief Nayquonabe or "Leading Feather" in the Wahkon area.

After the destruction of their village, Mille Lacs Band members sought damages, but the Commissioner of Indian affairs said he would not pay for damages from the incident unless the Mille Lacs Indians agreed to remove to White Earth.

According to research by historian Bruce White, Mille Lacs Band members had lived on the big island in Isle Bay until the land was claimed in 1891 by Charles Malone, the "founding father" of Isle. Isle is still known by local Anishinaabe as "Chi Minising" or "Big Island." The island is now called Malone Island.

As explained in the *Minneapolis Journal* on June 8, 1901, the 1889 Nelson Act allowed Indians to claim allotments on the Mille Lacs Reservation prior to white settlement, and prevented white settlers from claiming land Indians inhabited. In this and many other cases, the Indians' rights were not protected. Nayquonabe's band was forced to the mainland near the outlet of Chiminising River (later called Malone Creek or Thains River).

In 1897, Malone was convicted of selling whiskey to Indians and sentenced to six months in jail and a \$500 fine. Actually the "whiskey" was extract of lemon and peppermint, and

one person died from drinking it, according to the *St. Paul Daily Globe*. Malone was pardoned the next year.

In 1906, when Malone was arrested with five deer and 400 partridges, he claimed that the partridges in his hay mow were placed there by unknown Indians.

In 1909, Chief Nayquonabe said in a deposition that he had been driven off the reservation by "that man; that bad man that mistreated the Indians, Malone."

In an obituary in the Sept. 26, 1935, *Mille Lacs Messenger*, Malone was remembered as someone who "aided the Indians in straightening out their many tangled affairs with the federal government."

The Chiminising Band members did not have land of their own until 1913, when they purchased 40 acres near where the District II community is today. Listed on the deed are John Jekey, Jim Skinaway, Mrs. Ole Sam, Andrew Quiack, Charles Moose, William Henry, Fred Day, Mike Sam, Sam Davis, Tom Benjamin and Pete Anderson.

In a 1992 interview, the late Brenda Boyd of Chiminising said her father, Alex Moose, was born by the lake in 1903 near the old Forman's resort in Isle, which was across from the big island. The interview also states that the federal government intended to purchase land for Band members on the lakeshore in the 1930s, but there was too much opposition from the non-Indian community.

Indian villages at Mille Lacs were also destroyed by the Mille Lacs County Sheriff in 1911 and 1921. See next month's issue for a story on those incidents.

**SAW HOMES BURNED**

**Why the Mille Lacs Indians Are Aroused.**

**EVICTED FROM THEIR HOMES**

**Their Huts Were Destroyed—Sheriff and Deputies Do the Work for Kennedy.**

Details have just reached The Journal of the burning of an Indian village at Mille Lacs lake by the sheriff of Mille Lacs county, Edward C. Laggett, and several deputies.

The sheriff recently notified all of the Indians of the village to remove from the tract of land upon which the village was located. This notification the Indians ignored on the ground that the lands belonged to them, and were not the property of a man named Kennedy, who claimed ownership.

On May 26 the sheriff, backed by a force of deputies, gathered all the effects of the Indians and placed them on an adjoining tract of land, which is claimed by a town-site company, and fired all the log houses and tepees in the village.

The young men of the band are said to have urged an immediate outbreak as the only means of righting their wrongs. The wiser counsels of the old chief and some of the other old men prevailed, and through the assistance of their trader they complained to the commissioner of Indian affairs and to Governor Van Sant. Governor Van Sant has written a letter to the Indians, expressing sympathy with them, and advising them to refer the matter to the United States district attorney at St. Paul. The commissioner is yet to be heard from.

**Score of Huts Burned.**

More than a score of log houses and birch tepees were burned, and fifteen Indian families left practically homeless. Unless the Indians get relief through an appeal to the courts, serious complications may yet arise.

The Chippewa Indian commissioners who secured the consent of the Indians to the act of 1889, commonly called the Nelson act, promised to allot the lands the Mille Lacs Indians have cultivated and otherwise improved for nearly fifty years to members of the band.

