

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

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



A small group attended the State of the Band in person — including members of the Color Guard — while most Band members and guests participated through Zoom conference call or watched later on YouTube.



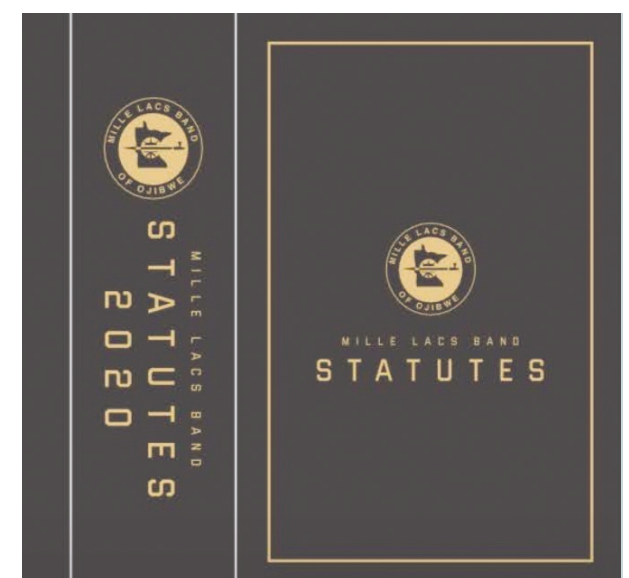
Statutes have been published in paperback (above) and hardcover (below).

STATUTES PUBLISHED IN BOOK FORM

On January 12, 2021, Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd unveiled a 2020 version of the “Laws of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians.” This is the first time that a comprehensive set of the Band’s laws have been published in print in approximately 15 years.

This publication will serve not only as a useful reference for Band members, but also an important historical record so that future generations will know the status of Band law in the year 2020. Although Band law is constantly changing, these changes will be reflected both online and in future hard-copy publications. The process will only be made easier by the hiring of a Mille Lacs Band Revisor of Statutes.

The Band currently has 200 paperback copies of the publication in stock, with 50 hardcover copies still forthcoming. A digital version of the publication is available on the Legislative Branch website at <http://millelacsbandlegislativebranch.com/statutes>.



2021 STATE OF THE BAND CHIEF EXECUTIVE CALLS BAND MEMBERS ‘A LIGHT OF COURAGE AND COMPASSION AMID THE DARKNESS’

In her 2021 State of the Band address, Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin summarized 2020 as a year in which “some of the worst things we could imagine happened, but in many ways, it brought out the best in us we could ever hope for.”

During one of the darkest times in our modern history, Melanie said many Mille Lacs Band members became a light in the darkness, “being the best ancestors they could be.”

“Small sparks together lit a great fire of community service, of fighting against injustice, and of adapting to a new world. As Band members and employees, you stepped forward to serve our Band with courage and compassion, risking your own safety to protect others. Together, we did not cower in the face of crisis. We faced it head on and we fought it. We took decisive action, and quickly changed the way we do nearly everything so we could keep Band members safe.”

See pages 3–6 for the complete address.

Normally delivered to a ballroom filled with Band members and dignitaries, this year’s State of the Band was delivered via an online webinar to protect the community from COVID-19.

Prior to the event, Arlyn Sam sang hand drum songs, employees’ names were listed as thanks for their work during the COVID-19 pandemic, and a slideshow reviewed highlights of the year and honored 2020 graduates.

The event began with an invocation by Lee Obizaan Sta-

ples, Honor and Flag songs by members of Joe Nayquonabe Sr.’s ceremonial drum, and the singing of the National Anthem by Band member Torrey Petite.

Commissioner of Administration Baabiitaw Boyd served as master of ceremonies, introducing speakers in Ojibwemowin and English. Addresses by Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd and Chief Justice Ramona Applegate preceded the Chief Executive’s State of the Band Address.

In his State of the Legislative Branch Address, Sheldon told Band members about the significant changes made in 2020, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Among those changes were the creation of a Revisor’s Office and a thorough, independent review of the Band’s investments. See page 8 for the full text of the speech.

Justice Ramona Applegate, in the annual State of the Judiciary Address, provided an update on the Tribal Court’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which allowed court activities to shift online, and she told an inspirational story about the reunification of a family that also illustrated the challenges faced each day by the Band’s Judicial Branch. To read the complete address, see page 10.

For the first time, Mille Lacs Band Commissioners provided brief speeches about their programs as part of the online State of the Band event on January 12.

State of the Band continued on page 2.

FOR THE COMPLETE TEXT OF THE 2021 STATE OF THE BAND, SEE PAGES 3–6

State of the Band continued from page 1

To see the videos of the speeches, go to youtube.com/mille-lacsband.

Highlights from the Chief Executive's speech include:

Band employees thanked for service during crisis:

Melanie thanked Band employees who endured a temporary furlough during the COVID-19 crisis, as well as those whose job duties required them to continue to work during the pandemic. "All of you sacrificed for our Band, sometimes at great personal cost," Benjamin said.

