

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

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T H E S T O R Y A S I T ' S T O L D

BAND MEMBERS GIVE POWERFUL TESTIMONY AT OPIOID HEARING

MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOLDS COMMITTEE MEETING ON RESERVATION

By Brett Larson Inaajimowin Staff Writer

The Minnesota House of Representatives Health and Human Services Policy Committee took to the road January 25 to learn about the opioid crisis from a community that's been severely affected: the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

Minnesota ranks 11th from the bottom of the 50 states when it comes to overdose deaths, with 11.7 deaths per 100,000 people.

However, the American Indian population of the state has a rate of overdose death that is six times the state average, at 64.6 — higher than West Virginia, which has the highest rate in the nation, with 57.8 deaths per 100,000 people.

Testimony from tribal and community leaders ranged from political observations to personal stories — stories that were emotionally powerful and drew appreciation from legislators who were struck by the courage and passion of the speakers.

One such moment came during the testimony of Baabiiyaw Boyd, Assistant Commissioner of Administration, who brought those statistics home by reading a list of six relatives she has lost to the crisis.

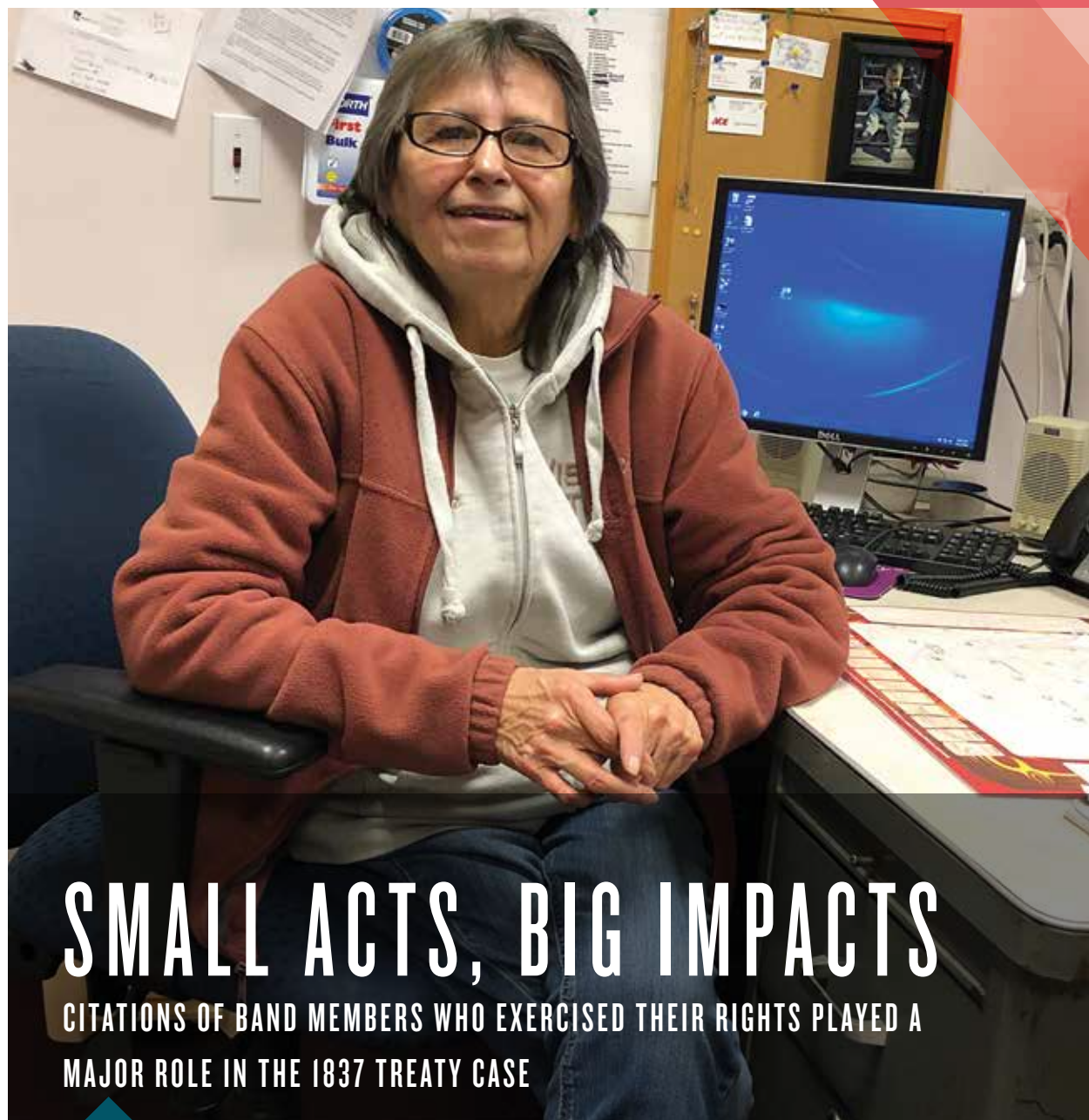
"Currently this is our reality," said Baabiiyaw. "The people that I named are my blood relatives, and I don't think I'm different from any other person. I think many of us have lost multiple people. ... Our reality is dreading Saturday mornings and dreading the weekend after per capita distributions because of hearing those sirens and getting phone calls. We've woken up to multiple phone calls of overdose death."

She spoke of assisting at funerals and seeing family members say goodbye to loved ones. "I've watched people devastated, completely devastated by opioid addiction in sending off their children, sending off their siblings, sending off their parents. And there's a different tone at funerals where somebody lived a long, healthy, and fulfilling life, and when opioid addiction has taken a life. It's a very different experience."

She talked about the language and ceremonies that the Anishinaabe have been given to nourish their spirits from birth to death. "Through historical trauma and oppressive systems ... a lot of those teachings have kind of gone by the wayside," said Baabiiyaw. "Because it's not readily available or accessible, people don't have the information that was provided for us as a people to nurture ourselves and process life."

Commissioner of Natural Resources Bradley Harrington also made the statistics real for the committee members. "I buried a lot of my friends over the last four years, and to lose a lot of people like that, it's going to take a lot of counseling," said Bradley. "If this were happening in Plymouth, it would be a national tragedy. If it were happening in Golden Valley, it would be a national tragedy."

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SMALL ACTS, BIG IMPACTS

CITATIONS OF BAND MEMBERS WHO EXERCISED THEIR RIGHTS PLAYED A
MAJOR ROLE IN THE 1837 TREATY CASE

District III Band member Carleen Benjamin engaged in a small, traditional act that had a huge positive impact for the tribe.

By Brett Larson
Inaajimowin Staff Writer

The 1837 Treaty case was filed in 1990 and finally resolved 20 years ago on March 24, 1999, with a Supreme Court decision affirming the Band's right to hunt, fish, and gather in the territory ceded to the U.S. government by the Ojibwe in 1837.

But the case really began well before 1990, with a series of arrests and citations of Band members by state conservation officers.

Carleen Benjamin was one of the plaintiffs named in the lawsuit after she was ticketed for ricing without a license.

She doesn't remember the date, or even the year, but she does remember what happened.

Carleen wasn't planning to go ricing that day, but her kids' dad, Virgil Skinaway, broke his foot and couldn't go. His friend Pat Reynolds needed a partner, so she agreed. "I don't even really like water," Carleen joked.

Carleen was never an avid ricer, but she went out on Crooked Creek and Hay Creek as a child. She also recalls going up to Moose Lake to rice with her brother, and going out with Virgil from time to time.

Her mom, Nina, and her dad, Jim, told her they didn't need a license to fish, hunt, or harvest rice.

Pat poled and Carleen knocked, and when they got to the landing at Crooked Creek with a sack and a half of rice, a state conservation officer was waiting. He took their rice and gave them a ticket, which Carleen paid in Pine City.

Although she didn't testify at the federal trial, she was interviewed by attorneys about her experience that day. "I got a letter in the mail asking if I would go down to St. Paul because they were trying to get the treaty rights recognized," said Carleen.

"I'M JUST GLAD THAT THE BAND GOT WHAT THEY WANTED OUT OF THE SITUATION."

For the last 19 years, Carleen has been the maintenance supervisor at Aazhoomog Clinic, a short walk from home. Nowadays she enjoys work and spending time with her kids and grandkids — with an occasional trip to the casino.

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M E S S A G E F R O M T H E C H I E F E X E C U T I V E

Aaniin, Boozhoo! This biboon (winter) in Minnesota has certainly been one of extreme cold and snow. We set a new record in Minnesota for the greatest snow fall since 1962, and a record for the coldest winter since 1996. While the majority of the rest of the world is setting records for heat and drought, there are a few small pockets in the world that have experienced extreme cold and snow, and we happen to live in one of those pockets. Global warming through climate change is happening at an alarming pace across the world, despite our localized experience this winter. I heard someone say, "It is called global warming for a reason, not where-you-happen-to-live warming."

As a tribal government and as Native people, we need to do our part to reduce our carbon footprint. I was very proud of a group of student warriors from Nay Ah Shing, who recently made a presentation to the Corporate Commission about using paper products rather than styrofoam, and the casinos have now made that change. The Band has a number of initiatives that are in the planning stage to reduce our carbon footprint, which you will hear about later this spring.

At the State of the Band Address this year, I announced that my office would be providing small grants to groups of our New Warrior community activists working to better our community. New Warrior Grant applications are now available, for an amount not to exceed \$5,000. These are competitive grants and funds are limited. Please check the Chief Executive Facebook page for more information or call/email to request an application be mailed to you. Applications are also available on-site in our office.

I am happy to announce that we have two new commissioners on board. Band member Nicole Anderson was sworn in as our new Commissioner of Health and Human Services. Nicole previously ran the Four Winds Lodge treatment center owned by the Band. A search is underway for a permanent Commissioner of Education, but in the meantime, Band member Joyce Shingobe agreed to a 45-day term as Commissioner of Education. Chi miigwech to Joyce for helping us in this capacity while this search commences. Interviews for both the Commissioner of Administration and Commissioner of Education positions are taking place during the last week in February.

Other events this month included a meeting of the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) of the MCT, which was scheduled for January 29 but canceled due to extreme cold. Governor Tim Walz's office said they wanted to keep the meeting with tribal leaders scheduled for that day, so we drove up to Bois Forte the night before. Early that morning, we learned the Governor's helicopter pilot said it was too dangerous to fly. Instead, we held

a conference call with both Governor Walz and Lt. Governor Flanagan and discussed the government shutdown, and ways the state could assist tribes. Our longer lunch meeting was rescheduled for February 26.

On February 5, I was invited along with President Cathy Chavers of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, former Chairwoman Karen Diver of Fond du Lac, and Tadd Johnson to serve on panel at St. John's University to discuss the impact of boarding schools on Native people. We drove through a blizzard to get to that event, which was attended by a large group of students and faculty. St. John's is the former site of a Catholic boarding school, and is working on reconciling that darker part of their history with their responsibility to Indian communities today. We discussed a number of ways that the university could provide more assistance to Indian students and tribal communities.

The National Congress of American Indians held its mid-year event February 11-14 in Washington D.C., which I attended. I was able to speak with several federal officials about assistance the Band needs on jurisdictional issues, and attend an event with Representative Collin Peterson, who represents Red Lake, White Earth, and the Dakota tribes in Minnesota. Congressman Peterson discussed the government shutdown and how other legislation will impact tribes.

I returned home early from D.C. so that I could attend the funeral of Chairman Norman Deschampe, of Grand Portage, who served on tribal council for more than 40 years and served as President of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe for 22 years. Chairman Deschampe was a wonderful leader and friend, and will be deeply missed by his community and those of us who knew him well. At the rescheduled TEC meeting that was held on February 19, we had a time of remembrance for Norman at the beginning of our meeting. A wonderful slide show of photos from his life was shared.

At the TEC meeting, resolutions were adopted supporting legislation from the U.S. Congress that would transfer title of MCT lands to each of the Bands which currently exercise jurisdiction over those lands. Like all of the other Bands, we have some parcels of land which are part of Mille Lacs, but the title is held by the MCT rather than the Mille Lacs Band. We also discussed the Tribal Task Force on Wild Rice, and compared the MCT's findings with the findings from the state. The Tribal Task Force of course had much more comprehensive recommendations based on science, versus the state's task force that included representatives from industry. We are meeting with the Governor on February 26 during lunch to discuss next steps.

On February 18, an historic first occurred at the Minnesota

State Capitol: Tribal Sovereignty Day. After a wonderful welcome by Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan (White Earth), several tribal leaders spoke about the need to acknowledge the past in order to move forward, a past that is very painful and steeped in injustice and even attempted genocide. State leaders then listened to a two-hour presentation by Tadd Johnson (Bois Forte) of UMD and Rebecca Crooks-Stratton, Secretary-Treasurer of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. They did a great job with the difficult challenge of boiling 300 years of history down to a two-hour presentation.

After lunch, we had a tribal panel in the afternoon to answer questions, and at the end of the day each of the tribal leaders were asked to speak a bit about our hopes for the future. My remarks were about my hopes for Bimaadiziwin for all Band members — the Good Life — which means public safety, wellness, language and culture, education, housing, and economic development. I also spoke about law enforcement and my hopes that neither Mille Lacs nor any other tribe in Minnesota ever goes through what we just went through with Mille Lacs County, when we had to function for two years without a law enforcement agreement in place, and I talked about my hope that rather than fighting, we would do more together in partnership as tribes with the state in areas such as economic development, tourism, and environmental projects.

On February 21, I held a day-long Cabinet meeting with our commissioners to discuss strategic planning for the Band. Commissioners will be scheduling meetings in each of the Districts to discuss budget matters and get other feedback from community members in the near future.

U.S. Senator Tina Smith (D-MN) stopped by to visit on Saturday, February 23. MCT President Cathy Chavers attended along with myself, Commissioner Nicole Anderson, Deputy Arlyn Sam, and other staff. We had good conversations about legislation supported by Senator Smith to assist victims of crime, and we discussed many other topics important to the Band and tribes in Minnesota.