Kennedy now insists that he owns the land by purchase from a man who acquired it by a homestead entry. It was through his efforts that the sheriff was induced to remove the Indians.

**Indians' Case.**

United States laws prohibit the entry of any land under the homestead laws which is occupied and being cultivated by an Indian, and section 3 of the Nelson act provides that a Chippewa Indian may take an allotment of land on the reservation where he resided at the time of the passage of the act, instead of removing to White Earth.

It is under the provision of these laws, that the Mille Lacs Indians intend to attack the validity of the entries which have been made of their lands, and the patents that have been issued therefor.

## Sherrif Should Pressure County on Law Enforcement Agreement

*Note: This letter from Band member and Marine Corps Veteran Donivon Boyd ran in the Feb. 16 Mille Lacs Messenger.*

Dear Editor:

I found it strange that the Mille Lacs County Sheriff came to the District I Community Meeting to try to convince Mille Lacs Band members that he is on our side and is not to blame for the revocation of the law enforcement agreement between the Band and the County.

For one thing, the sheriff told the county board that 10 new deputies could provide the law enforcement that had been provided by more than 20 tribal officers. That's crazy.

We created our Tribal Police Department because the law enforcement service provided by the county sheriff was not adequate. Going back to an arrangement that never worked in the first place doesn't make sense.

The recent death of one of our Band members only enforces the idea that the County and the Sheriff's Office are trying to get rid of us as proven over the course of the past century.

The sheriff should understand that our relationship with the county over the years does not inspire confidence. His predecessors destroyed our ancestors' villages in Isle in 1901, Mazomanie Point in 1911 and Cove Bay in 1921, and stood by when settlers destroyed a village on Wigwam Bay where my grandfather, Jack Boyd, lived. To my knowledge, the county and the office of the sheriff have never apologized to the Mille Lacs Band for those actions.

This is not ancient history. People of my generation learned these stories from our Elders who were there, but these stories are also part of the public record.

Gaining back the trust of Mille Lacs Band members will take more than just a visit to our community meeting.

If he really wants to convince us that he's on our side, and on the side of good law enforcement in northern Mille Lacs County, then he needs to do all in his power to get the county board and county attorney to approve a new law enforcement agreement, or better yet, simply go back to the old one.

Donivon Boyd, Mille Lacs Band member, St. Cloud V.A.

# TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

## Happy March Birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Ramona Anne Applegate  
Debra Rose Barge  
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 Dumler  
Robina Lou Eagle  
Dawn Renee Fahrlander-Peel  
Mary Flores  
Terry Duane Frye  
Cheryl Darlene Garbow  
Donald Anson Graves  
Marie Jane Gudim  
Kathleen June Hill

Bradley Allen Kalk  
Leslie Roger Karsjens  
Sandra Arlene Kegg  
Jeffrey Jay Keller  
Susan Marie Kramer  
Barbara Jane LaBlanc  
Lorelei Lee LaFave  
Mert Elaine Liebgott  
Anita Ann Misquadace  
Wanda Kay Misquadace  
Pauline Moose  
Wanda Roxane Navarro  
Lester Lee Nelson  
Victoria Marie Nichols  
Marie Esther Paschke  
Marlene Ruth Poukka  
George Wilbur Premo  
Debra Jo Sam  
Fred L. Sam  
Kathryn Mary Sam  
Francis Dean Schaaf  
Susanna Lee Schaaf  
Thomas William Schleeve  
Roy Alden Shabaiah  
Russell Shabaiah  
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 Weyasu

### Happy March Birthdays:

Happy birthday **LeRoy Sam** on 3/2! From Grandma & Grandpa Smith and cousins; Hunter, Chuck, Elvis & Sunshine. • Happy 17th birthday **Hunter Shingobe** on 3/2 from Grandma & Grandpa Smith. Siblings: Sam, Chuck, Elvis, Amber & Sunshine. Uncle Elliot & Boys. Uncle Manny, Aunt Liz & Family. • Happy birthday **Donny** on 3/10! From Mary, Selena, Carlyle, CJ, Dante, Maysun, Shawsha, Soul and Daymon. • Happy birthday **Sami** on