Major economic development tool announced: Benjamin announced that the Mille Lacs Band received 8-A certification from the U.S. Small Business Administration for its Makwa Global companies. The 8-A program is for businesses owned by women, minority groups, and tribes, and the 8-A status gives the Band preferential treatment for federal government contracting. "In March, four of our Makwa Global companies were accepted into the 8-A program. This is a very big deal. In just the past few months, Makwa Global has landed several government contracts around the world that are very exciting."

New health care center: In 2020, the Band opened its new health care center, a state-of-the-art facility where Band members can get health and wellness services. "The move was very difficult due to the pandemic, but we did it."

Line 3 pipeline opposition continues: "In 2020, we continued our legal battle to protect our lands and waters from a new pipeline through the courts, which is the proper role of government. Individuals worked at the grassroots level."

Urban housing and multi-use development: The Band purchased property in Minneapolis across from All Nations Church, where it will be building new housing in a multi-use building that will include a community gathering space for

"IT IS IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE IS GREAT SADNESS IN OUR COMMUNITY RIGHT NOW. IF YOU OR A LOVED ONE IS SUFFERING FROM DEPRESSION, WE HAVE HELP AVAILABLE. EVERY BAND MEMBER IS A GIFT. YOUR FAMILIES AND YOUR BAND NEED YOU."

Band members.

Eagle feathers permit: The Mille Lacs Band is one of two tribes in Minnesota that received a special eagle permit, which removes the challenges that made it hard to obtain eagle feathers. Band members now have a much more fair and consistent process when eagle feathers are needed.

Acknowledgment of depression, and available resources: Depression in the United States has tripled since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, affecting one in three Americans, and even more in communities of color. The number of Band members who have passed away this year is double from the previous year. Hearts are broken from the loss of life. "It is important to acknowledge that there is great sadness in our community right now. If you or a loved one is suffering from depression, we have help available. Every Band member's life is a gift. Your families and your Band need you."

Resilient Band will emerge from the pandemic even stronger: "As we begin this new year, many have asked, 'When will the world return to normal?' That depends on what 'normal' means. All of us have been impacted by the pandem-



ic. We have all changed in some way. Things can never go back to the way they were, but that does not have to be a bad thing. Our future can be better than before the pandemic. If we move safely and continue to be smart, we can reemerge as the community we want to be, and know we can be. We can get through this pandemic together because we are resilient."

About the State of the Band

Mille Lacs Band statute requires the Chief Executive to "present to the Band Assembly an annual State of the Band Address on the second Tuesday of January of each calendar year" [4MLBSA 6(i)]. The first State of the Band Address was delivered in 1983, making the Band the first Minnesota tribe to provide a formal update in this way.

TRIBES CRITICIZE STAUBER FOR OPPOSING HAALAND NOMINATION

Last month, Representative Pete Stauber, who represents northeast Minnesota (including Mille Lacs, Pine, and Aitkin Counties) in Congress, sent a letter asking fellow lawmakers to join him in urging President-elect Biden's transition team to withdraw the nomination of Representative Deb Haaland for Secretary of the Interior.

It's no surprise that Rep. Stauber, a Republican, was opposed to Haaland's nomination on policy grounds. But instead of consulting with the five tribes in his district, Stauber sent a strongly worded statement attempting to drum up support for his opposition to Haaland's historic nomination.

Rep. Stauber, a member of the House subcommittee on Indigenous Peoples, has no say in approving the nomination, which is the job of the Senate. Lacking the power to vote against her, he chose instead to attempt to scuttle the nomination, calling her a "direct threat to working men and women" and citing her support of the Green New Deal and record of environmental protection — a key duty of the Department of the Interior.

Stauber's letter was met with strong condemnation from tribal leaders who pushed strongly for the nomination and rejoiced together when President-elect Biden agreed that Rep. Haaland was the right choice for the position.

Haaland, a member of the Laguna Pueblo, serves with Stauber on the House Natural Resources Committee. If confirmed, she would lead the Department of the Interior, which includes the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Environmental Protection Agency and oversees tribal lands and other public lands in the U.S.

The leaders of the five Ojibwe bands in Stauber's district (Mille Lacs, Fond du Lac, Leech Lake, Bois Forte, and Grand Portage) responded quickly to Stauber's attack with a letter to the Congressman.

"As tribal leaders in the 8th District, we write today to express our profound disappointment after learning that you are leading an effort in the House of Representatives to oppose the appointment of Representative Deb Haaland as the first American Indian Secretary of Interior. This historic nomination is more important to us and all of Indian country than any other Cabinet nomination in recent history..."

"Most concerning is that you did not consult with us as



the sovereign federally recognized tribal governments in your District in advance of initiating this effort that has such a direct impact on us as your American Indian constituents. Yet it appears you did consult with industrial interests in the 8th District."