As I write this column, February is ending with a meeting of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council in St. Paul. On February 26, we will have our rescheduled meeting with Governor Walz, and the MCT's annual Legislative Dinner will take place at our InterContinental Hotel later that evening.

Miigwech to all the Band members who met with me this past month. I hope everyone stays safe and warm as we get through what is hopefully the last month of extreme weather for this winter. Miigwech!



SNOWSTORMS AND STORIES!

The Anishinaabe tell sacred Wenabozho stories when there's snow on the ground — which hasn't been an issue this winter! The third annual Aadizooke Event at Grand Makwa Cinema in District I went forward as scheduled February 20 in spite of a raging blizzard. Students from Waadookodaading Ojibwe Language Immersion School in Lac Courte Oreilles came to share stories and compete for the title of best storyteller. For more Aadizooke news, see page 9.

"I'VE WATCHED PEOPLE DEVASTATED, COMPLETELY DEVASTATED BY OPIOID ADDICTION IN SENDING OFF THEIR CHILDREN, SENDING OFF THEIR SIBLINGS, SENDING OFF THEIR PARENTS."

— BAABIITAW BOYD



Baabiiitaw Boyd and Bobby Eagle were two of the Band members who testified at a hearing of the Minnesota House of Representatives Human Services Policy Committee at Grand Casino Mille Lacs on January 25. Left: Colin Cash, Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin, District I Representative Sandi Blake, Commissioner of Natural Resources Bradley Harrington, and District Court Judge David Christensen were among the others who testified.



"IF THIS WERE HAPPENING IN PLYMOUTH, IT WOULD BE A NATIONAL TRAGEDY. IF IT WERE HAPPENING IN GOLDEN VALLEY, IT WOULD BE A NATIONAL TRAGEDY."

BRADLEY HARRINGTON

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Bradley told his personal story of growing up on the reservation and becoming an addict and convicted felon, saying he had been raised to think it was his destiny to end up in prison as so many of his male role models had done.

Bradley also emphasized the role of culture and traditions in healing for Native Americans and asked the committee members to integrate that into long-term policies. "Let our ways eventually become part of that system of healing that needs to occur," he said. "In order to take care of our intergenerational trauma, we need an intergenerational plan."

Bradley also stressed the need to consider the effects of the crisis on children and asked Legislators to develop ways to help those who are leaving prison and reentering their communities. "Coming home is a big deal," he said. "This is where our answer lies, but also where our problems are."

MORE TESTIMONY

Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin was the first to testify. She talked about Mille Lacs County's decision in 2016 to rescind its law enforcement agreement with the Band, which effectively "handcuffed" Tribal Police for more than two years. Drug deals saw the reservation as a "police-free" zone, so heroin and other illegal drugs became more available.

Also during that time, Melanie said, grassroots groups like Sober Squad stepped into the gap to encourage addicts to get help. Sober Squad and other groups have provided transportation to and from meetings and treatment centers and organized smudge walks, "per cap patrol," community picnics, and other outreach events.

Melanie introduced Sober Squad founding member Colin Cash, who testified about the effect his group has had and its growing influence on other reservations and in cities like Brainerd and Duluth. Colin's comments led to several questions from House members, who were clearly impressed by the power of his message.

Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd talked about the "fires" the reservation has experienced — from disease long ago, to alcohol abuse more recently. "The fires killing people in this age are very powerful drugs," said Sheldon. "Children now tell stories and talk about heroin and meth. Those words seem strange coming out of such young mouths."

He also spoke about the sirens that no longer indicate a car accident or heart attack but raise fears of another overdose.

He stressed that many in the community don't participate in the drug problem, but all have been touched by it.

"There are a lot of families here and people who don't personally take or use drugs or experience overdoses," he said. "They never have and never will. But it does affect 100 percent of the community indirectly, and it should affect 100 percent of the community because a healthy community doesn't leave anybody out."

District I Representative Sandi Blake thanked the committee members for coming and credited the state for providing grant funds for the Band's medication-assisted recovery program, which uses closely monitored Suboxone prescriptions to help

people who are addicted to opioids. She spoke of the need for services in remote areas like District II and District III, and she recommended that the Suboxone program be expanded to include all tribes in the state.

Sandi said prescription pills have been a gateway to heroin and meth, and Indian people are more susceptible to addiction due to historical trauma.

Nearly everyone on the reservation has been affected by the opioid crisis. "Our addicts, they're our sons and our daughters, our cousins, our aunts and uncles," Sandi said. "We're all related. And they're good people, they're human beings."

She talked about the way addicts withdraw from their families, and the pain it causes. "It hurts the parents, the children. Our children are suffering post-traumatic stress from the behaviors they are dealing with in their homes."

Sandi also spoke of the need for education, the shortage of social workers, and the ripple effects of the opioid crisis on housing, schools, and families — including grandparents who step up to help with their grandchildren. "They're too old to be watching their grandchildren, and yet they'll have many, many grandchildren in their homes because we'll never turn our backs to our children," Sandi said. "We'll always try to help."

Bois Forte Chairwoman and Minnesota Chippewa Tribe

"IT DOES AFFECT 100 PERCENT OF THE COMMUNITY INDIRECTLY, AND IT SHOULD AFFECT 100 PERCENT OF THE COMMUNITY, BECAUSE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY DOESN'T LEAVE ANYBODY OUT."

SECRETARY-TREASURER SHELDON BOYD

President Cathy Chavers and Leech Lake Tribal Chairman Faron Jackson also spoke, as did Mille Lacs Tribal Court Judge Dave Christensen, Prairie Island Police Chief Jon Priem, and Sergeant Derrick Naumann of the Mille Lacs Tribal Police Department.

Band member and Drumkeeper Bobby Eagle, who is a Cultural Advisor at the Band-owned Four Winds Lodge Treatment Center, concluded the testimony, emphasizing again that Anishinaabe ways should be acknowledged as a key to recovery.

"Culture is the cure for what is happening in our community," said Bobby. "There is intergenerational trauma that has occurred to our people, and over the past year I have been helping at the Four Winds treatment facility to help people cope with that in an Anishinaabe way. We have had great successes utilizing our traditions and ceremonies. I just hope you will keep that in mind as you go forward in creating new policies."

Rep. Rena Moran, the chair of the committee, gave a heartfelt thank you to those who testified or came to listen and support their fellow community members. She welcomed individuals to send written comments to the committee or to come to the Capitol to testify at a future hearing on the topic.

STATE AND LOCAL NEWS BRIEFS

Anglers cited for illegal harvest: Violations of state fishing laws have been rampant this winter, according to Lieutenant Bob Gorecki of the Minnesota DNR. He said the violation rate by ice anglers is the highest he's seen in five years, and officers also saw a lot of drug use over four weekends of "saturation" enforcement. The special enforcement resulted in 146 citations and 213 warnings. Twenty percent of the write-ups dealt with keeping fish illegally. About 40 percent of the violations were for having too many fishing lines, unattended lines, or no license. Another 30 percent were for drugs or litter. Disparaging remarks about the tribal harvest have been common on the lake, Gorecki said. *Source: startribune.com.*

Grants target opioids in rural Minnesota: Two federal grants totaling more than \$1.5 million will help four northern Minnesota counties and two reservations fight the opioid crisis. A grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture is targeted to Aitkin and Itasca counties. A grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration was awarded to Aitkin, Itasca, St. Louis, and Pine counties, along with the Bois Forte Band and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Since 2000, the death rate from opioids, heroin, and psychostimulants has increased by more than 11 times in rural Minnesota compared to a five-fold increase in the seven-county Metro area. *Source: duluthnewtribune.com.*

Walz allows Line 3 appeal to continue: Governor Tim Walz announced last week that his administration would allow the Commerce Department to continue its appeal of the Public Utilities Commission's decision to allow Enbridge to build the Line 3 pipeline. The appeal began under Governor Mark Dayton and required review by Walz, who took office in January. Walz said he would not try to unilaterally stop the project because it would violate principles of checks and balances. "If you fall on the side that says, 'Well, the governor should just stop this; it's the right thing to do,' then you would be making the case that the next governor should just build one, without any environmental review, without any process involved," Walz said. *Source: minnpost.com, startribune.com.*

Legislator seeks to bring sports betting to casinos: Republican Representative Pat Garofalo has authored a bill that would allow sports betting in tribal casinos. The bill proposes language to define and legalize "sports pools" within state lines and would create a new five-member Minnesota Sports Wagering Commission to promulgate rules and regulations for the tribal casinos. The tribes have not stated their position on the bill. *Source: legalsportsreport.com.*

White Earth Band gives legal rights to manoomin: The White Earth Band of Ojibwe has passed a law granting wild rice its own enforceable legal rights, including the right to "pure water and freshwater habitat" and "a healthy climate," and the rights to "flourish, regenerate, and evolve." The law makes it illegal for any business or other entity to violate the plant's rights. A similar law has been adopted by the 1855 Treaty Authority. It is believed to be the first time in the U.S. that a plant species has been granted legal rights, but the Ponca tribe of Oklahoma has codified the rights of nature as a whole. *Source: startribune.com.*



Families affected by the power outage found food, warmth, and support at the District I Community Center.

NEIGHBORS HELP NEIGHBORS DURING POWER OUTAGE

During the evening of Saturday, February 9, a waterline break flooded the ditch in the area of Ataage and Ojibwe Drive affecting a power transformer and causing around 40 homes to lose power.

Assistant Commissioner of Administration Baabittaw Boyd was notified of the situation and contacted Tribal Emergency Management Coordinator Monte Fronk to mobilize a response to provide temporary shelter and food for displaced Band members.

The Tribal Emergency Response Committee (TERC) was partially activated with members from Administration, Emergency Management, Community Development, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, and Public Information Staff. The District I Community Center was opened as a temporary shelter providing warmth and food to those affected.

As information came in that the power was not going to be reestablished that night, the Mille Lacs Band Emergency Operations Plan came into effect. Tables and chairs were set up at the community center, and snacks and beverages were provided by Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures.

Fortunately there were enough rooms available at the Band's hotels to meet the temporary housing needs of those displaced. The Red Cross was also on standby for sleeping cots if needed.

The community center was staffed by Community Development, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, and Tribal Emergency Management until 4 a.m. Sunday morning. Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures provided shuttle rides to the community center.

Throughout this process, Government Affairs staff were posting updates through the Band media outlets on the repairs and shelter operations, and Tribal Police were going door-to-door checking on families and Elders who lived on the affected streets to make sure they were aware of the shelter and the

availability of rides and meals.

On Sunday morning at 7:30, Community Development, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, and Tribal Emergency Management arrived back at the District I Community Center to set up for breakfast.

Tribal public works staff and equipment were hard at work at the water line break all day Sunday to lower the water so the power transformer could be replaced by Mille Lacs Electric.

Families who were housed at the hotels returned to the center not only for breakfast but also for lunch as the repair work continued during the day. Just after 4 p.m. the hard efforts of the Band's Public Works Department staff and Mille Lacs Electric were able to reestablish power to those homes.

Knowing that it would take many hours for those homes to warm up properly, it was decided to provide one more night of temporary housing at Band hotels so Elders and families with young children would be safe and warm for the night. A final dinner was provided at 6 p.m. on Sunday for displaced families before the District I Community Center was demobilized.

On Monday, February 11, Commissioner of Corporate Affairs Joe Nayquonabe thanked Commissioner of Community Development Percy Benjamin and his Public Works staff for responding quickly and effectively.

Percy returned the thanks, saying the Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures team, led by Sarah Barten, went above and beyond to keep people safe, warm, and well fed.

He also thanked the Tribal Police Department, Emergency Management Coordinator Monte Fronk, and the Administration Department.

"If it wasn't for help from Monte (Fronk) and Sarah (Barten), it would've been a lot harder," Percy said.

RARICK VICTORY MEANS ANOTHER SPECIAL ELECTION

District III Voters Return to Polls in March

For the first time in 22 years, the Minnesota senator representing District III will not be named Lourey, after Republican Jason Rarick defeated Democrat Stu Lourey in a February 5 special election.

Stu Lourey sought to succeed his father Tony and grandmother Becky as District 11 senator but lost by almost 1,000 votes or 6 percentage points. Rarick received 8,127 votes to 7,171 for Lourey, 298 for John "Sparky" Birrenbach of the Legal Marijuana Now party, and 27 write-ins.

The special election was called when Stu's father Tony was appointed Commissioner of Human Services for the state.

Since Rarick had been serving in the House representing District 11B, a special election will be held March 19 for Rarick's House seat. House District 11B represents most of Pine County and eastern Kanabec County.

Since two Republicans — Nathan Nelson and Ayrhahn Johnson — filed to replace Rarick, a primary will be held March 5. Tim Burkhardt, who ran against Rarick in the House election last fall, will represent the Democrat-Farmer-Labor

(DFL) party. Rarick defeated Burkhardt in that race 9,147 to 6,166.

Polls will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. for both the March 5 primary and the March 19 special election.

In Minnesota, you can register or update your registration at your polling place on Election Day with a Minnesota driver's license or Tribal ID.

The Government Affairs Department will once again host election-day events and provide rides to the polls. Please watch Facebook for details as Election Day approaches.

For more information, see the Minnesota Secretary of State's website at <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/>.



Jason Rarick

SOVEREIGNTY DAY OFFERS HOPE FOR BETTER FUTURE

By Wendy Merrill

Legislative Affairs Director, Mille Lacs Band Member

Tribal-State Relations Training at the State Capitol in St. Paul was a historic event to see. The goals, according to the hand-out given to each person in attendance, were to educate state employees about Indian people and governments, create partnerships, build respectful relationships between the State and Tribes, and create an enduring commitment by the State to learn about tribal governments.

The mission statement read, "To provide training and education for Minnesota State employees about the American Indian tribal governments, histories, cultures, and traditions, in order to empower state employees to work effectively with American Indians and promote authentic and respectful relationships between state agencies and American Indian tribes."