3/12, I love you! From your little sister Boss-so & Aaron. • Happy birthday **Keith** on 3/13! Love Grandma & Grandpa Smith, Hunter, Elvis Chuck and Sunshine. • Happy birthday **Twindian's** on 3/13! From Auntie Barb & Cousin Aaron. • Happy birthday **David Smith Jr.** on 3/22, love your Kids, Grandkids, Great Grandkids and the Elliot Family. • Happy birthday **Tawnya Stewart** on 3/24. We love you much! Love Sheila and Penny's kids and grandkids. • Happy birthday **Mary Flores** on 3/26, love from your Pokeman. • Happy birthday **Mom** on 3/26! Love Ree, Julian and the babies. • Happy birthday from down under **Mary Flores**, ya old chook, on 3/26. Love, you! Robyn. • Happy birthday **Mary** on 3/26, all the way from Germany! Love foxxii. • Happy birthday **Mom/Grama**

on 3/28! From Selena, Carlyle, Dante, Maysun, Shawsha, Soul, Daymon. • Happy birthday **Marissa Robertson** on 3/28 from auntie Mary and Kids. • Happy birthday **Sissy Poo (Sharon Sam)** on 3/31, love Auntie Barb & Cousin Aaron.

### Happy Belated Birthdays:

Happy belated 23rd birthday **Amber Shingobe** on 2/23, • love Grandma & Grandpa, Smith and Shingobe families.

### Submit Birthday Announcements

Send name, birthday and a brief message that is **20 WORDS OR LESS** to Myles Gorham at [myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com](mailto:myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com) or call **612-465-0653**. The deadline for the April issue is March 15.

## Mille Lacs Band Recovery Groups

### District I Mille Lacs

#### Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition

Mondays, 5:30 – 7 p.m., 17222 Ataage Drive, Onamia (Next to the Halfway House – Brown Building)  
Contact Kim Sam at 320-532-7773, ext. 2419

#### Wellbriety Migizi Meeting

Mondays, 7 p.m., Grand Casino Mille Lacs Hotel  
700 Grand Avenue, Onamia, Minnesota

#### Wellbriety Celebrating Families

Tuesdays, 6 p.m., Mille Lacs Band Halfway House Group  
17222 Ataage Drive, Onamia, Minnesota  
Contact Halfway House at 320-532-4768

#### N.A./A.A. Welcome

Hosted by Mille Lacs Band Halfway House

Wednesdays, 8 p.m., 42293 Twilight Road, Onamia (Red Brick Building)  
Contact Halfway House at 320-532-4768

#### Women's Support Group

Thursdays, 3 – 5 p.m., DI Public Health Building

#### Mino Minwaadizii Ikwewug — Lead a Good Life Women

Women encouraging Women Support Group  
Fridays, 6 p.m., the Old Budget Host

#### Wellbriety Sons of Tradition

Sundays, 1 – 4 p.m., 42293 Twilight Road, Onamia  
Contact Kim Sam at 320-532-7773, ext. 2419

#### District II East Lake AA Group

Mondays, 5 – 6 p.m., East Lake Community Center  
Contact Rob Nelson at 218-768-2431

#### Women's Support Group

Mondays, Noon – 2 p.m., District II ALU  
Contact Petra at 320-292-1646

#### District III Hinckley & Aazhoomog NA Meeting

Mondays, 7 p.m., Aazhoomog Community Center

#### Wellbriety 12 Step Group

Tuesdays, 12 p.m., Aazhoomog Clinic Conference Room  
Contact Monica Haglund at 320-384-0149

#### Wellbriety Meeting

Thursdays, 6 p.m., Hinckley Corporate Bldg.  
Contact Mike Kettner at 320-385-7052

## RECURRING EVENTS

### Ojibwe Language Tables

Mondays, 6:30 p.m., DII-A, Chiminising Community Center  
Tuesdays, 6 p.m., DIII, Aazhoomog Community Center  
Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., DI, District I Community Center  
Thursdays, 4:30 p.m., DII, East Lake Community Center (3:30 p.m. on last Thursday)  
Thursdays, 6 p.m., DIII, Hinckley Corporate building

### DI Open Gym

Open Gym is held at the DI Community Center, Mondays – Thursdays: 3:30 – 9 p.m.