Aaron Payment, chair of the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MAST), followed suit with a letter of his own, saying, "We are writing to voice our grave concern over your efforts to lead the campaign against Rep. Deb Haaland as Secretary of Interior, whom we very strongly support and have endorsed ... as the first Native American who would serve on the President elect's cabinet in the history of our country. [Your] your demonizing of her in your letter as 'a direct threat to working men and women' is not just offensive; it is hostile and irresponsible given the current state of crisis in our nation resulting from politicians vilifying one another..."

"MAST respectfully requests that you step back from your leadership role in this campaign against Rep. Deb Haaland as the first Native American Secretary of Interior."

In addition to signing the letter from the five tribes in Stauber's district, Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin also wrote directly to Stauber emphasizing the lack of consultation and

the tribe's unwavering support of Haaland's historic nomination. "We understand that you walk a fine line in the 8th district in balancing the interests of industry versus those of environmental interest groups, but as Native nations we are in a separate category as sovereign governments," said Melanie. "Your letter cites your concern about jobs yet Indian tribes are the largest employer in your district. In Federal-Indian affairs, consultation with tribal governments is the bedrock of our government-to-government relationship and that includes the Congress."

Melanie stressed the Band's demonstrated willingness to work with Rep. Stauber and recognized his work on behalf of the Band. "Mr. Stauber, you personally know we have sought to work with you since your first day as a Congressman. You and your staff have indeed assisted us on some matters of importance. But on this matter of huge and historic importance to us, we learned only indirectly and after the fact that you have taken an action that is diametrically opposed to our long and publicly stated, heart-felt position in strong support of Representative Haaland's nomination to head the Interior Department. We are dismayed by this."

She concluded, "As our Congressman, we understand that on occasion we may have policy disagreements. We believe it is the antithesis of unity and respect for you to actively reject the nomination of a person we have worked so hard to see nominated, especially an historic figure like Representative Haaland, without consultation with us as your constituents. We respectfully request that you reconsider and abandon your work to oppose her historic nomination."

Stauber's letter and the tribes' response created a storm in the media in the days leading up to President Biden's nomination. Dozens of local, state, and national outlets covered the story, and Rep. Stauber came away looking insensitive to the concerns of tribes and his district.

While Mille Lacs and the other Bands in Rep. Stauber's district will continue to work with him out of respect for the office he holds, the damage his actions have done to his relationship with tribes will not be easily or quickly undone.

2021 STATE OF THE BAND ADDRESS

ANISHINAABE RESILIENT

CHIEF EXECUTIVE MELANIE BENJAMIN

Aaniin, Boozhoo, Good Morning. Mr. Speaker, Members of the Band Assembly, Madame Chief Justice and Members of the Judiciary, and most important, fellow Members of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe: I am honored to speak to you today on the state of the Band.

One year ago, this room was filled with nearly one thousand Band members who came to hear about the state of our Band, reunite with old friends, and enjoy a wonderful community meal together. When I was standing at the podium and looking into the audience, I saw a sea of beautiful Anishinaabe faces.

The sounds of coffee cups, of crying babies, of little children who have been trying to sit quietly... Those sounds have been the background music to all 14 State of the Band addresses I have given.

Today, I miss those sounds.

Last year at the State of the Band Address, we sat close to each other. It was a day of lots of hugs, of holding new babies, of shared food — and especially shared desserts! We laughed and talked to one another close up without worry.

Today, I am really missing those things.

Last January, we did not know that less than three months later we would be a community in lockdown with the doors to our casinos and businesses closed, school buildings closed, and government buildings locked due to a global pandemic.

This year, the State of the Band is very different. We are coming to you online in order to protect the health and safety of our Band community. Yet some things will never change, including how we begin this day in our traditional way.

— Miigwech to Obizaan for speaking on our behalf, so we can begin in a good way;

— Miigwech to the Ceremonial Drum, and Waabishkibines (Joe Nayquonabe Sr.) for setting the dish;

— Miigwech to Mille Lacs All Veterans for posting the flags;

— And to Arlyn Sam, Little Otter, and Torrey Petite for singing for us today.

Like me, I know many of you miss getting together as a community. Yet COVID has not been able to stop us from being a community.

There are more people who worked hard to make sure we could broadcast this to your homes. It took a small army to make this day happen. To each of you, miigwech for your hard work.

There is no getting around the fact that 2020 was a very rough year. COVID-19 has been vicious, with too high of a cost. Band members lost loved ones to this disease.

Many Band members faced job loss and financial insecurity, and as America Indians, all of us had to cope with the fear and anxiety of being in the highest risk group for complications or loss of life from COVID-19.

2020 was a year of an ugly national election that nearly ripped our country apart. Just last week, we watched live on TV as the U.S. Capitol was attacked by domestic terrorists trying to overthrow the election and the government.

It was also an MCT Election year, during which we saw some of the ugliness of the national politics spill into our Band elections, which we must never allow to happen again.

And as if that wasn't enough, it was also a year of fear, anger, and anxiety sparked by racism with social unrest felt around the world due to the murder of George Floyd — in the middle of the global pandemic.



Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin delivered the annual State of the Band Address via video on January 12.