Less than one year ago, I graduated from the Master of Tribal Administration and Governance program at the University of Minnesota Duluth. I was taught a great deal about tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

Sovereignty means the right to determine our own destiny and governance. After hearing the history explained again, I imagined what others might have been thinking, and I hope they see the word "sovereignty" from our perspective. This intense session — which took me two years to learn — was jammed into two hours for the House of Representatives.

It was neat to watch my professor, Tadd Johnson, teach those same values, and seeing him explain the legal, cultural,

and political contours of tribal sovereignty to members of the House was something I will always remember. The moment one of the Representatives stood up and said "boozhoo" when he asked a question meant progress and hope for the future. Standing ovations were well deserved.

This historic event for Tribal Sovereignty Day had a huge impact on me. Our 11 Native leaders from across Minnesota shared their perspective on tribal history and culture, and they were speaking their language to House legislators. This was an emotional part of the day because they mentioned historical trauma and past assimilation. This is important for state lawmakers to understand the sovereign nations within Minnesota.

Our own chief executive, Melanie Benjamin, shared her hope that all Band members find "Bimaadiziwin" — "The Good Life" — meaning public safety, wellness, language, culture, education, housing, and economic development. An important topic was the discussion about the law enforcement agreement and doing more together in Tribal-State partnership in areas such as economic development, tourism, and environmental projects.



Wendy Merrill

MINNESOTA CHIPPEWA TRIBE RELEASES RICE REPORT

Minnesota Chippewa Tribe News Release

The Tribal Wild Rice Task Force (TWRTF) released its 2018 Tribal Wild Rice Task Force Report to the governor, as outlined by the Governor's Executive Order 18-08 and Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) Resolution 107-18.

The TWRTF consisted of 15 Tribal experts and specialists appointed by their respective Minnesota Tribal Nations, as well as other contributors with expertise in their respective fields. Members of the TWRTF were appointed by Tribal leaders from 8 out of the 11 federally recognized Tribes in Minnesota. The task force and its report were approved by MCT and supported by the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council that included 10 out of the 11 Tribes. Unlike the makeup of the TWRTF, the Governor's Task Force on Wild Rice was heavy on industry representation who are biased against developing Clean Water Act-compliant regulatory recommendations; more importantly, they lacked expertise in wild rice ecology, management, harvest, restoration, or protection.

The TWRTF report is based upon tribes' extensive experience in sustainably managing this critically important cultural resource, and overcoming/mitigating the damage and degradation that has occurred since widespread agricultural and industrial development. Tribes have long-standing expertise protecting wild rice through regulatory programs, have partnered with academia in comprehensive research projects, and have shared traditional knowledge and best practices with state agencies.

Multiple lines of evidence from tribal, state, and academic research confirm the need to protect wild rice from excess sulfate pollution. MPCA's preliminary analysis of potentially affected dischargers overstates the number of municipal wastewater treatment facilities that could be subject to a sulfate limit and requirement for expensive treatment technology. The tribal analysis clearly demonstrates that the number of potentially affected dischargers is much reduced, and generally

limited to industrial dischargers in the St. Louis River and Mississippi River watersheds. Further, there are clear disparities in state permitting compliance and oversight between domestic and industrial dischargers, even though industrial dischargers release effluent with substantially higher volumes and higher sulfate concentrations.

The practices of harvesting, processing, eating, sharing, and gifting manoomin — and the language associated with these practices and ceremonies that celebrate wild rice — are central to the health of tribal communities. Despite its cultural significance, Minnesota tribes have experienced challenges in raising public awareness about impacts to community health, social cohesion, and access to healthy food as wild rice resources are being degraded and diminished.

Tribes have long advocated for cooperative monitoring and surveys of wild rice waters across the state, and establishing a coordinated management, protection and restoration program for off-reservation treaty protected wild rice waters in Minnesota. This coordination should include both MPCA and MNDNR and Minnesota tribes, as well as potentially state ricers and NGOs with a conservation mission that includes wild rice (e.g., Ducks Unlimited). It should not include the regulated community.

The tribes continue to urge the state to invest in wild rice monitoring, protection, and restoration using all available regulatory and non-regulatory approaches, and in close collaboration with the tribes. Protecting remaining stands of manoomin should be a priority; we share this obligation to future generations. Hand-harvested wild rice is a vital part of the state's tribal and local economies. Although the cultural values of wild rice are beyond economic measure, there is a strong economic case for protecting wild rice and preserving its cultural and nutritional benefits for future generations.

The TWRTF made the full report available on January 2.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

Klobuchar, Warren enter presidential race: On succeeding days in February, Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar and Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren announced their intentions to run for president in 2020. Klobuchar made her announcement on a snowy day in Minneapolis, positioning herself as a moderate pragmatist. Warren, who has been criticized for her claim to Native American ancestry, made a surprise appearance at the National Congress of American Indians in Washington. They joined Senators Kamala Harris, Cory Booker, Bernie Sanders, and Kirsten Gillibrand in a crowded field expected to become even more crowded in coming weeks. *Source: duluthnewstribune.com, startribune.com.*

Ho-Chunk proposes gaming expansion in Madison: Ho-Chunk Gaming Madison is proposing a casino expansion, a hotel, a heritage center, a conference center, restaurants, and parking garages for its 47.5-acre property on the city's southeast side. Daniel Brown, general manager, said the tribe's investment would easily reach into the tens of millions of dollars. The development would offer outdoor dining and activity areas plus an outdoor event space. A wetland would be restored, and a surrounding prairie and oak savanna would feature interpretive walking paths. *Source: startribune.com.*

Federal judge allows lawsuits against PolyMet to proceed: U.S. District Judge Joan Ericksen ruled last month that four lawsuits seeking to overturn a land exchange between PolyMet and the U.S. Forest Service could proceed. Last March, Ericksen put a stay on the lawsuits that several environmental groups filed in early 2017 because Congress was considering a bill to end all legal challenges to the exchange. That bill failed in Congress, so the lawsuits can now proceed. The environmental groups argue the land swap undervalues the 6,650 acres of federal land in the Superior National Forest that the U.S. government traded with PolyMet in exchange for a similar amount of private land scattered throughout the region. *Source: mprnews.org.*

School clears boys who taunted Native Elder: The smug face of a smirking boy went viral in January after Nick Sandmann and his Kentucky classmates taunted a Native American Elder at a march in Washington D.C. In February, the boys' school, Covington Catholic, announced that an investigation had found that the boys did nothing wrong. "Our students were placed in a situation that was at once bizarre and even threatening," Diocese of Covington Bishop Roger Foys said in a letter to parents. "Their reaction to the situation was, given the circumstances, expected and one might even say laudatory." *Source: npr.org.*

Federal judge sides with Texas over Tigua: El Paso's Tigua Native American tribe suffered a major defeat last month in their quarter-century battle with Texas over casino-style gaming when a federal judge ruled that their bingo and machine games violated state law. Courts have ruled that the Tiguas and the Alabama-Coushatta are not covered by the Indian Gaming and Regulatory Act but by a 1987 law called the Restoration Act, which granted federal recognition to the tribes and prohibits the tribes from offering gaming that isn't allowed by state law. *Source: texasmonthly.com.*

READ THE RICE REPORT AT WWW.MNCHIPPEWATRIBE.ORG/WILDRICETASKFORCE.HTML

ROBIN EAGLE

THE FRIENDLY FACE OF NAY AH SHING

Story and Photos by Amikogaabawiikwe (Adrienne Benjamin)
Mille Lacs Band Member



Robin Eagle has worked at Nay Ah Shing School as a custodian since July 2010. She originally started there through the Department of Labor (now Aanjibimaadizing) day labor crew, then was hired on as a temporary worker. She did such a wonderful job that she was hired on as a permanent employee in December 2010 and has been there ever since. Robin has had three grandkids who have all been graduates of NAS.

Anyone who has ever walked through the halls of Nay Ah Shing — student or staff — will recognize her kind smile and always affirming words. “Many kids have come and gone from the school during my time,” Robin said, beaming with joy. “My favorite part of this job is the kids. I’ve loved watching the kids grow over the years. I feel like crying when I talk about them all. They could all be my grandchildren, the way that I feel about them.” As she spoke, Robin wiped away tears of love and pride.

“I tell the kids all the time that the most important thing is staying in class, and not being absent. That’s what employers look for when they hire you. They check school records and look at attendance and tardiness. No one is going to hire someone who is absent and tardy a lot, or if they have a bad attitude about things. I’ve told quite a few kids that they need to start thinking about that more. I really wish the kids would realize how im-

portant it is to be in class.”

Whenever the kids give Robin any bit of attitude, she is known at the school for giving the “Grandma look” to the kids. “I give them the Grandma look, and most of the time, that’s all it takes for them to behave. I don’t know what the look is, but my grandkids and the Nay Ah Shing students call it the ‘Grandma look,’” she said with a laugh.

“I GIVE THEM THE GRANDMA LOOK, AND MOST OF THE TIME, THAT’S ALL IT TAKES FOR THEM TO BEHAVE.”

ROBIN EAGLE

Robin takes a different approach to the kids, knowing they have been through a lot in their young lives. “I show the kids respect. I don’t talk down to them, and they show respect to me in return. With these kids, I think they need to be shown respect first before they show it to you. They’ve had a lot of stuff happen to them in their lives.”

Listening to Robin, you can hear her genuine love and care for the kids she works with and the love she has for her job.

“These kids are our future leaders. I always tell them, ‘You’re a future leader. You need to think about that and your actions.’”

When asked what the key to success in school is for kids, she said, “They need continual reinforcement from adults. They need compliments. They need to be built up. A lot of these kids have low self-esteem, and they are shy. We need to get these kids feeling good about themselves and feeling like they can succeed.”

Robin said she never fails to be amazed by the resiliency of the youth at Nay Ah Shing, and it inspires her daily in her own life. “These kids are smart. If you put a teacher and a kid out on the toughest streets, the kid would be the one to survive. They just don’t realize their own inner strength and resilience that’s within them,” Robin explained. “No child ever really does unless they’re made to believe it. It makes me so happy when kids are succeeding in class. They need the confidence to go on and be the leaders that we need them to be in the future.”

MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH

TRADITIONAL OJIBWE CRAFTS

By Millie Benjamin

This article by the late Millie Benjamin was first published in the Mille Lacs Messenger. It is reprinted here to help preserve her teachings for the next generation.

When I was young, my parents lived at Fort Mille Lacs. It was a tourist attraction, and there was an Indian village. We lived there in wigwams. I think that’s where I learned a lot of the old crafts. In fact, I tell people I went to “Clark University.” They say, “I’ve never heard of that.” And I say, “Clark University was my mom and dad, John and Lucy Clark.”

My parents made canoes during the summer. They even made the tools they used — they did it the old way. I remember, too, how my mom would get up early in the morning when it was still damp. She’d have us start weaving mats out of bulrushes (which are a kind of plant) because they still had dew on them and were moist and easy to weave. Oh, how I hated to get up in the morning when it was cold! She’d have all of us kids in a line with her at the head and me on the tail end.

We also helped her stretch deer hides to dry and then smoked them. But I never got good at tanning a deer hide. It’s really a smelly process where you soak the hide to get the hair out. To avoid that smell, my dad sharpened one of my mom’s old butcher knives, and she would shave all the hair off right down to the skin. She’d lean the hide over a chair and hold the other end and shave that hair off.

I always watched her shave the hides, and one day she said, “I think you know how now. But don’t cut a hole in it.” So I took her knife, and I just barely touched the hide and a hole popped. That was the end of my hide tanning career. She fired me!

When I grew up, I lived with my mom when I became widowed, and later when she became widowed she lived with me. So my kids always had Gramma there to keep us on the right track. Just as she had taught me, she taught my children everything she knew. My children can make birch bark baskets. They know how to make moccasins and dance outfits. They know how to prepare basswood to make basswood dolls. They know a lot of the crafts that aren’t practiced anymore.

For instance, my daughters can make bulrush mats like I used to, which is a lost art now. I take the kids out picking bulrushes, and I’m teaching them how to cook the bulrushes. That’s the hard part. A weaver could look at a bulrush mat and figure out how it’s made — it’s just weaving in and out. But it’s the preparation of those bulrushes that is special. It’s what we must know how to do, and I’m sharing it with my kids right now.

I also take my kids out in the woods to pick nettles because I want to make a net. Nettles are plants that sting and hurt if you touch them. But after the frost, nettles lose their sting. So we go out, even without gloves, and pull nettles out by the root. We let the plant dry, and then we work it so the pulp comes out. All that’s left is the skin, which is so strong you can’t break it. I swear, if you twisted this and made a little rope, you could probably pull a semi truck!

When my mom died, people started coming to me and asking me the questions they would normally ask her. It was a little frightening, because I was scared I would never be able to fit my mom’s moccasins. But I would just think of my mom and what she’d tell them, and it’s not so frightening anymore.



Left: Chinoodin Shabaish got some extra one-on-one time with WBA middleweight champ Rob "Bravo" Brant. Above: NABF super featherweight champ Mikaela Mayer taught the kids footwork.

BAND YOUTH SPAR WITH THE PROS AT MESHAKWAD

Band members from the Niigaan Program trained with WBA middleweight champion Rob "Bravo" Brant, female fighting sensation and NABF super featherweight champion Mikaela Mayer, and top bantamweight contender Joshua "Don't Blink" Greer Jr. at the "Clinic with the Pros" at Meshakwad Community Center on February 13. The fighters were preparing to take center stage at Grand Casino Hinckley on Friday, February 15, as the Band hosted its first world championship bout in several years (see below).

On February 15, Brant, a St. Paul native, defended his title against Khasan Baysangurov. Mayer (9-0, 4 KOs) took on Yare-

li Larios, and Greer fought Giovanni Escaner. All three bouts were televised live on ESPN beginning at 8 p.m.

Brant, Mayer, and Greer ran the children through assorted boxing drills and gave motivational speeches about the hard work required to become a world-class athlete.