### DI Women's Group (Strength & Support)

Thursdays: 3:30 – 5 p.m., Public Health Building (17230 Noopiming Lane)

### 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.)

**DI Sewing Circle:** Mondays & Wednesday, 5:30 – 8 p.m.

**Pool League Night:** Wednesdays, 5 p.m., Onamia

**B-Ball League Night:** Thursday Nights

## All-Native Basketball Tournament

The All-Native Basketball Tournament will be held March 31 – April 2 at Onamia High School.

Half of the registration fee is due by March 17 to confirm your spot. For more information contact Byron Ninham at 320-362-1023 or [byron.ninham@millelacsband.com](mailto:byron.ninham@millelacsband.com).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>Want your event here?</b> Email <a href="mailto:myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com">myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com</a> or call 612-465-0653. Visit <a href="http://millelacsband.com/calendar">millelacsband.com/calendar</a> for additional MLB events.</p> <p><b>Band Assembly Meetings</b> Band Assembly Meetings are held at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at rotating locations throughout the districts. For locations and other information, call the Legislative office or visit <a href="http://millelacsbandlegislativebranch.com">millelacsbandlegislativebranch.com</a>. Meeting dates, times and locations are subject to change.</p>			<p><b>1</b> <i>See page 14</i> <b>DI Open Gym, N.A./A.A. Welcome</b></p> <p><i>aninaatig: a maple</i></p>	<p><b>2</b> <b>Circle of Health Outreach</b> 12 – 3 p.m. Urban Office <i>See page 14</i></p> <p><i>ziinzibaakwadwaatig: another name for maple</i></p>	<p><b>3</b> <b>Healer Herb Sam</b> 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Powwow Grounds, Minneapolis <i>See page 14</i></p> <p><i>ziinzibaakwadwaaboo: sap</i></p>	<p><b>4</b> <b>Storybook Time</b> Noon – 1 p.m. <b>Kids Crafts: Bead a Ring</b> 1 – 3 p.m. ML Indian Museum</p> <p><i>maajigaa: it starts to run with sap</i></p>
<p><b>5</b> <b>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition</b> 1 – 4 p.m. Red Brick House, District I</p> <p><i>negwaakwaan: a tap, a spile, a spigot</i></p>	<p><b>6</b> <i>See page 14</i> <b>DI Open Gym, AA Group, Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition, Wellbriety Migizi Meeting, NA Meeting, DII-A Language Table</b></p> <p><i>ishkode: fire</i></p>	<p><b>7</b> <b>Circle of Health Outreach</b> 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Aazhoomog <i>See page 14</i></p> <p><i>boodawe: S/he builds a fire.</i></p>	<p><b>8</b> <b>DI Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. DI Community Center <b>DI &amp; II Division of Powers Presentation</b> 5:30 – 8 p.m., Grand Casino Mille Lacs <i>See page 14</i></p>	<p><b>9</b> <b>Circle of Health Outreach</b> 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. East Lake 2 – 4 p.m., Isle <b>DIII Division of Powers Presentation</b> 5:30 – 8 p.m., Grand Casino Hinckley <i>See page 14</i></p>	<p><b>10</b> <b>Healer Herb Sam</b> 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Powwow Grounds <b>Mino Minwaadizii Ikwewug</b> 6 p.m. Old Budget Host</p> <p><i>biskitenaagan: sap bucket of folded birch bark</i></p>	<p><b>11</b> <b>Polar Plunge</b> Check in from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Plunge begins at 1:30 p.m. Eddy's Resort, District I</p> <p><i>iskigamiziganaak: a frame for holding sap-boiling kettles</i></p>