“LAST YEAR, I TALKED ABOUT SOMETHING JOE NAYQUONABE SR. SAID. HE SAID WE SHOULD ALL TRY TO BE ‘GOOD ANCESTORS.’ DURING ONE OF THE DARKEST TIMES IN OUR MODERN HISTORY, MANY MILLE LACS BAND MEMBERS DID JUST THAT. THEY BECAME A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS, BEING THE BEST ANCESTORS THEY COULD BE.”

Finally, COVID has caused loss of life in other ways. Addictions and mental illness became worse with social isolation. Depression in the United States has tripled since COVID, affecting one in three Americans, and is higher in communities of color.

When people have trouble coping with sadness, isolation, and anxiety, they may turn to drugs or alcohol. Research has proven that depression also makes other chronic illnesses like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer worse — and harder to treat.

Sadly, we have seen all of this first-hand. The number of Band members who have passed away this year is double from the previous year. Hearts are broken from the loss of life and so many funerals.

It is important to acknowledge that there is great sadness in our community right now. If you or a loved one is suffering from depression, we have help available. There are phone numbers listed here during the program. Please call them if you are struggling. Every Band member's life is a gift. Your families and your Band need you.

During 2020, some of the worst things we could imagine happened, but in many ways, it brought out the best in us we could ever hope for.

Last year, I talked about something Joe Nayquonabe Sr. said. He said we should all try “to be good ancestors.”

During one of the darkest times in our modern history, many Mille Lacs Band members did just that. They became a light in the darkness, being the best ancestors they could be.

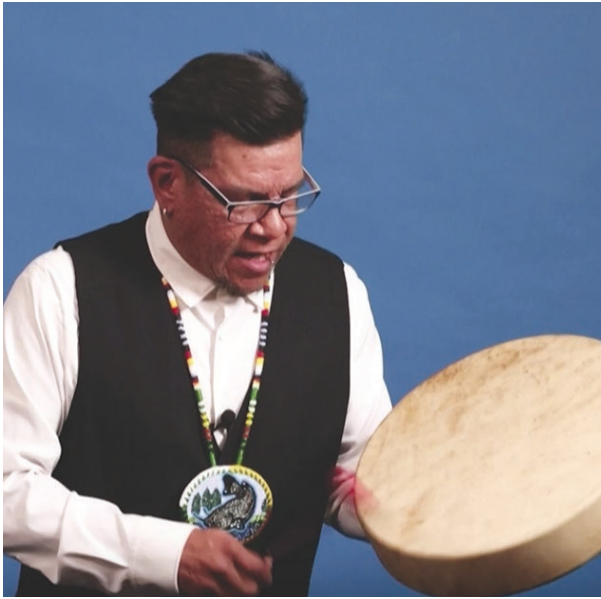
I've heard 2020 described as a “dumpster fire,” but 2020 was also a year when small sparks together lit a great fire of community service, of fighting against injustice and of adapting to a new world.

As Band members and employees, you stepped forward to serve our Band with courage and compassion, risking your own safety to protect others.

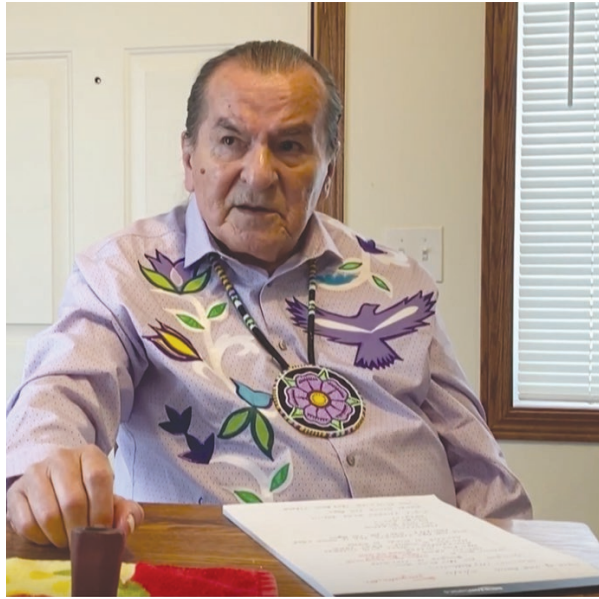
Together, we did not cower in the face of crisis. We faced it head on and we fought it. We took decisive action, and quickly changed the way we do nearly everything so we could keep Band members safe.

On March 14, 2020, I issued an Executive Order to mobilize our Tribal Emergency Response Committee, which we call the “TERC.” Our TERC included members from all three branches of government. They met around the clock, making sure we could get help and basic government services to our Band members.

State of the Band continued on page 4.



Arlyn Sam shared hand drum songs prior to the event.



Lee Obizaan Staples gave the invocation.



Mille Lacs Band descendant Torrey Petite sang the National Anthem.

State of the Band continued from page 3

To slow down the virus, many difficult decisions had to be made. All employees who could perform their jobs from home were directed to stay away from government buildings.

We continued to pay all employees as long as we could, but there came a time when we had no choice but to furlough many employees. We tried to time this with the federal government's expansion of unemployment benefits, so that people would still have a source of income.