Rob Brant (24-1, 16 KOs) captured the WBA middleweight title last October with a unanimous decision over Ryota Murata in Las Vegas. Before turning pro in 2012, he was one of the United States' top amateurs, winning gold medals at the U.S. National Championships and National Golden Gloves Championships.

Mikaela Mayer (9-0, 4 KOs) represented the United States at the 2016 Rio Olympics and is now one of the most prominent female boxers in the world. She captured the NABF super featherweight title last October and made the second defense of that belt February 15 versus Larios. A versatile combat sports athlete, Mayer almost turned pro as an MMA fighter before signing a deal with Top Rank to focus on boxing.

The big-punching Joshua Greer Jr. (19-1-1, 11 KOs) is one of boxing's rising stars who has won his last six bouts by knockout. The Chicago native is in line for a world title opportunity in 2019.

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETIC REGULATION BRINGS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TO CASINO

Photos and Story by Bradley Roache Jr.

Mille Lacs Band Member

The Mille Lacs Band Department of Athletic Regulation and Grand Casino Hinckley hosted a world championship bout on Friday, February 15, and Band members played a variety of roles to make the night a phenomenal success.

From the Boxing Commission of the Department of Athletic Regulation, to boxing inspectors, security, and hospitality workers, Band members were part of the vision and implementation at every step in the process.

Commissioner of Corporate Affairs Joe Nayquonabe said, "Hosting a world championship broadcast on ESPN was significant for both the tribe and Grand Casino Hinckley. The event drew in nearly 1,500 spectators and had thousands of viewers tuning in on ESPN+. Our collective ability to execute these live, televised events allows us to continue to introduce our property – and the work of the Department of Athletic Regulation – to an incredibly passionate audience."

WBA middleweight champion Rob Brant successfully defended his title, beating Khasan Baysangurov in an 11th round technical knockout. Brant said he wanted his first title defense to be at Grand Casino Hinckley, calling it his "professional boxing home" after fighting their 11 times as an up-and-coming pro.

Boxing Commissioner Percy Benjamin pointed out that there were actually four world champions in the room that night: Brant, WBO welterweight champ Terance Crawford, and retired champs Andre Ward and Timothy Bradley.

The fights were promoted by Top Rank, which is owned by Bob Arum, one of the top promoters in the sport who has worked with everyone from Muhammad Ali to Floyd Mayweather.

Bob has an interesting connection to the Mille Lacs Band: Bob's son John was one of the attorneys who worked on the 1837 Treaty case. In a recent interview, attorney Marc Slonim gave John much of the credit for the Band's victory in the case.

John passed away in a climbing accident in the state of Washington in 2010, but he will always be remembered with gratitude and great respect by the Band.



Mille Lacs Band boxing commissioners, boxing inspectors, and Grand Casino staff helped bring the event to fruition.

YOUTH EMBRACE BIBOON AT MILLE LACS INDIAN MUSEUM



Heavy snow and bitter cold made winter camp at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum that much more memorable and authentic for local students.

On Thursday, February 7, Onamia kids got to travel by snowshoe around the museum grounds as they learned winter lore from staff and guests. They watched Mike Wilson skin a beaver, played traditional games with Drs. Dan and Susan Ninham, made asemaa pouches with Linda Ulrick and Paula Maday, learned about winter from Kathio Park Naturalist Erin Fallon, and practiced making cordage with Kaitlin Thompson of the Minnesota Historical Society.

The kids also got to visit the museum's collection of artifacts to see nets made of nettle fibers and learned to twist fibers into rope.

On Friday, February 8, youth from Isle and Nay Ah Shing schools enjoyed the stations and lunch at the museum.

Site Manager Travis Zimmerman was pleased with the turnout and the success of the winter camp. He was grateful to the teachers and also thanked Chris Clitso-Nayquonabe from Onamia Indian Education, Katie Raverty from Isle Indian Education, Byron Ninham of the Niigaan Program, and Rory Lieb from the museum, who helped with the plowing.



GET READY FOR 2019 TRIBAL HARVEST ON MILLE LACS

Band members can look forward to a productive netting and spearing season on Mille Lacs this spring, after the state and tribes agreed on allocations for state anglers and tribal harvesters.

There are also good signs that the walleye population is recovering after it reached its lowest levels ever recorded from 2013 to 2015.

Mille Lacs Band DNR Commissioner Bradley Harrington said, "The upward trend of the walleye population reflects the conservation efforts of both the state of Minnesota and the Ojibwe tribes with harvest rights in Mille Lacs Lake.

"While it is critical that combined harvest limits should continue to allow for the recovery of walleye, we join the state in cautious optimism about the trend in increasing spawning biomass. Within our teachings it is stated that accepting the gifts from the lake while respecting the manidoo by avoiding taking too much is the best way to honor our gifts from the creator."

The state of Minnesota and the Ojibwe bands came to a scientifically based consensus on harvestable surplus of ogaa (walleye), ginoozhe (northern pike), and asaawe (yellow perch) in Lake Mille Lacs, and the parties agree that improvements in the spawning stock are now at a point that can allow for a limited open water harvest of ogaa for state anglers.

The state and the bands agreed on a safe harvest level of 150,000 pounds of ogaa for 2019, which provides a tribal allocation of 62,200 and a state allocation of 87,800 pounds. The tribal allocation is divided among eight bands, with Mille Lacs receiving 30 percent (18,660 pounds initially) and the remaining

ogaa allocation divided among harvesters from the Fond du Lac Band and six Wisconsin bands: Bad River, Lac Courte Oreilles, Lac du Flambeau, Mole Lake, Red Cliff, and St. Croix.

The bands and state have also agreed on target population goals and overage plans.

Although the state and bands disagreed on allocations in 2018, state anglers stayed under the tribes' recommended safe-harvest allocation for ogaa in 2018, after exceeding the quota in 2016 and 2017.

Under the catch-and-release only regulation last year, walleye angler kill totaled just over 47,000 pounds, based on scientific estimates of hooking mortality — the amount of fish that die after they are caught and released.

With an improving walleye population, the Minnesota DNR will allow a limited ogaa harvest when the state angling season opens Saturday, May 11. The limited ogaa harvest will include a restrictive slot and potential mid-season closure or shift to catch and release.

Regulation options will be discussed with the Mille Lacs Fisheries Advisory Committee, a group of local businesses, fishing experts, and community leaders who help advise the agency on Mille Lacs fishing regulations and other issues.

ON THE REBOUND?

The population of ogaawag (walleyes) in the lake is primarily estimated using data from Minnesota DNR fall gill net surveys. That assessment indicated that the ogaa population was at a historic low point from 2013 to 2015, leading the bands to cancel netting for a year and the state to allow catch-and-release only.



The Mille Lacs Band's ogaa allocation for 2019 is up from recent years, providing opportunities to teach youth about our rights and traditions.

The bands and state also came up with a target goal in 2017 of 20 pounds of mature walleye per net lift — a goal that was surpassed in last fall's assessment.

The adult ogaa biomass is mostly made up of the 2013 year class, the only recent class to make it to adulthood in large numbers. Management efforts have attempted to protect those fish to maintain or increase spawning stock, and those fish are now able to spawn.

Scientists have also concluded that one of the causes of the population decline is the failure of young ogaawag to make it to adulthood, but there are signs that this is also changing for the better.

For information about tribal fishing licenses, call the Mille Lacs Band DNR at 320-532-7896.

WEWENI INAABAJI'AW ASEMAA

WINTER STORIES AND SPECIAL FEAST FILL UP GUESTS AT MUSEUM



By Li Boyd Mille Lacs Band Member

The Weweni Inaabaji' aw Asemaa! Program chose the perfect cold February night to hold a winter storytelling event complemented by an excellent meal courtesy of The Sioux Chef catering. The event fell on one of the coldest nights of the season and served as a perfect reminder of why the Anishinaabe knew biboon, winter, to be story time. It was warm and cozy inside the Mille Lacs Indian Museum, and the event was so well-attended that museum staff set up extra tables as more and more people arrived.

Mille Lacs Band member Terry Kemper opened the evening with a greeting, prayer, and pipe ceremony. He then introduced drummers from Timber Trails, reminding people that more than anything the drums are the "heartbeat of our people. They are the heartbeat of Mother Earth." Timber Trails performed a song, and event organizer Mikayla Schaaf started out by saying how thankful she was that things turn out the way they are supposed to. She had originally lined up storytellers Bill Blackwell and Alex Kmett for the event, but both had to cancel at the last minute. Fortunately, Devery Fairbanks happened to be around and willing to share some stories, and Jim Northrup III made a surprise appearance as well.

Jim Northrup III comes from an extra strong line of storytellers, and he isn't afraid to speak up. Jim's stories aren't quite traditional. Jim is a water protector, on a mission to defend the sacred, and it's inevitable that all his stories circle back to the source. Jim talked about watching loons on the water as a boy. It took some observation and a chat with his grandpa for him to realize he was watching a loon marriage ceremony. That's the kind of magic that happens on the water. Jim's grandpa also told him, "You watch. One day we're gonna buy water." It was a foreign idea, once upon a time. Water used to fall from the sky, drinkable, and flow through the creeks, clean and clear. Contamination has already changed that enough that many people purchase drinking water in stores. Jim's grandpa knew the story before it came true. Jim says that we need to pay attention to the world around us and listen to the stories and wisdom passed down to us by our grandparents. One day, we might need all those things we learned from them, through the stories they told, to live in a good way once again.

Devery Fairbanks teaches at Red Lake Nation College



but comes from White Earth Nation. He's been well-traveled throughout Minnesota all his life though and remembered going to Cash's Store on US Highway 169 just north of where Grand Casino Mille Lacs is today. In keeping with the theme of traveling between villages, Devery told the story of the brave girl who went to get medicine for her family and ended up leaving bloody tracks in the snow after losing her moccasins. In her tracks, the first ever moccasin flowers grew the following spring. These special flowers were called Lady Slippers by the state of Minnesota and declared the state flower. Devery also told Wenabozho stories, including why certain ducks have red eyes and flat backs, where red willow came from, and what happened when Wenabozho met a woodpecker.

Devery's last story was a perfect match for the event. In it, there were four brave young men who left their village to go out and find food and better things for their people. They encountered an old woman in a lodge, who gave each a bundle and told them not to open it until they were home. Each young man followed directions and made tea from the bundle they were given, but when nothing appeared to improve for their people, each young man died of a broken heart. They were buried, and the following year each had a different new gift for the people on their grave. The first had pine, so the people would always have wood; the second had white birch with chaga, for crafts and medicine; the third had flint so that the people could use it with steel to make fire whenever they needed it; and the fourth had asemaa, tobacco, so the people could ask for help and give thanks in a good way.



The story of the four brave young men was a good finish for the Weweni Inaabaji' aw Asemaa! event. The program name means Use Tobacco in a Good Way! It's run by the Department of Public Health. Staff member Mikayla Schaaf has made sure to keep the campaign highly visible by passing out hats with the program slogan on it and getting the message out in places like the Ne-la-Shing Clinic pharmacy on the prescription bags. Tobacco misuse and addiction is one of the biggest health problems in Indian Country, and this program is not afraid to take it head on.

For health bonus points, the team brought in catering from The Sioux Chef. Attendees were treated to a buffet-style feast of roast shredded buffalo, wild rice, sweet potatoes, wilted kale salad, and a sunflower seed soft-baked cookie. The chefs also had swamp tea available. It was the best meal on a paper plate in the region.

Raffle tickets given at the beginning of the event were gradually called the rest of the night, and winners walked away with birchbark frames, ledger art, and other special prizes. There was plenty of food, plenty of company, and time for a good visit on a Friday night. As Devery said following his Wenabozho stories, referring to some of the humorous details, "There will be times when your stomach's gonna growl, your neck will be bony, your wrists will be born; your nose will hurt; your butt will hurt!"

But things always look up in the end.



VALENTINE'S VISIT

On Valentine's Day, the Nay Ah Shing eighth-graders had the pleasure of going to the District I Assisted Living Unit (ALU). Activities Director Renee Bruneau arranged for students to meet the Elders who live there — as well as many of the staff. Renee and the Elders had lovely holiday bags filled with goodies and a separate Valentine's Day pen. After everyone enjoyed hot chocolate and donuts, the students introduced themselves in Ojibwe and English, and presented red satchels of asemaa to the Elders. The students also handed out home-made valentines. Chase Sam read a segment of Jim Clark's "Naawigiizis" in English. Such a pleasant time was had by all that the school plans to have the eighth-graders visit the ALU again in March.

1837 TREATY TIMELINE

Part 1: 1837-1990

1837 – As non-Natives continued to encroach on Ojibwe lands, the Mille Lacs Band signs the Treaty of 1837 ceding territory to the United States government. In return, the treaty maintains and protects the rights of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe to hunt, fish, and gather while allowing the ceded territory to be settled by non-Indians.

1855 – The Mille Lacs Band signs the Treaty of 1855 which sets aside 61,000 acres on and around the south end of Mille Lacs Lake as its reservation.

1858 – Minnesota officially becomes a state.

1972 – Leech Lake on-reservation treaty rights are affirmed.

1979-85 – Band members are cited for illegal netting, fishing without a license, carrying an uncased rifle, and other conservation violations.

1983 – U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit rules in favor of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band in the Voigt decision, affirm Ojibwe band members' right to hunt, fish, and gather in Wisconsin under the terms of the 1837 and 1842 Treaties.

September 24, 1980 – The Mille Lacs Reservation Business Committee (RBC) adopts the 29-page "Conservation Code of the Mille Lacs Reservation."

October 6, 1980 – Then-Mille Lacs Band Chairman Art Gahbow sends a letter to Minnesota Commissioner of Natural Resources Joe Alexander with the Conservation Code enclosed.

December 12, 1980 – Commissioner Alexander writes Gahbow saying he could not name representatives to serve on the conservation committee due to the state's disagreement about the extent of Band jurisdiction.