<p><b>12</b> <b>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition</b> 1 – 4 p.m. Red Brick House, District I</p> <p><i>bagidinse: S/he puts wood on the fire.</i></p> <p><i>okaadakik: a large kettle or cauldron; a treaty kettle</i></p>	<p><b>13</b> <i>See page 14</i> <b>DI Open Gym, AA Group, Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition, Wellbriety Migizi Meeting, NA Meeting, DII-A Language Table</b></p> <p><i>minomaate: it smells good cooking</i></p>	<p><b>14</b> <b>DI Executive Branch Meeting</b> Nay Ah Shing Upper School <b>Circle of Health Outreach</b> 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Aazhoomog <i>See page 14</i></p> <p><i>zhiywaagamizigan: maple syrup</i></p>	<p><b>15</b> <b>MCT Division of Powers Presentation</b> 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley <b>DIII Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m., Grand Casino Hinckley Event Center <b>Special Meeting of MN Chippewa Tribe</b> Grand Casino Hinckley</p>	<p><b>16</b> <b>Circle of Health Outreach</b> 10:30 a.m. – noon Aazhoomog <b>DII Executive Branch Meeting</b> East Lake Community Center <b>Elder Meeting</b> 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Mille Lacs ALU <i>See page 14</i></p>	<p><b>17</b> <b>Healer Herb Sam</b> 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Powwow Grounds <b>Mino Minwaadizii Ikwewug</b> 6 p.m. Old Budget Host</p> <p><i>naadoobii: s/he gathers sap</i></p>	<p><b>18</b> <b>Appliqué Beading 2-Day Workshop</b> Noon – 4 p.m. ML Indian Museum</p> <p><i>ninaadoobii: I gather sap</i></p> <p><i>zhiywaagamizan: cook it to a syrup</i></p>
<p><b>19</b> <b>Appliqué Beading 2-Day Workshop</b> 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. ML Indian Museum</p> <p><i>See page 14</i></p> <p><i>minopidan: It tastes good.</i></p>	<p><b>20</b> <b>Circle of Health Outreach</b> 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Aazhoomog <b>DII Sobriety Feast</b> 5 p.m. East Lake Community Center <i>See page 14</i></p>	<p><b>21</b> <b>Circle of Health Outreach</b> 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Aazhoomog <i>See page 14</i></p> <p><i>niminopidaan: I like the taste of it.</i></p>	<p><b>22</b> <i>See page 14</i> <b>DI Open Gym, N.A./A.A. Welcome</b></p> <p><i>iskigamizigewigamig: a sap-boiling lodge</i></p>	<p><b>23</b> <b>CPR Class with Monte Fronk</b> 5 – 9 p.m. Urban Office <i>See page 14</i></p> <p><i>nooskwaanzo: S/he licks sap.</i></p>	<p><b>24</b> <b>Treaty Day Noon Closing</b> <b>Treaty Rights Celebration</b> Noon – 4 p.m. Grand Casino Mille Lacs, See pg. 2 <i>See page 14</i></p>	<p><b>25</b> <b>Maple Sap, Sugar and Syrup Demo</b> Noon – 3 p.m. ML Indian Museum</p> <p><i>j</i> <i>ndoonzaan: I boil it.</i> <i>ogoonzaan: S/he boils it.</i></p>
<p><b>26</b> <b>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition</b> 1 – 4 p.m. Red Brick House, District I</p> <p><i>ishkwaagamizige: S/he finishes boiling sap.</i></p>	<p><b>27</b> <b>DIII Sobriety Feast</b> 6 p.m. Aazhoomog Community Center <i>See page 14</i> <b>DI Open Gym, AA Group, Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition, Wellbriety Migizi Meeting, NA Meeting, DII-A Language Table</b></p>	<p><b>28</b> <b>Circle of Health Outreach</b> 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Aazhoomog <b>DI Sobriety Feast</b> 5:30 p.m. DI Community Center <i>See page 14</i></p> <p><i>ziinzibaakwad: maple sugar</i></p>	<p><b>29</b> <b>DIIa Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center <i>See page 14</i> <b>DI Open Gym, N.A./A.A. Welcome</b></p> <p><i>ishkwaagaa: It is the last run of sap.</i></p>	<p><b>30</b> <b>Urban Area Executive Branch Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. All Nations Church <b>DII Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m., East Lake Community Center <b>DIIa Sobriety Feast</b> 5:30 p.m., Chiminising Community Center <b>Urban Area Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m., All Nations Church</p>	<p><b>31</b> <b>All-Native Basketball Tournament (through 4/2)</b> Onamia High School <b>Healer Herb Sam</b> 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Powwow Grounds <b>Mino Minwaadizii Ikwewug</b> 6 p.m. Old Budget Host</p> <p><i>onzan: Boil it.</i></p>	<p><b>Upcoming Events</b> <b>DIIa Executive Branch Meeting</b> April 18, Chiminising Community Center <b>DIII Executive Branch Meeting</b> April 20 Hinckley ALU <b>Urban Area Executive Branch Meeting</b> April 27 All Nations Church</p>