But we know this has been a period of great stress for our furloughed workers. I want to acknowledge your sacrifice for our Band as well.

While many of our Band member services went online — like education, telehealth, and nearly all our business functions and meetings — there were still services and help that Band members needed that could only be provided in person. Those employees were asked to remain working.

With careful planning, the TERC found the safest way for our front-line workers to continue providing those services to Band members in person.

This included housing staff, who continued going into homes to assist Band members during the pandemic; our Education staff and teachers also continued working to care for and teach our children when "in-person" education was in place again; our health care and wellness providers and staff, public health staff, and maintenance crews across all districts; our employees who returned to work after the casinos reopened so we could begin our economic recovery; and our OMB staff, because we still needed to pay the bills and get paychecks out, and many others.

All of you sacrificed for our Band, sometimes at great personal cost, especially those who became sick while working.

I also want to acknowledge our Urban area staff led by Wahbon Spears. After the murder of George Floyd, there was civil unrest like we have never seen before.

While a new civil rights movement was born from millions of peaceful protesters, the actions of a few created destruction. The world watched as south Minneapolis seemed to be burning down, very close to our Urban community near Franklin Avenue.

With COVID-19, Wahbon and her staff had to deal with two crises at the same time, and they did it well. They coordinated with the TERC to make sure that Band members received food and supplies when all the stores were closed and that Band members could get their medications when there was no public transportation.

Band members from the reservation like Colin Cash and Randell Sam answered the call to help, driving to Minneapolis to assist with protecting the community, watching over our Woodlands National Bank, tribal offices, businesses, and housing. All in the middle of a global pandemic.

To our front-line workers and Band members who risked your own health and safety to ensure the basic needs of our Band members were met and to all in our community who sacrificed during the pandemic: You are all heroes for our Band. Miigwech for your bravery, generosity, dedication, and service.

I also want to acknowledge and thank our dedicated Members of the Band Assembly for your important legislative work and your strong partnership in getting through this crisis. Our emergency response would not have been possible without your great work.

And chi miigwech to Speaker Sheldon Boyd for his strong, decisive leadership during this crisis. With Speaker Boyd in charge, our Legislative Branch worked harder than I have ever seen.

When our casinos closed and there were no funds for per capita, Speaker Boyd laid the course for providing much-needed economic assistance to Band members. At the same time, he did a brilliant job managing our finances and preserving long-term savings so that future generations will always have resources for another crisis, if needed.

"TO OUR FRONT-LINE WORKERS AND BAND MEMBERS WHO RISKED YOUR OWN HEALTH AND SAFETY TO ENSURE THE BASIC NEEDS OF OUR BAND MEMBERS WERE MET AND TO ALL IN OUR COMMUNITY WHO SACRIFICED DURING THE PANDEMIC: YOU ARE ALL HEROES FOR OUR BAND. MIIGWECH FOR YOUR BRAVERY, GENEROSITY, DEDICATION, AND SERVICE."

Speaker Boyd leads with integrity and compassion, and he lives our Anishinaabe values. It has been my privilege to work with him.

I also want all Band members to know that our division-of-powers government was the main reason we were able to respond so quickly. Together as a government, I think we had the best crisis response team in Indian Country, and that is not just my opinion.

Throughout COVID, we were contacted by other tribes asking for advice, wanting to know how they could replicate what we were doing. Federal and state officials commented that we were better prepared for a crisis than most cities and counties.

For that, I want to acknowledge everyone on our TERC team. I also want to give a big miigwech to Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. When the virus hit and the state was about to shut down, tribal leaders were among the first people the Governor contacted. The Governor's office held daily phone calls with tribal leaders to brief us on the crisis and to coordinate with our team.

The Governor and Lieutenant Governor also helped get emergency assistance to the tribes in Minnesota. No other states offered as much help to tribes as Minnesota did. We will always be grateful to our state leaders for standing by us.

Miigwech as well to our Minnesota Congressional delegation, especially Senator Tina Smith and Congresswoman Betty McCollum, who fought hard for a fair share of COVID funding for Minnesota tribes.

Despite the challenges of 2020, we did not let COVID stop us from making progress. Some exciting things happened this year. For example, after taking inconsistent positions on the status of our reservation in recent years, the State of Minnesota made clear in early February of 2020 that our reservation was never disestablished, and has since reaffirmed that position. Miigwech to Attorney General Keith Ellison and Governor Walz for joining with the federal government's position that our reservation boundary never ceased to exist.

Mille Lacs County still refuses to acknowledge the existence of our reservation, even though it has never been able to show how the county is harmed by the reservation. The issue will be argued in federal court in March of 2021, and we may get a ruling by the end of the year.

Our historic language revitalization project got off the ground in 2020. In partnership with Rosetta Stone, we are making tools and resources that many generations will be able to use.