January 22, 1981 – A newly formed organization called the Mille Lacs Lake Advisory Association (MLLAA) meets with Mille Lacs Band and Minnesota Chippewa Tribe officials about the Conservation Code. Association officials indicated their opposition to "all gillnetting of gamefish and any other liberal approaches that might threaten natural resources and the local economy."

February 11, 1981 – Almost 100 people attend a special meeting of the Mille Lacs Lake Advisory Association at Carlsons Beach Resort. The April 1 issue also reports that the group has collected more than 5,000 signatures in opposition to the Conservation Code.

1981 – Art Gahbow directs Don Wedll to research how to resolve the Band's treaty rights issues.

1982 – The Band hires Al Zientz's law firm from Seattle, which appoints Marc Slonim to review legal and historical information about treaties Mille Lacs Band members had signed.

August 13, 1990 – The Mille Lacs Band and four enrolled Band members file a complaint in federal district court claiming that the state of Minnesota has adopted and enforced natural resource laws and regulations that violate hunting, fishing, and gathering rights guaranteed by the Treaty of 1837. The Band tries to settle the issue out of court for the next two-plus years.



Among those who traveled to Washington, D.C. for the Supreme Court hearing in 1998 were Donald Graves, Erik Gahbow, Don Wedll, and Joel Shaugobay.

VERDICT CAME AS A SURPRISE — TO SOME, THAT IS

The verdict in the 1837 Treaty case, which was announced on March 24, 1999, confirmed what Band members had long believed: that the Ojibwe had a right to hunt, fish, and gather throughout the territory ceded to the U.S. government in the treaty.

But at the time, it was far from a sure thing — and the 5-4 decision was a victory by the narrowest of margins.

In a recent interview with the Mille Lacs Band's DNR archives, lead attorney Marc Slonim reflected on the hearing before the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., on December 2, 1998, and on the decision that came several months later.

For Marc, the Court's decision to hear the case was not encouraging. After all, two federal courts (the 7th circuit in the Wisconsin case in the 1980s, and the 8th circuit in the Minnesota case in the 1990s) had affirmed those rights, and the Supreme Court normally only takes cases that it questions.

It takes four justices to agree to hear a case, and they usually do so because they see something wrong with the decision. "That was probably the worst day of my professional career," Marc said. "We had won in the Eighth Circuit, so that wasn't a very good sign."

The Supreme Court hearing gave many on the Band's side cause for concern, especially the justices' aggressive examination of the U.S. Attorney who argued with Marc on behalf of the bands.

After the hearing, the opponents of the bands gathered on the front steps of the Supreme Court building. "They were all high fiving each other," said Marc. "They were sure that they had won. They were all smiles, couldn't be happier, and we were a little more serious. I didn't really know how it would come out. I couldn't really count five votes, which is what we needed."

Indian law experts predicted a loss for the bands but argued how bad it would be — 6-3, 7-2, or 8-1.

But the Ojibwe had a quiet confidence. "All the Ojibwe people who were at the argument said, 'We're gonna win this case,'" Marc recalled, choking up at the memory. "They knew. I don't know how they knew, but they knew."

On March 24, Marc was told about the decision by a Minnesota Public Radio reporter who called him at home. It was early morning in Seattle, and Marc was just getting up.

The reporter asked for a comment on the decision, and Marc had to ask her what the decision was. She told him the bands had won.

"I was just relieved," Marc said. "It had been such a long fight, and there was so much at stake. Just relief." Twenty years later, the memory brought back the same emotions.



Attorney Marc Slonim spoke with reporters after the Supreme Court hearing on December 2, 1998.

Don Wedll was Mille Lacs Band DNR Commissioner during the case, and he recently shared some of his memories of the long process that led to the filing of the case in 1990.

In 1982, Chairman Art Gahbow directed Don to review the treaties and determine how best to pursue recognition of the Band's treaty rights.

This was before the Band opened its two casinos, so the money to pay the attorneys needed to come from other sources of revenue.

That was no easy task, but by 1990 the money was there, and the decision was made to pursue the case.

It also took a lot of lobbying to convince the U.S. to side with the Band in the case, Don said.

When news of the verdict came in, Don remembers being in Marge's office. Bonita Sam (now White) was at the front desk and called back to Marge, saying there was someone from the Department of Justice on the phone saying the Band had won the case.

In typical low-key fashion, Marge simply told Bonita to announce it on the intercom.

A press conference was put together, and Band members, allies, and even some former opponents gathered in front of the government center to celebrate the victory.

For Don, the significance of the decision was clear: "Your grandparents said you had these rights, and everybody discounted that, but this proves that they were right."

For more on the 1837 Treaty case and for coverage of the 20th anniversary celebration, see the April issue of Ojibwe Inaajimowin.

For a schedule of anniversary events, see page 12.

Supreme Court Upholds Mille Lacs Band's Treaty Rights!!



Chief Executive Marge Anderson and Secretary/Treasurer Herb Weyaus spoke to the media, Elders and others at a news conference shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its decision.

Photos by Patty Dunn

Decision Marks the End of Historic Legal Battle

The Mille Lacs Band's nine-year legal fight to have its treaty rights recognized ended on March 24, 1999, when the United States Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Mille Lacs Band and seven other Chippewa bands. The decision upholds the Treaty of 1837, which grants the bands the right to hunt, fish and gather on land in east-central Minnesota.

"Today, the United States kept a promise — a promise that our rights are not just words on paper," Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive Marge Anderson said at a news conference shortly after the decision was handed down.

Band Secretary/Treasurer Herb Weyaus, who spoke at the news conference, said, "We are thankful that everyone in the country now knows that our rights are real."

Marge, Herb and Band Commissioner of Natural Resources Don Wedll repeated the Band's pledge to respect its neighbors and protect natural resources for the good of all people.

"We understand that we are all part of the sacred hoop of the world," Herb said, "and we are ready to work with our Band members and our non-Indian neighbors to protect the natural environment."

"Mii gwetch to the members of the Mille Lacs Band, whose belief in our cause never faltered," Marge said. She also expressed thanks to the Band's ancestors and Elders who struggled to preserve the Ojibwe culture and traditions, the Waabanong runners who ran from the Midwest to Washington, D.C., where the Supreme Court heard the treaty rights case, and to the Great Spirit who guided the Band during its long struggle.

Plaintiffs continued from page 1

Although she doesn't think much these days about her role in the treaty case, she's proud that she was part of it. "I'm just glad that the Band got what they wanted out of the situation," she said.

According to the Band's attorney, Marc Slonim, the individual plaintiffs were selected because they had been cited for violating Minnesota natural resources laws while engaged in traditional, treaty-protected harvesting activities.

"We were looking for Band members who had been harmed by the State's enforcement of its natural resources law," said Marc.

The other plaintiffs — Arthur Gahbow, Joseph Dunkley, and Walter Sutton — have passed on, but their names will forever be associated with the case and the Band's victory.

According to long-time Band employee Don Wedll, Chief Executive Art Gahbow had been cited for spearing a sucker. The fish and spear were confiscated, and the commissioner of the Minnesota DNR, Joe Alexander, had the fish and spear head mounted and gave it to Art as a gift.

Joseph Dunkley was cited for fishing with multiple lines, something he said was a common practice in the Aazhoomog community. He was an avid hunter and fisherman who testified in the 1837 Treaty case.

They were only a few of the many Band members whose rights were violated by the state over the decades.

Another member, Herman Kegg, testified during the trial that he had served 60 days in jail for violating state regulations.

They didn't do it as a protest or in preparation for a court case, but simply to practice and preserve traditions that had been passed down for generations.

That holds true for Carleen, whose simple act of helping a friend landed her in the history books — and cost her a sack and a half of rice.



Joseph Dunkley

1837 TREATY TIMELINE

Part 2: 1990-1999

November 1990 — In response to the Band's complaint regarding treaty rights, the Minnesota DNR formally denies the claims in federal district court.

April 1991 — The Mille Lacs County Board of Commissioners votes 3-2 in favor of hiring an attorney, with the intention that the county would intervene as defendants in the Band's lawsuit against the state.

November 1991 — Mille Lacs County and eight other counties intervene in the treaty lawsuit.

January-February 1992 — Then-U.S. District Court Judge Diana Murphy overturns the ruling that allowed the nine counties to intervene in the treaty lawsuit. The counties appeal this decision.

April 1992 — The Save Lake Mille Lacs Association (SLMLA) forms to oppose a negotiated settlement between the Band and the state of Minnesota.

April 15, 1992 — The Hunting and Angling Club leads a mass rally at the Minnesota Capitol in opposition to Indian treaty fishing.

Summer 1992 — Local landowners backed by the Hunting and Angling Club have their motions to intervene in the treaty case denied.

October 28, 1992 — The Band and the Minnesota DNR reach a tentative settlement that allows for limited subsistence spearing and netting and does not allow commercial use of game fish, big game, and timber. The agreement needs State and Band approvals prior to a final agreement.

February 23, 1993 — Mille Lacs County commissioners vote 4-1 to urge the Legislature to oppose the proposed treaty settlement.

March 1993 — Mille Lacs Band members vote 200 to 139 to approve the proposed treaty settlement.

April 1993 — The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals rules that nine counties and six landowners are allowed to intervene in the Band's lawsuit against the state.

May 3, 1993 — The Minnesota House of Representatives rejects the treaty settlement on a 70-64 vote. (The Minnesota Senate passed the agreement on a 40-25 vote on April 30, 1993.)

October 1993 — The U.S. Justice Department joins the Mille Lacs Band's treaty lawsuit as a plaintiff against the state of Minnesota. The SLMLA is denied their intervention motion.

August 24, 1994 — U.S. District Court Judge Diana Murphy affirms the rights of the Mille Lacs Band and the other Indian tribes that had joined the lawsuit as guaranteed by the Treaty of 1837.

August 26, 1997 — A three-judge panel of the Eighth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals upholds the lower court's decisions.

November 1997 — The Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals denies a request to reconsider the ruling of the three-judge panel. The case is then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

December 2, 1998 — The U.S. Supreme Court hears arguments in the 1837 Treaty case.

March 24, 1999 — The United States reaffirms Mille Lacs Band members' hunting and fishing rights, as outlined in the Treaty of 1837.

CLAYTON BENJAMIN

DAD DOUBLES AS BASKETBALL COACH



By Amikogaabawiike (Adrienne Benjamin)

Mille Lacs Band Member

"No one else was doing it," Clayton Benjamin said as he corralled basketballs on a Saturday morning in the Onamia Elementary gym with a group of little girls running wild.

When his older daughter Aubrey was in 4th grade, Mr. Naslund (a former teacher at Onamia) asked Clayton to help coach her basketball team. At that time, there were coaches for each elementary grade, but the next year Clayton found himself the lone coach. He coached those girls all the way through to 6th grade. Now his daughter Danica is in 3rd grade, so Clayton dusted off his playbook to provide basketball fundamentals for Danica and her friends.

This time, though, he isn't doing it alone; he has help from his other daughter, Roxy, who is in 10th grade and a varsity starter at Onamia. "I like hanging out with my dad and teaching the girls skills, although I don't like waking up early on the weekends," Roxy laughed (and her dad agreed).

"When they finally understand something, they get so excited, and that makes it all worth it," Roxy added.

Clayton and Roxy laugh as they think about the fun times they have had over the years. "Still to this day, all of us girls laugh about my dad running this play called 'Kiwi,'" Roxy remembered. "It was so funny. I don't know why the plays always turn into food with these girls, but they always do."



Clayton laughed. "I ran two plays called 'Hand' and 'Fist,' and somehow by the end of the season we were running 'Ham' and 'Fish' and there's even another one called 'Pineapple'."

When asked what the best part of Saturday basketball is, Danica Benjamin said, "I like hanging out on Saturday mornings with my friends. We play one-on-one, chicken, and another game called 'Knock the Ball Out.'"

Taliya Hansen echoed Danica's excitement about basketball Saturdays and said, "I like learning how to dribble, doing layups, and passing."

"I like watching and helping the little girls," said Roxy. "It reminds me of myself when I was young. Having the practice and experience playing in elementary really made a difference as I got older to know what I'm doing, and what is coming ahead. The kids that I played with from elementary, we have a special bond on the court. It really made us better, and we learned how to play together as a team."

Coach Benjamin believes in the importance of starting athletics from a young age, and he said it makes a difference in the lives of the kids he coaches.

The 3rd grade Onamia Panthers will be looking to play in tournaments over the summer and are possibly looking into hosting a tournament here as well. For now, they are enjoying their Saturday morning basketball practices with Coach Benjamin and Junior Coach Roxy.

TREATY OF 1837
20TH YEAR TREATY RIGHTS CELEBRATION
 MARCH 24, 1999 - MARCH 24, 2019

At Grand Casino Mille Lacs Event Center

Wednesday, March 20th - Bi-nandagikendaasog Abinoojiinyidog - Come and Learn Youth Day - 10:00AM-3:00PM with Lunch Provided from 12:00PM-1:00PM
Activities to Include:
 • Making spearing decoys and duck boxes
 • A Medicinal Salve Preparation Demonstration
 • Moccasin Game • Fishing Game • Much More

Thursday, March 21st - Wenji-bimaadiziyaang Anishinaabewiyaang - Where We Get Life As Anishinaabe Exhibition Day - 10:00AM-3:00PM with Fish Fry Provided from 11:00AM-1:00PM
Free T-shirts To All Who Attend! Limit One Per Person
Presenters to Include:
 • Kekek Jason Stark • Jason Schlender • Jonathon Houle • Mille Lacs Indian Museum

Friday, March 22nd - Apii Waa-Miigiweng - Giveaway Feast Day - 11:00AM-5:00PM
 • Vendors, Feast, and Separate Youth and Adult Raffles Throughout the Afternoon

For More Information, call the Department of Natural Resources at 320-532-7439.