## Chili Cook-off Brings the Heat

The Second Annual Chili Cook-off, sponsored by the Health and Human Services Department's SNAP Ed and SHIP Programs, was held Jan. 30 at the District I Community Center. The first place recipe came from the Chief's office (top right), with the runner-up going to the Halfway House (bottom right) and 3rd place to the Family Violence Prevention Program. Fourteen different chilies were submitted. Winners received a plaque and Subway gift cards.



## Food Fun at Wewinabi

Dietician Cyndy Travers from the Ne-la-Shing Clinic Diabetes Department brought her puppet to Wewinabi Early Ed in February to teach youngsters about fruits and vegetables and healthy eating.

### Need Help?

- If you or someone you know is injured or in danger, call **911** first.
- **Tribal Police Department dispatch:** 888-609-5006; 320-532-3430
- **Emergency Management Services:** 24-hour fire, disaster, and emergency management response: Monte Fronk, Emergency Management Coordinator: 320-362-0435
- **Community Support Services:** For emergencies related to food and nutrition, Elder services, Elder abuse, emergency loans, sexual assault, or emergency loans, call 320-532-7539 or 320-630-2687.
- **Domestic violence:** (c) 320-630-2499
- Women's Shelter: 866-867-4006
- **Heating, water, or other home-related maintenance problems:** If you live in a Mille Lacs Band Housing-maintained home, call for housing maintenance service in your district. During regular business hours, please call our Customer Service Representative at 800-709-6445, ext. 7799. If you live in a home not maintained

by the Mille Lacs Band and need assistance after hours with utilities or heating, please contact: After Hours Emergency Service: 866-822-8538. (Press 1, 2 or 3 for respective districts)

- **Mille Lacs Band Family Services:** Foster Care: 320-630-2663; Social Worker: 320-630-2444, Toll-free: 800-709-6445, ext. 7588.
- **Family Violence Prevention:** District I 320-532-4780; East Lake 218-768-4412; Aazhoomog 320-384-0149; Hinckley 320-384-7400; toll-free 24-hour crisis line 1-866-867-4006.
- **Batterers' Intervention:** 320-532-8909
- **Behavioral Health:** 800-709-6445, ext. 7776

**Aazhoomog Clinic Hours:** Providers are at the Aazhoomog Clinic in District III from Monday through Thursday. The dentist is in the office on the last Friday of every month, and the foot doctor is available the first Wednesday of every month. Call 320-384-0149 to make an appointment or ask a question.

**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.

**Reporters Wanted, Submissions Accepted:** The Mille Lacs Band and Red Circle Agency are seeking Band members in all three districts to cover events and provide content for the Inaajimowin newsletter, millelacsband.com, and the Facebook page. If you or someone you know enjoys being out in the community, is active on social media, likes taking photos, or has an interest in writing, send an email to [brett.larson@millelacsband.com](mailto:brett.larson@millelacsband.com) or call 320-237-6851. No experience necessary. Hours and pay will depend on work experience, education and availability. You can also simply submit articles or photographs, and if your work is used you will receive reimbursement.

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## 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, *DNR Executive Director*,  
320-362-1756

Ed Minnema, *Commissioner of Education*  
320-630-0674

Sam Moose *Commissioner of Health & Human Services*, 320-630-2607

Percy Benjamin, *Commissioner of Community Development*, 320-630-2496

Michele Palomaki, *Assistant Commissioner of Administration*, 320-630-7415

Catherine Colstrud, *Commissioner of Administration*,  
320-292-0258