We are also creating books to build our library of Ojibwe language resources. By raising children who are fluent, we are exercising our sovereignty. We are making sure our future generations can think, act, and live like Anishinaabe people with Anishinaabe values. This project will protect our language forever, promising that future generations will always be able to learn Ojibwe.

In 2020, we also opened our new health care center, a state-of-the-art facility where Band members can get health and wellness services. The move was very difficult due to the pandemic, but we did it.

We purchased property in Minneapolis across from All Nations Church, where we will be building new housing in a multi-use building that will include a community gathering space for Band members. Miigwech to our Urban Area Planning Committee members who are advising us on the design.

We are also just one of two tribes in Minnesota that received a special eagle permit, which removes the challenges that made it hard to obtain eagle feathers. Band members now have a much more fair and consistent process when eagle feathers are needed.

We continued our legal battle to protect our lands and waters from a new pipeline through the courts, which is the proper role of government. Individuals worked at the grassroots level.

On the economic development front, we have some very big news. The U.S. Small Business Administration has a special program called the 8-A Certification program. This is for businesses owned by women, minority groups, and tribes. Businesses that get this 8-A status can receive preferential treatment for federal government contracting.

In March, four of our Makwa Global companies were accepted into the 8-A program. This is a very big deal. In just the past few months, Makwa Global has landed several government contracts around the world that are very exciting.

For example, our Band is now assisting the U.S. State Department with its counterterrorism training needs. Through another contract, we are working with the U.S. State Department on a construction project overseas at a secure location that cannot be disclosed.

Who would have ever thought this was possible? It has always been our goal to diversify so that we are not dependent on gaming. For three months last summer when our casinos were closed, we experienced the hardship that loss of gaming could mean. With this new source of income from government contracting, we are on a path to long-term economic security, even if there is another pandemic. This is history making.

And on another historic front, next week on Wednesday, January 20, President-Elect Joe Biden and Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris will be sworn in as the 46th President and Vice President of these United States. This is a profound moment in history, because on that day, we will have the first woman Vice President.

We are witnessing another glass ceiling being shattered forever by Kamala Harris. To anyone who has a young daughter, granddaughter, or niece in your homes, there is one thing I ask you to do on that day. Please make certain your TV is on a channel showing the Inauguration. We need all our little girls to watch this historic event so they know their dreams — no matter how big — can come true.

I am confident in the Biden Administration. President-Elect Biden's "Plan for Tribal Nations" is the strongest I have ever seen by any President. It is based on tribal sovereignty and respect for tribal governments.

President-Elect Biden has made history for us in another way as well. During the campaign, he promised that if he won his election, his Cabinet would look like America and be the most diverse Cabinet in history.

He has already made good on that promise in a big way. By nominating Congresswoman Deb Haaland to the position of Secretary of Interior, we may have the first American Indian to ever serve on the President's Cabinet in one of the most powerful positions in the country for Indian tribes.

The Department of Interior's reach goes far beyond the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education. Every day, decisions are made or actions taken across the whole Department that affect us. This includes protecting our trust lands, our economic development, our sovereignty, law enforcement, and public safety. It includes our treaty rights, access to clean water, our food security, management of our trust funds, protection of our wildlife, plants, fish, and even our religious freedom. The Secretary of Interior is supposed to be our Trustee. Yet throughout most of the past 170 years, the Trustee has overseen the exploitation of our lands and people.

That will not happen with the new Administration. If Congresswoman Haaland is confirmed, a highly qualified American Indian woman will be serving in this position who already knows our needs and who understands tribal sovereignty because she is one of us.

Finally, despite the division that a few people tried to create, our MCT elections proved that our tribal democracy works. On that note, I want to thank Band members for giving me the

honor of serving as your Chief Executive for another term of office.

I am very humbled by your support, and I intend to see through every commitment I made during the campaign. My goal is that four years from now, we will look back on the post-pandemic years as being a time of growth and prosperity for every Band member. I know we can do this if we keep working together the way we have this past year. Now is a time for unity.

As we begin this new year, many have asked: When will the world return to normal? That depends on what "normal" means. All of us have been impacted by the pandemic. We have all changed in some way. Things can never go back to the way they were, but that does not have to be a bad thing.

Our future can be better than before the pandemic. If we move safely and continue to be smart, we can reemerge as the community we want to be and know we can be. We can get through this pandemic together because we are resilient.

We are already on the path of coming out stronger than before. Out of fear and uncertainty, many Band members and employees shined. They showed courage and determination, using creative problem-solving to meet our challenges.

It has been a long time since our Band has had to deal with food insecurity. But COVID-19 put up new road blocks that made it harder to get nutritious food, especially for Elders and people in high-risk groups, families with young children, and those who lost their work income.

When our children could no longer get their meals at school, our government and Corporate Commission devised a plan to get meals to the kids at home. After the casinos closed, our food and beverage staff switched from serving guests to serving our Band communities — almost overnight. Thousands of meals were made every day for Band members and area school children.

Weeks' worth of food for Elders was put together, and our highest-risk people were able to receive basic food supplies so they would not have to risk going to stores. I also want to thank Julie Skinaway and Roberta Martin, of my staff, who helped Elders get groceries in District II and District III.