GIKENDANDAA I'IW OJIBWEMOWIN — LEARN THE OJIBWE LANGUAGE

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

Prepared by Memengwaakwe Mille Lacs Band Member

ZHEMAAGIWEBINIGANAG

Mewinza ingiw minidmooyenyag iko giiwenh gegabe-biboon, gaawiin gegoo izhichigesiiwag. Miish ingiw zhemagiwebiniganag izhinikaazowag ingiw ginebigoo-mazinikozowag, ni-wiwin. Gaawiin-sh giiwenh gaye anishaa awiia odayaawaasiin. Awiiya eta go obawaanaaganid, mii ezhi-ayaawaad. Miish i'iw gegabe-biboon ezhichigewaad ingiw mindimooyenyag; oonh, ikwewag igo, awegwen igo, zhemagiwebinigewaad, ataadiwaad igo dibishkoo.

Miish ingiw zhemagiwebiniganag, mii go ginebigoo ezhi-naagoziwaad. Ingii-wiidookawaag aabiding, ingii-kanawaa-bamaag. Miish gaa-izhi-achiged bezhig a'aw mindimooyenhi bagiiwayaan, gaa-izhi-maajitaayaan gaye niin — wegogogwen niin gaa achigewaanen — maajitaayaan azhigwa, apaginagwaa ingiw ginebigoo. Mii niizh gaa-izhi-aazhigijisewaad. Miinawaa niizh gii-animikosewag. Miish niizhing gaa-izhi-apaginagwaa. Mii akina gaa-izhi-aazhigijisewaad, gaa-izhi-niiwenagwaa. Niswi gaye aazhigijisewaad, mii i'iw nising ayaang, miinawaa animikosewaaad, mii go gaye dibishkoo, mii niizho gabenaaged.

Miish i'iw gaa-ikidowaad iko mindimooyenyag, gaawiin giiwenh awiia giiwenh odayaawaasiin iniw, miinawaa asemaan asaawaad azhigwaa wii-ataadiwaad. Giishpin

giiwenh anishaa awiia izhichiged i'iw, nizhigon, maagizhaa gaye nisogon, maagizhaa gaye geginwenzh iko gii-ataadiwag, mii giiwenh ani-nibaad, mii eta ezhinang ginebigoon. Miish iidog i'iw, gaawiin ginwenzh awiia odayaawaasiin miinawaa gaawiin awiia odayaawaasiin, mii go genapii ginebigoon ezhi-waabamaad.

THE SNAKE GAME DICE

Long ago the women didn't have anything to do all winter long. Four snake game dice called zhemagiwebiniganag are carved. No one should have any without a reason. Only someone who dreams of them can have them. That's what the old women did throughout the winter; oh, the ladies, whoever, played the snake game, just like they were gambling.

Those dice look like snakes. I was helping them once and watched them. One old lady bet a piece of cloth, so I too started in — I don't know what I must've bet — I started in and cast those two snakes. Two of them turned belly-side up. And two turned belly-side down. So I cast them two more times. All of them turned belly-side up so I beat everyone. If three turned belly-side up, the player get three turns and if they turn belly side down, then it counts as double.

The old ladies would say no one should play with them for very long, and they put out tobacco when they wanted to play. If anyone did this without reason, gambled for two or three days longer, then when she went to sleep she would only dream of snakes. No one should play with them for very long and no one should just play with them for fun, or pretty soon she'll just see snakes.

WORD FIND AND MATCHING

Find these words in the Ojibwe passage on the left and try to determine their meaning by looking at the translation. Match the Ojibwe word in the left column with the English in the right, or look up their meaning at <https://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu>.

<i>Miinawaa</i>	<i>three days</i>
<i>Anishaa</i>	<i>two days</i>
<i>Niizhigon</i>	<i>for fun, just kidding</i>
<i>Nisogon</i>	<i>he/she places a bet</i>
<i>Mewinza</i>	<i>again, also</i>
<i>Akina, gakina</i>	<i>a long time ago</i>
<i>Achige</i>	<i>all, every</i>
<i>Gabenaage</i>	<i>snake, singular</i>
<i>Ginebig</i>	<i>once, one time</i>
<i>Ginebigoo</i>	<i>he/she wins</i>
<i>Aabiding</i>	<i>snakes, plural</i>

GRAMMAR

"Ingii-wiidookawaag" translates as "I helped them." The "In" prefix means "I." "Gii" means it happened in the past. The root verb is "wiidookaw" — to help him or her. The "aag" suffix means first person (I) to third person plural (them).

"Gaa-izhi-majitaayaan gaye niin" translates as "And then I started in too." Gaa-izhi — and then; Maajitaa — he/she starts; Nimaajitaa — I start an activity. Gaye niin — I (or me) too; "-yaan" is a first person b-form suffix.

WHAT IS CIRCLE OF HEALTH?

Health care can be difficult to understand and to navigate, and the Mille Lacs Band's Circle of Health team knows that. Beginning this month, Circle of Health will begin a series of articles to help take the confusion out of health care so that you may be empowered to take control of your own health care.

Circle of Health is a Mille Lacs Band program whose mission is to promote physical and mental well-being in all of our communities, by assisting Mille Lacs Band members to acquire health coverage and eliminate barriers to health care access.

The program pays for deductibles, copays, and insurance premiums for Mille Lacs Band members and eligible first descendants. All Band members are entitled to Circle of Health benefits regardless of income or where they live, but it is important to understand that Circle of Health is not health insurance. To be eligible for benefits there must be a Mille Lacs Band member on the primary policy. The program pays for single or family medical and dental premiums, one premium per household, and Band Members must accept and be willing to apply for medical and dental coverage that is available to them.

Circle of Health benefit coordinators are available to assist Band members in understanding and applying for applicable insurance policies and can help navigate you through the process of enrolling in health plans.

Intake specialists process the documents that you send in when you enroll in Circle of Health and do your yearly update. The purpose of these updates is to maintain updated information from Band members and to determine who is eligible on their policy. Initial enrollments require several accompanying documents. Your annual update should be submitted along with your tribal identification card and health insurance cards prior to any claims being paid through Circle of Health. A consent form is included in your update packet; this allows Circle of Health

staff to directly deal with providers, employers, and insurance companies on your behalf.

Claims processors process payments for premiums and reimbursements.

TO ENSURE TIMELY REIMBURSEMENTS

There are a few things that you can do to help this process to ensure timely reimbursements.

- It is important that when you send in documents for reimbursement, medical bills must always be accompanied by an explanation of benefits, which is mailed out by your insurance company.
- If you are seeking reimbursement for a copay, a receipt is required.
- Reimbursement for prescription copays requires the receipt from your prescription bag as well as the cash register receipt.
- Provider payments and medical bills may be submitted for payment up to six months from the date of service, so it is very important that you send any bills you receive as soon as possible.

You can streamline this process by ensuring that you present your Circle of Health card at patient registration and when picking up prescriptions, as well as listing Circle of Health as your payer of last resort.

Ultimately, the more you know about your health care and how to get the greatest benefits from your coverage, the better you will be able to advocate for your needs. Becoming a better consumer of health care will also help to sustain the Circle of Health program.

Contact Circle of Health in District I at Ne-la-Shing Clinic, 800-491-6106, or in District III at the Hinckley Corporate Building, 320-336-0224. Staff make regular visits to all districts and the urban area.

URBAN AREA CLASSES

The Mille Lacs Band Urban Office is sponsoring quilting and CPR classes in March. Class size is limited, so call 612-872-1424 to reserve a spot.

On March 2 and 3 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., join Charlene "Shot" Shingobe for quilting.

On March 9 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monte Fronk will provide CPR training.

JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT

SURVIVORS RETREAT

The Family Violence Prevention Program is hosting a retreat for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Join us for a day of honoring your journey and healing your soul.

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2019
9AM - 5PM

OPTIONAL OVERNIGHT STAY ON FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2019

ANISHINAABE IZHITWAAWIN OJIBWE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CENTER
7201 HWY 61 RUTLEDGE MN

Register at:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/survivors-retreat-tickets-56590324183>
or by calling
Kala Roberts @ 320-384-4613

ROUND DANCE IN THE SWAMP

'IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO HEAL A COMMUNITY'



Vito Buckanaga, third from left, organized the round dance to help his community heal from tragedy and celebrate life.

By Brett Larson Inaajimowin Staff Writer



Aaron Buckanaga — better known as 'Vito' — remembers the last time he saw the East Lake Community Center packed for a social event. He was seven years old, and there was a state drum and dance competition when he sang with a drum group called Yellow Feather.

Fourteen years later, on Friday, February 1, 400 people crowded the center for the first-ever Round Dance in the Swamp, and Vito couldn't have been happier — or more surprised.

"I have a lot of time to think, especially in the winter, and one of the things I'm always thinking about is our youth, and our way of life," said Vito.

The youth in East Lake have struggled, and Vito feels like the community needs to step up and help them — as it helped Vito and his brothers and sisters.

That kind of healthy community environment "trickles down" to the youth, Vito said.

"We didn't come from the best household. For a while there I was on my own, and the community was always there. I can see the difference from then until now. That connection has dwindled."

Vito is thankful for the time he spent with Elders at drum ceremonies, powwows, and other occasions. "Helping Vince

"MY MAIN DRIVE IS TO BRING BACK THAT OLD WAY OF THINKING, WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A COMMUNITY."

(Merrill) and Amik (Smallwood), Melvin Eagle, Skip Churchill when I was in my teenage years, that's who I was with all the time," he recalled. "Just sitting with them guys, you learn so much — all the stories, all the knowledge they carry. A lot of it has stuck with me, and it influences my decision making and my way of thinking."

"What I wanted to do — and a lot of people were willing to help — was to give people a way to clear their minds from whatever they are going through, to have fun, to eat, to laugh, to hear the singing, and get out there and dance. Singing and dancing are good for our spirits. They help us get happier in our time of hardship."

He also wanted to raise some money for his sister Amber to attend fashion week in New York.

Both goals were met — big time — as a huge crowd came out to sing, dance, eat, and take it all in.

Vito knows a lot of singers from his travels with Red Willow — East Lake's resident drum group. Many of his friends came from long distances, expecting nothing in return. Vito raised enough to compensate them with a little gas money, but most would've come anyway.

Round dances, where singers come with hand drums to share their favorite songs, originated in Cree country, but they're becoming more popular among the Ojibwe, especially during the winter months. Some will say it helps to remember the people who have gone on and to connect with them — to help with grieving, and to celebrate the lives of those who have passed.

As Vito thought it over during those long winter nights, it made sense to bring a round dance to "the swamp" to meet a need in the community.

"It takes a community to heal a community," Vito said. "My main drive is to bring back that old way of thinking, what it means to be a community. I always say we as Anishinaabe have been gifted so many beautiful things, we need to grasp what we have. We can be there for each other, help each other, count on each other. We need to be a people again."



Top left: Morningstar GoodSky signed in over 400 people. Top right: Dave Northbird Sr. and Mike Sullivan served as masters of ceremonies. Bottom: Pete Gahbow, Tom Benjamin, and Gabe Gahbow brought their years of experience along with their hand drums, and Duck White had lots of women following him on the dance floor.

HOUSING BOARD MEETS MEMBERS WHERE THEY LIVE

By Brett Larson Inaajimowin Staff Writer

The mission of the Mille Lacs Band's Housing Department is to provide affordable, attractive, safe, and comfortable homes to Mille Lacs Band members.

Housing Director Daniel Boyd is responsible for the daily administration of housing programs and services to Band members. Dan reports directly to Commissioner of Community Development Percy Benjamin.

One of Dan's jobs is to enforce policies — and there are a lot of Housing Department policies, including an elder policy, disabled housing policy, transitional housing policy, rental admission policy, rental occupancy policy, and drug policy.

In a small community where everybody knows everybody and many are related, it's important to have an enforcer who plays by the rules. Otherwise, there may be a perception that someone is playing favorites.

"You have to go by the book," said Dan. "That's what the policies are there for."

Dan accepts that he may be perceived as the "bad guy" at times, and he knows that when Band members are not satisfied with his decision, there's also a policy that protects them: the grievance policy.

The grievance policy relies on a group of Band members who ensure that the policies are enforced with fairness, but also with sensitivity to extenuating circumstances.

HOUSING BOARD

The current Housing Board is composed mostly of Elders (or close to it): District III member Bonnie Matrious, District I member Pam Eagle, and at-large members Reine Garbow, Herb Weyaus, and Janice Taylor. There are currently two open positions, one at large, and one representing District II.

Board members are nominated by the Chief Executive and the four members of Band Assembly: the Secretary-Treasurer and three District Representatives.

The board meets two times per month in rotating locations around the districts, making the board easily accessible to Band members who may not be able to travel 100 miles or more in a day.

Meetings are open to the public.

At a meeting in District III in February, the Housing Board considered several complex situations.

- One Band member faced eviction for a series of police calls to their residence.
- Another had been denied a spot on the waiting list due to their criminal background.
- A third was going through a divorce and wanted to have payments temporarily deferred on a home loan.

Each case was handled with patience but also directness. They weren't all resolved, but Band members still have options if the Housing Board rejects their claim.

In some cases, the Commissioner can overturn a decision



The Mille Lacs Band Housing Board.

by the Housing Director or Housing Board, and as a last resort, a dispute can be resolved in Tribal Court.

MAKING CHANGES

Dan and Percy have instituted several changes since Dan became Housing Director in 2017.

One change was to give the Housing Board a more central role. Previously, the Board was consulted after the Commissioner reviewed a decision by the Housing Director. That put a lot of responsibility on the Commissioner and didn't give the Board as much of an active role.

Now, Band members who are dissatisfied with one of Dan's decisions can go right to the board, which is often able to resolve the situation without bringing in the Commissioner.

Previously the waiting lists were very long because no pre-approval or regular updates were required. Many on the list no longer qualified or had found other housing.

Applications were often full of missing information, and if someone was at the top of the list but their application wasn't complete, it might take a long time to get them into a home.

As a result, there was a perception of a housing shortage that wasn't accurate. "People would look at the list and say, 'We need more homes,'" said Dan. "But actually we're overstocked today."

Now, individuals need to complete the application before they can get on the waiting list, and they need to update their application every six months or they will be removed from the list.

Having an up-to-date waiting list means the process of getting Band members into homes is much smoother, so people move up the list much faster.

Next on the agenda, in response to a directive from Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin, is a new transitional housing program for Band members in recovery — a "zero tolerance" neighborhood where substance abuse is not allowed.

The Department is also working on updating the rent-to-own policy in response to another directive from the Chief Executive.

A PLACE TO CALL YOUR OWN!

HOMEOWNERSHIP IS ACHIEVABLE through several avenues; one that is underutilized is the HUD Section 184 Home Loan Program. Mille Lacs Band members are fortunate to have Woodlands National Bank provide this unique opportunity for financing! Benefits of this program include:

- Low down payment (1.75%-2.25%)
- No private mortgage insurance (PMI) required
- Payments are made directly to Woodlands National Bank offices, and loans are not sold
- Manufactured homes are eligible for financing
- Construction loans are written at the same low down payment
- Down payment and closing cost assistance is available via GRANTS
- Non-traditional credit can be used for approvals

When you find or wish to build your dream house, either on or off-reservation, don't pass up the opportunity! Explore all of your options, especially by contacting Woodlands National Bank Mortgage Office at 320-532-4142 or visiting www.woodlandsnationalbank.com to fill out your application today! Woodlands National Bank will assist you to build or create credit to assist you in obtaining your financing.

Grants through the Federal Home Loan Bank Native American Homeownership Initiative (NAHI) fund allow up to \$15,000 in down payment assistance for 2019.

If your home site is located on tribal property, you MUST have an approved land lease acceptable to HUD on file with Woodlands National Bank.

Homeownership benefits begin the day you sign on the dotted line and accept your keys! Building equity for your future allows for endless possibilities from that new kitchen remodel to landscaping work and additions! The legacy you build in your home can be passed on through future generations!

Woodlands National Bank services Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota. When you locate your perfect location, if it is on Mille Lacs Band owned property, you will need to obtain a land lease. Land leases are available through application to the Department of Natural Resources – Real Estate Department and are approved by the Band Assembly.

The Band owns property in fee simple and trust status, depending on which location you choose determines more specific time frames for final closing. For leasing questions and available lease sites, contact the Real Estate Department at 320-532-7897.

KNOW YOUR GOVERNMENT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Housing is one of four divisions of the Department of Community Development, which is supervised by Commissioner Percy Benjamin. The Community Development department strives to provide development and improvement services that promote safety, security, and cultural sensitivity while building communities. In addition to housing, the Community Development Department is in charge of construction projects, roads, and infrastructure, including water and sewer. The Commissioner of Community Development is appointed by the Chief Executive and ratified by the Band Assembly.

If you have heating, water, sewer, or other home-related maintenance problems, call the Housing Department at the following numbers:

For after hours emergency service, call 1-866-822-8538, Push 1 for District I, 2 for District II, or 3 for District III.

Or call one of these direct numbers:

District I or IIa: 320-630-2498; District II: 320-630-2492; District III: 320-630-2497.

You can also call Percy Benjamin at 320-630-2496 or Dan Boyd at 320-630-2620.

HOT COTTON AND HISSING IRONS — REMEMBERING NONI

By Jessi Souza Mille Lacs Band Member

Some of my earliest memories are of my mom getting her sewing things together, Singer sewing machine tucked up under one arm, and her “good” scissors in her sewing basket under the other. She’d head over to Grandma’s house about 100 yards to the north. My family lived in four small HUD homes on a 40-acre plot of land east of Hinckley. There was a deeply worn path between our houses that we would follow many times each day. It was always a good day to smoke cigarettes and gossip over coffee. Or throw a quilt together.

My grandma would be ready for us and have her huge iron set up on her creaky, ancient ironing board. Music of some kind, usually old country or an old powwow record (Buffy Saint Marie was in heavy rotation), would play on her record player or radio and was often punctuated by the sharp hiss of her iron. The place was filled with the wonderful aroma of ironed cotton. It’s a distinctive smell that brings me instant relaxation. A large part of my sewing today is done to think about my mom and grandma as I make quilts, and to be lulled by the smell of freshly ironed cotton.

“I LOVE THE LOOK OF PRIDE IN HER EYES AS SHE STANDS NEXT TO HER QUILTS, LOOKING BACK AT ME FROM FADED PHOTOS IN OUR FAMILY ALBUMS.”

Mom and Noni would plan together, heads bent over a piece of scrap paper or the back of a bill envelope, trying to figure out how big the quilt pattern squares should be to make sure it was the size needed. There weren’t any set colors; they both worked off patterns in their heads. Plans depended more on what fabric they had on hand than elaborate design. Simple as that. Back then you didn’t go to Joanne’s for fabric at \$16 a yard.

My Noni’s favorite type of quilt to make was a scrap quilt, sewn from the leftover scraps saved over decades. She had a

box with old work shirts, outgrown kids’ dresses, and old coats. No strip was too small, no chunk too oddly shaped for her not to piece together into a crazy menagerie of warm, heavy goodness. She liked to call these “Tom T. Hall” quilts, as she felt the country artist of that name wrote songs that had no discernible pattern or meaning. She loved how warm they were and how they made use of every bit of something. She was not a woman to waste anything.

Once they figured the design out, it was up to me or my sister to iron the scraps of fabric into a neat stack that we would then pass to Mom to cut into pieces and stack again near the sewing machines. Noni would be sewing at 100 mph, and then my sister would cut off the long line of sewn pieces, cut them apart, bring them over to me for ironing, and so on and so forth.

Before too long, we were spreading beautiful quilt blocks over her floor, so she and mom could have a cigarette break and look at it spread out, commenting on how it would look once finished while sipping yet another cup of steaming, black coffee. It was incredibly comforting as a kid, watching them talk and smoke as I danced around the blocks on her floor waiting on lunch to be done, with nothing to worry about but my belly.

The only time Noni would ask to have her picture taken was when she finished a quilt. She liked to hang it on the clothes line or the side of her house and proudly pose with it. Once that was over, it was usually neatly folded and given away to someone in the family. Oftentimes, she and mom would crank out a few block quilts to give to the drum group that Grandma sat on. She was not active with the group except in providing blankets for dances when needed. She enjoyed going to dances down at the village center at Lake Lena and was always proud to trade quilts for a dance.

Noni would sit and scope out the night, nodding to her friends around the drum, each woman cannily eyeing each other’s quilt designs and colors and perhaps planning then who to ask for a dance, in the hopes of snagging the quilts they liked in the return dance. Nothing escaped her notice.

On the ride home, she would sit with her new blankets on her



Jessi Souza and her grandma, Cecelia Dunkley.

lap, examining each for quality and durability, sometimes admiring the extra steps someone took to make it durable, sometimes clucking her tongue at shortcuts in the process. Her quilts were sought after, and for good reason. She made things to last and took her time.

I love the look of pride in her eyes as she stands next to her quilts, looking back at me from faded photos in our family albums. She was confident in her abilities and knew her own mind. If she liked something, she liked it, and did not care what others thought. That impressed me greatly as a kid. She was quiet in life but loved bright colors in her fabric medium.

I’ll never forget working on my very first quilt all on my own. I was 17 and wanted to make a crazy scrap quilt like hers. I remember sewing and sewing in the summer heat and bringing it over to show her when it was done. She sat looking at it for the longest time, up close, spread over her table with her glasses pulled down on her nose so she could see the stitching. After a few minutes she declared it a “Job well done, Weezy” and promptly followed me and mom outside to hang it over the line and get a picture. I still look back at that picture, and I see that I’m not looking at the camera. I’m looking at Noni as she stood behind mom, watching me proudly pose with my blanket.



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

As part of its Community Risk Reduction (CRR) program, the Tribal Police Department provided car seat training at the District III Early Education building on January 22 and fire extinguisher simulator training at the Wewinabi Early Education Health Fair on Wednesday, February 13. The car seat training was coordinated by Meghan Buhaug at Early Ed in collaboration with Stephanie Larson, who is the Pine County Child Safety Seat Tech. The training seat was purchased from the BIA Highway Safety Grant last year. CRR is a nationwide effort to reduce risks from all hazards. For information on CPR/AED, Basic First Aid, Fire Extinguisher Training, Car Seat Training, and free car seats and fire alarms, contact Emergency Management Coordinator Monte Fronk at 320-532-3430.

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Summary of Expenditures and Financing Uses:	Approved Budget for FY 2019	Expenditures through 1/31/19	% of Budget Expended
Administration (1)	19,561,346	5,301,597	27%
Department of Labor	20,707,828	1,388,366	7%
Judicial	2,392,725	374,495	16%
Department of Justice	7,268,288	1,712,897	24%
Education	17,947,956	4,898,923	27%
Health and Human Services	38,847,559	8,730,616	22%
Circle of Health Insurance	5,720,000	1,655,943	29%
Natural Resources	9,528,724	3,589,088	38%
Community Development	50,781,199	10,952,710	22%
Gaming Authority	5,332,641	1,465,883	27%
Bonus Distribution	21,774,091	11,906,710	55%
Economic Stimulus Distribution	3,299,000	3,294,000	100%
Total	203,161,357	55,271,228	27%

- (1) Administration includes chief executive, administration, finance, legislative, government affairs, and district operations.
- (2) Casino operations are not reported above; however, they do include government operations funded by casino operations.
- (3) The financial statements of the Band are audited every year by an independent public accounting firm. Audit reports from previous years are available for review at the government center upon written request.
- (4) Economic Development appropriations have been excluded as of October 31, 1997.

CHIMINISING ZIIGWAN POWWOW RETURNS MARCH 30



The Chiminising Ziigwan (Spring) Youth Powwow comes back to District 1Ia for the fourth straight year on March 30.

The powwow includes a royalty contest, several other contests, food by First Nations Kitchen, and grand entries at 1 and 7 p.m.

See the flyer below for more details.



MAPLE SAP, SYRUP, AND SUGAR DEMONSTRATION

Join staff at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 30 for a demonstration of traditional and contemporary methods of harvesting and processing maple sap. Guests will observe the process of gathering maple sap and boiling it into syrup and sugar.

Hourly demonstrations of sugar making will be held at noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m., and 3 p.m. Samples of maple sugar will be available. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. In the event of bad weather, this event will be moved indoors.

Call 320-532-3632 or email millelacs@mnhs.org for more information. Cost: Free with \$6-10 site admission/MNHS members free.

MISI ZAAGA'IGANING BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

The Misi Zaaga'iganing Basketball Tournament returns to Onamia High School March 29-31 sponsored by the Mille Lacs Band's Niigaan Program and the Onamia Indian Education Program, with proceeds going to the Onamia Anishinaabe Quiz Bowl students.

The tournament will include 12 men's all-Native teams and 12 high school boys' teams open to Native and non-Native youth. Admission cost is \$10 for a weekend pass or \$6 for a day pass.

This is a drug- and alcohol-free event. Alcohol will not be tolerated and will result in immediate disqualification. To enter or for more information, contact Byron Ninham or Chris Nayquonabe at 320-362-1023.

JINGLE DRESS EXHIBIT AT INDIAN MUSEUM

Opening April 3 at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum is an exhibit on the Jingle Dress Tradition featuring work by Mille Lacs Band member Steve Premo. The exhibit commemorates the epidemic and the 100th anniversary of the jingle dress dance.

Through photographs, oral tradition, and a display of jingle dresses from the MNHS collections, visitors will learn about the jingle dress dance and how its origins can be traced to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe.

It is being developed in partnership with the University of Minnesota Department of American Studies and the Mille Lacs Ojibwe community.

WOMEN'S CULTURAL CLASSES

The Crafting to Heal series of events continues in March with quill-on-birch earring classes, moss bag classes, native dance classes, and rescheduled baby moccasin classes. Class size is limited, so call Kitty Johnson at 612-516-8647 to reserve a spot.

The earring classes will be held March 4 and 5 at Chiminising Community Center and March 12 and 13 at East Lake ALU. Teachers are Carol Hernandez and Mikayla Schaaf.

The moss bag classes taught by Nanette DesJarlait will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 17 at East Lake Community Center and March 24 at Chiminising Community Center.

The native dance classes taught by Darcie Big Bear will take place from noon to 2 p.m. March 2 at East Lake, March 9 at District I, March 16 at Chiminising, and March 23 at Meshakwad.

The rescheduled baby moccasin classes, also taught by Carol and Mikayla, will be held March 20 and 21 at East Lake ALU. Call Kitty to reserve your spot.

Classes are free, with supplies provided. There is no child care available. Date and time subject to change.

4th ANNUAL CHIMINISING ZIIGWAN YOUTH POWWOW MARCH 30, 2019



GRAND ENTRY 1PM & 7PM

HOST DRUM: RED WILLOW

CO-HOST DRUM: TIMBER TRAILS

(1st 5 drums to register will receive pay)

MC: BRAD HARRINGTON

CO-MC: COLIN CASH

HEAD DANCERS:

SHERRAINE WHITE & IAN BEARHEART

CONTEST SPECIALS:

YOUTH TEAM DANCING

CHIMINISING CHAIR CHALLENGE

1st - \$300 2nd - \$200 3rd - \$100

RIBBON SKIRT/SHIRT

HAND DRUM

SIDE STEP

1st - \$500 2nd - \$400 3rd - \$300

CHIMINISING ZIIGWAN ROYALTY CONTEST

CANDIDATES MUST BE MLB MEMBER 6 - 17 years of age

Dancers & Royalty contestants must be in full regalia at registration & Grand Entry

Registration: 11:00am - 12:45pm

Location: Chiminising Community Center
2605 Chiminising Drive, Isle MN 56342

Free and Open to the PUBLIC

Feast @5PM provided by: FIRST NATIONS KITCHEN

www.firstnationskitchen.org

For more information contact (320) 630-6870
or cheryl.miller@millelacsband.com

TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAYS TO MILLE LACS BAND ELDERS!