Across the Band, teams of people were organized to distribute food in each district and the urban area. This took hundreds of people, but we did it.

We were successful getting a special grant of nearly \$1 million dollars to provide housing assistance. 478 Band families received help through this grant. On that note, miigwech to Brittany Wind and our Grants Department staff. The Band received every single COVID grant we applied for.

Individual Band members also got creative. When the whole country was out of medical masks, our ladies went to work sewing masks for Band members. Some even taught other Band members how to sew their own masks. Miigwech to Temperance McClain, Carol Hernandez, our ALU residents, and the many others who saw a community need and took care of it.

Band members put our Anishinaabe values into action by taking care of one another, checking on Elders, delivering food to those in need, and helping neighbors.

Getting through this pandemic is not a sprint. It is a marathon. Resilience is not about avoiding the winds of crisis. It is about facing and walking through the storm with courage and coming out stronger than ever. This is who we are and what we do.

We have that in common with other American Indian people but also with Indigenous people all around the world. International researchers who study resilience came up with six things that seem to get Indigenous societies around the world through the hardest times: Our Elders, our identity, our language, our ceremony and traditions, our spirituality, and our sense of humor.

Of course, we already knew all of that at Mille Lacs, but the past year has proven our need to respect and protect these things. Our ability to survive every crisis the world has ever thrown our way is built into our culture and all that makes us Anishinaabe. These are the traits that will get us through a pandemic, and we will come out stronger than before. As we go through this new year, I hope we will focus on strengthening, sharing, and supporting all these things that make us Anishinaabe Resilient.

"OUR ABILITY TO SURVIVE EVERY CRISIS THE WORLD HAS EVER THROWN OUR WAY IS BUILT INTO OUR CULTURE AND ALL THAT MAKES US ANISHINAABE. THESE ARE THE TRAITS THAT WILL GET US THROUGH A PANDEMIC, AND WE WILL COME OUT STRONGER THAN BEFORE. AS WE GO THROUGH THIS NEW YEAR, I HOPE WE WILL FOCUS ON STRENGTHENING, SHARING, AND SUPPORTING ALL THESE THINGS THAT MAKE US ANISHINAABE RESILIENT."

One of the many lessons I learned this past year is that most people don't like to watch long video messages. So rather than go through each department, I asked the Commissioners to provide a short video about their areas in more detail. This way, you can learn more about our achievements and challenges from last year as well as our goals for 2021 directly from the experts who run those areas. I encourage you to watch those videos following this Address.

I have a few directives for Commissioners that I want to mention today.

To the Commissioner of Administration, Baabiiyaw Boyd: With the loss of so many of our fluent speakers, we are facing a cultural state of emergency. When an Indigenous community loses their language, it is called "language death." This has happened to countless tribes in the United States.

Our younger people who are second-language speakers are very worried that unless we take big steps now, our Band could experience language death. If this happens, our identity and survival are at risk because it is only through our language that we can conduct our ceremonies and continue our traditions that make us Anishinaabe.

Ojibwe language is a gift we've been given from the Manidoo to communicate with the natural world, the animals, the plants, and one another. There is meaning built into our language that guides us about how to treat one another. It is through our language that our ancestors were able to survive.

Our ancestors lived through a time called "The Termination Era," when federal policies tried to terminate our Indian-ness. Federal officials made it a crime for us to conduct our ceremonies. They sent our children to boarding schools and forbid them from speaking our language. But our ancestors didn't allow this. They fought back.

State of the Band continued on page 6.



Commissioner of Administration Baabiiyaw Boyd served as master of ceremonies, sharing her remarks in English and Ojibwe.

State of the Band continued from page 5

This is our time to fight back. What we have found out is that we need a comprehensive plan to achieve recovery of our language. The good news is that we are on that path. Commissioner Boyd, we need focused leadership working full-time on this project. I hereby direct you to make a leadership plan so this can happen. Chief Executive Art Gahbow had a dream that one day Ojibwe would be spoken throughout the government center. This can happen if we do it right.

Also, our personnel policies must be updated. Currently, they do not reflect the culture of the Band. I further direct you to work with the other commissioners to get this done within three months.

To the Assistant Commissioner of Administration, Peter Nayquonabe: I hereby direct you to continue working to get Band members into our homes and convert rentals to home ownership. I further direct you to work on a Veteran's Housing project as a 2021 priority. Every veteran who served our country should be guaranteed housing on Band lands.

To the Commissioner of Health and Human Services, Nicole Anderson: You and your staff have done an outstanding job this year protecting our community. You still have your work cut out for you with COVID-19. Continue rolling out the vaccine until every Band member who wants a vaccine gets one.

To the Commissioner of Natural Resources, Katie Draper: I direct you to focus attention on reorganizing our Enrollments department. For Band member parents, the most important service our Band provides is ensuring that their children who are eligible to be enrolled get enrolled.