Robert Allen Dorr
Dawn Renee Fahrlander-Peel
Ramona Anne Applegate
Kathleen June Hill
Debra Jo Sam
Leslie Roger Karsjens
Gloria Ann Starkey
Bradley Allen Kalk
Susan Marie Kramer
George Wilbur Premo
Merle Lee Skinaway
Thomas William Schleeve
Curtis Leroy Kalk
Wanda Kay Misquadace
Kathryn Mary Sam
Sandra Arlene Keggs
Marlene Ruth oukka
Sami Thomas
Terrance Lee Smith
Edward Skinaway
Lester Lee Nelson
Laurie Marie Benjamin
Francis Dean Schaaf
Robert Patrick Benjamin
Lorelei Lee LaFave
Wanda Roxane Navarro
Kella Rae Churchill-Johnson
Michael James Nickaboine
Cynthia Eileen Beaulieu
Jeffrey Sheldon Nickaboine
Jeffrey Jay Keller
Debra Rose Barge

Curtis Anthony Cody
Anita Ann Misquadace
David Smith
Lucille Deborah Doffing
Randy Elmer Benjamin
Robina Lou Eagle
Larry Benjamin
Cheryl Darlene Garbow
Barbara Jane LaBlanc
Donald Anson Graves
Francis Charles Colton
Marie Jane Gudim
Bonnie Elaine Dumler
Susanna Lee Schaaf
Mary Flores
Dean Russell Davis
Fred L. Sam
Patricia Lorayne Christofferson
Laureen Gay Davis
Marie Ann Bengtson
Marie Esther Paschke
Mert Elaine Liebgott
Terry Duane Frye
Roy Alden Shabaiash
Pauline Moose
Bernard Leroy Weyaus

HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAYS:

March 5 Happy 3rd birthday
Jarvis Jr love mom, dad, gram Tracy, Gram Karen, Auntie Val, Dan, Pie, Kev, Auntie Rachel, Rory, Auntie Shelby, Max, Aidan, Jacob, Dusty, Auntie Sharon, Wally, Ravin, and Melodie

March 8 **Rileh Schoman**
Love you beaz! Grandma Neema, Grandma Frances, Baby Antwaun, Aunty Ricki, Laila, CheyaunaRei, Baby Ricki
March 8 **Wyndessa Davis**
Aunty Neema and everyone on Henry Davis Drive.
Happy 8th Birthday **Brielle Waite** on March 13! Love, Auntie Kelly, Uncle Terrence, EllaMarie & Baby T!
Happy 8th Birthday **Cici Bugg** on March 14! Love Auntie Kelly, Uncle Terrence, EllaMarie & Baby T!
Happy 7th Birthday **Marcus Bugg Jr** on March 16! Love Auntie Kelly, Uncle Terrence, EllaMarie & Baby T!
March 18 **Jayla** love dad, Lileah, Papa Brad, Grannie Kim, Papa Kyle, Auntie Val, Dan, Pie, Kev, Auntie Randi, Auntie Rachel, Rory, Uncle Jay, Taylor, Adam, Uncle Brad, Braelyn, Payton, Eric, Wes, Waase, Brynley, Bianca, and Henry.

March 19 brother **Bruce** love Sissys and Brothers
March 19 **Dad**, Love Jayla and Lileah
Happy 4th Birthday **EllaMarie Flores** on March 21! We love you so much!! Love Mommy, Daddy, Baby T & Kitty Callie!
Happy birthday March 24

Marlow Davis from Wah-eh Neema, Baby Antwaun and the whole Family
Happy Birthday **Grandma Mary Flores** on March 26! Love you lots, Breanna, MaKayla, Julian Jr, Jaylen, EllaMarie & Baby T!
Happy Birthday **Mom** on March 26 love Terrence & Kelly!

SPRING CEREMONIAL DRUM DATES

Tim and Tom: March 29-30
Mick and Syngen: April 5-6
Ralph and Andy: April 12-13
Niib and Iyawbance: April 19-20
Joyce and Lynda: April 26-27
Elmer and Sheldon: May 3-4
Darrell and Skip: May 10-11
Dale and Vince: May 17-18
Obizaan and Migizi: May 17-18
Joe and George: May 24-25
Bob and Perry: May 31-June 1.

Noteboard guidelines

The Tribal Noteboard welcomes Band member submissions, including birthdays, congratulatory messages, and memorial tributes. For birthday messages, send name, birthday and a brief message that is **20 WORDS OR LESS**. To congratulate a friend or family member on a milestone or accomplishment, send a message that is **50 WORDS OR LESS**. For a memorial tribute to a Band member who has passed on, send a message that is **100 WORDS OR LESS** to brett.larson@millelacsband.com or **320-237-6851**. The deadline for the April issue is March 15. Photos may be included if space allows.

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 320-532-4768

Wellbriety Migizi Meeting

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

Wellbriety Celebrating Families

Tuesdays, 6-8 p.m., Mille Lacs Band Halfway House Group
17222 Ataage Drive, Onamia, Minnesota
Contact Halfway House at 320-532-4768

NA/AA Welcome

Hosted by Mille Lacs Band Halfway House
Wednesdays, 7 p.m., 42293 Twilight Road, Onamia (Red Brick Building) Contact Halfway House at 320-532-4768

Wellbriety Sons of Tradition

Sundays, 1-3 p.m., 42293 Twilight Road, Onamia
Contact Kim Sam at 320-532-4768

District II East Lake

AA Group

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

District III Hinckley & Aazhoomog

Wellbriety Talking Circle

Mondays, 6 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 12 Step Group

Thursdays, 6 p.m., Meshakwad Community Center

Please send changes and additions to brett.larson@millelacsband.com.

RECURRING EVENTS

Co-ed Volleyball: Tuesdays, Meshakwad Community Center.

Co-ed Basketball: Wednesdays, Meshakwad CC.

Volleyball: Thursdays, noon, District I CC.

Zumba: Wednesdays, noon, District I CC.

To add your event to the calendar, email brett.larson@millelacsband.com or call 320-237-6851.

ANONYMOUS DRUG TIP HOTLINE

The Mille Lacs Band Tribal Police Department's anonymous drug tip line is 320-630-2458. Feel free to leave voicemails and/or text messages. If you would like a call back, be sure to leave your name and phone number. In case of emergency, dial 911.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Jingle Dress Exhibit Opening: April 3, Mille Lacs Indian Museum.

Survivor's Retreat: April 12-13. See page 13.

Central Lakes Powwow: April 18.

Nay Ah Shing Quiz Bowl: April 25.

Art Gahbow Day: April 26.

Nay Ah Shing/Pine Grove Royalty Powwow: May 17.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>WANT YOUR EVENT HERE? Email brett.larson@millelacsband.com or call 320-237-6851. Visit millelacsband.com/calendar for additional MLB events.</p> <p>BAND ASSEMBLY MEETINGS Band Assembly meetings are held at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at rotating locations throughout the districts. Meeting dates, times, and locations are subject to change. For additional information, call the Legislative office at 320-532-4181.</p>					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<p>Quilting Class 10 a.m.–3 p.m. Urban Office <i>See page 13</i></p> <p>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition 1–3 p.m. District I. <i>See page 18</i></p>	<p>Wellbriety, AA, NA District I, II, III <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>Women's Quill on Birch Earring Class 5:30–8:30 p.m. Chiminising CC <i>See page 17</i></p>	<p>Wellbriety District I, III. <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>Women's Quill on Birch Earring Class 5:30–8:30 p.m. Chiminising CC <i>See page 17</i></p> <p>Special Election District III <i>See page 4</i></p> <p>No Band Assembly</p>	<p>Inaajimowin Meeting 11 a.m. Red Circle Agency <i>See below</i></p> <p>NA/AA Welcome District I <i>See page 18</i></p>	<p>Wellbriety 12-Step 6 p.m. Meshakwad Community Center <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>No Band Assembly</p>		<p>MCT First-Time Homebuyer Class <i>See below</i></p> <p>CPR Training <i>See page 13</i></p> <p>Polar Plunge 1:30 p.m. Eddy's Resort</p> <p>Women's Native Dace Class <i>See page 17</i></p>
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<p>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition 1–3 p.m. District I <i>See page 18</i></p>	<p>Wellbriety, AA, NA District I, II, III <i>See page 18</i></p>	<p>Wellbriety District I, III <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>Band Assembly 10 a.m. Meshakwad Community Center</p> <p>Women's Quill on Birch Earring Class 5:30–8:30 p.m. East Lake ALU. <i>See 17</i></p>	<p>District I Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Community Center</p> <p>NA/AA Welcome District I <i>See 18</i></p> <p>Women's Quill on Birch Earring Class 5:30–8:30 p.m. East Lake ALU. <i>See 17</i></p>	<p>Wellbriety 12-Step 6 p.m. Meshakwad Community Center <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>Band Assembly 10 a.m. District I Government Center</p>		<p>Women's Native Dancing Teaching noon – 2 p.m. Chiminising Community Center <i>See page 17</i></p>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<p>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition 1–3 p.m. District I <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>Moss Bag Teaching 10 a.m.–4 p.m. DI Community Center <i>See page 17</i></p>	<p>Wellbriety, AA, NA District I, II, III <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>District II Sobriety Feast 6 p.m. DII Community Center</p>	<p>Wellbriety District I, III <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>Band Assembly 10 a.m. District I Government Center</p> <p>Special Election District III <i>See page 4</i></p>	<p>District III Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley</p> <p>District Ila Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Chiminising CC</p> <p>Baby Moccasin Class <i>See 17</i></p>	<p>Wellbriety 12-Step 6 p.m. Meshakwad Community Center <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>Band Assembly 10 a.m. East Lake ALU</p> <p>Baby Moccasin Class <i>See page 17</i></p>	<p>Treaty Rights Day Government offices close at noon. <i>See page 12 for 20th Anniversary Treaty Day events March 20-22!</i></p>	<p>Women's Native Dancing Teaching noon – 2p.m. Meshakwad Community Center <i>See page 17</i></p>
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<p>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition 1–3 p.m. District I <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>Moss Bag Teaching 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Chiminising Community Center <i>See page 17</i></p>	<p>District III Sobriety Feast 5:30 p.m. Hinckley Corporate Building</p> <p>Wellbriety, AA, NA District I, II, III <i>See page 18</i></p>	<p>District I Sobriety Feast 5:30 p.m. Community Center</p> <p>Wellbriety District I, III <i>See page 18</i></p> <p>Band Assembly 10 a.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>District II Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. East Lake Community Center</p> <p>NA/AA Welcome District I <i>See page 18</i></p>	<p>District Ila Sobriety Feast 5:30 p.m. Chiminising CC</p> <p>Urban Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. All Nations Church</p> <p>Band Assembly 10 a.m. All Nations Church, Minneapolis</p>	<p>Misi Zaaga'iganing Basketball Tourney Onamia High School <i>See page 17</i></p> <p>Tim and Tom's Ceremonial Drum <i>See page 18</i></p>	<p>Maple Sap, Syrup, Sugar Demo <i>See page 17</i></p> <p>Misi Zaaga'iganing Basketball Tourney <i>See page 17</i></p> <p>Chiminising Ziigwan Powwow <i>See page 17</i></p> <p>Tim and Tom's Ceremonial Drum <i>See page 18</i></p>
31	<p>SHARE YOUR IDEAS Join the Inaajimowin team at 11 a.m. on March 6 at Red Circle Agency in Minneapolis to share your thoughts and ideas. If you have an interest in writing for the newsletter, please come and introduce yourself! Band members are paid for submissions. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to darla.roache@millelacsband.com or 320-495-5006. If you're interested in writing for the newsletter, please email brett.larson@millelacsband.com.</p>				<p>MCT FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER CLASS MCT Finance Corporation First-Time Homebuyer Class First-time homebuyer education is coming Saturday, March 9, and Saturday, April 20, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Building, 15542 State 371 NW, Cass Lake, Minnesota. First-time Homebuyer Education is a requirement of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Finance Corporation for qualified buyers. Please reserve your spot in this free class with Cyndi Cwikla at 218-335-8582, extension 150 or ccwikla@mnchippewatribe.org. No Childcare is provided so please make other arrangements.</p>	

More events: See page 18 for Recurring Events, Upcoming Events, and Recovery Groups.



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

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UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS

If your address on file with the Enrollments Office or Office of Management and Budget is incorrect, you may not be receiving important mail from the Band. Each time you move, you need to fill out a Change of Address form. Call 320-532-7730 or download a Change of Address form at millelacsband.com/services/tribal-enrollments.

ABOUT US

Ojibwe Inaajimowin is produced monthly by the Government Affairs Department of the Mille Lacs Band's Executive Branch. Please send questions, comments, corrections, or submissions to brett.larson@millelacsband.com or call 320-237-6851. The April issue deadline is March 15.

NEED HELP?

If you or someone you know is injured or in immediate 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.

Addiction/Behavioral Health: 800-709-6445, ext. 7776.

Community Support Services: For emergencies related to food and nutrition, Elder services, Elder abuse, 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.

Batterers' Intervention: 320-532-8909.

Heating, water, or other home-related maintenance problems: If you live in a Mille Lacs Band Housing-maintained home, call our Customer Service Representative during regular business hours 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: 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; 800-709-6445, ext. 7588. Family Violence Prevention: District I 320-532-4780; East Lake 218-768-4412; Aazhoomog 320-384-0149; Hinckley 320-384-4613; Toll-free 24-hour crisis line 866-867-4006.

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

MARCH 2019 | VOLUME 21 | NUMBER 03

T H E S T O R Y A S I T ' S T O L D



20 YEARS LATER REMEMBERING THE 1837 TREATY RIGHTS CASE

**BAND MEMBERS GIVE
TESTIMONY IN OPIOID
HEARING**
page 1

**NEIGHBORS RESPOND
TO POWER OUTAGE IN
DISTRICT I**
page 4

**WHEN THERE'S SNOW
ON THE GROUND,
STORIES AROUND**
page 9

**ROUND DANCE
HEATS UP
MINISINAAKWAANG**
page 14