We know from history that many mistakes were made in blood quantum, some going as far back as 150 years. With new data coming from the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, we have to revamp our entire process. I will also be holding public hearings in 2021 on enrollment to include Band member input into this process.

To the Commissioner of Education, Joyce Shingobe: Your directive for 2021 is to get a history program developed for every grade that focuses on our Band. By the time our students graduate, they should have deep knowledge about our history, including our division-of-powers government, the meaning of tribal sovereignty and self-governance, and they should understand exactly how our Band government works.

To the Commissioner of Corporate Affairs, Joseph Nayquonabe: I hereby direct you to train as many Band members as possible to participate in Makwa Global ventures. We are in the beginning stages of a new revenue stream, but we need Band member jobs to come from these ventures as well.

To Solicitor General Caleb Dogeagle: I direct you to work with tribal police and federal, state, and other tribal agencies on a Drug Free Zone plan for all three districts. Also, I direct you to improve communication between OSG, law enforce-

ment, and Band members so our community is well informed.

I also have two directives for all the commissioners. Last year, we brought in our first Solicitor General, Jay Kanassatega, to provide a training to our elected officials and commissioners about the creation of our division-of-powers government. This was a transformative experience for all who went through the training. People who had only heard stories about how our Elders planned our current system of government left with a deeper understanding of the cultural reasons for our three-branch system. They gained new knowledge about the connection between our Anishinaabe identity and the way our government was intended to serve Band members.

In 2021, I direct you all to create a plan that provides this training to any Band member who wants to learn more about our history. Our history is our birthright, and all Band members should have access to this important part of our identity.

"IF THERE IS ONE THING WE HAVE PROVEN, IT IS THAT NO VIRUS CAN STOP US OR TAKE AWAY OUR SPIRIT. DESPITE WHAT WE HAVE LOST, DESPITE THE GRIEF AND HARDSHIP, WE WILL BE STRONGER AND MORE DETERMINED BECAUSE OF THIS."

Second, 2020 has taught us that it is time for all communities and businesses in America to have real conversations about racism, inclusion, and respect for other cultures. Our employees especially need to understand how our Elders are to be treated. I direct Commissioners to work as a team to develop one comprehensive cultural sensitivity training for all government and casino employees. The training will be guided by our Elders and inclusion experts and will strengthen our entire community.

Some days, even in a long and dark winter, there is a very bright sunrise streaming through clouds that lights up the sky, the snow, and frozen earth. Today, there are rays of hope in our future.

We have been through one of the worst years in modern history. The whole world has. But we know there are better times coming. Where do we find the strength and hope to move on?

I have hope that the Biden-Harris Administration will reverse the policies that hurt Indian Country and restore policies meant to protect our lands and resources, especially slowing down climate change. I have hope that the new Administration

will bring justice back to the Justice Department and that the Indian Health Service will finally receive more funding as we recover from the pandemic.

I see hope in our ability to win the legal battle about our reservation boundary. I see hope in an economic recovery. I see hope in science and medicine and the vaccines that have been developed in record time. The world will soon be safer again.

Mille Lacs Band Members are people of great strength. So many times before in our history, we have stood our ground. In 1855, we were promised a permanent home. We were told we could stay here for one thousand years and longer. In 1863, they tried to move us, and again in the 1880s. At that time, Shaboshkung asked the federal negotiators, "Is the one thousand years up...that the great father sent you here?"

Shaboshkung would not be moved. And still today, we are the Non-Removables.

Almost 100 years ago, our ancestors were fighting another global pandemic — the Spanish flu. The first jingle dress was created right here at Mille Lacs to help heal the sick during that time. Our ancestors met the disease with our resolve, our medicine, and our prayers. Our community survived.

That character that was passed down to us by our ancestors — that strength, determination, stamina, and grit — that resilience is the greatest gift they passed on to us. Their blood, the blood of warriors, runs through our veins. The will to face down any opponent, stand our ground, and fight is within us.

But especially the ability to get up and fight another day. The ability to rise to any challenge, and then rise again.

Our Anishinaabe values, our compassion for others, and our resilience will show the world how to get through a crisis.

History is not something that fate decides. History is made by people of vision and courage. We have plenty of both. When our history is written, future Band members will define us not by how we suffered through tragedy, but by how we persevered despite tragedy. Even when socially distant, we are still united by our blood, by our history, our culture, and our values.

In future years, we will tell our grandchildren about this time — about how we met this challenge and how we did not just survive, but came out stronger and more unified.

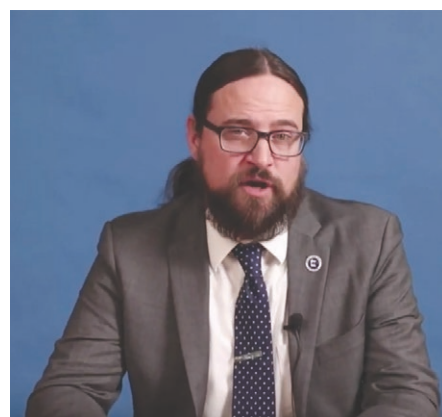
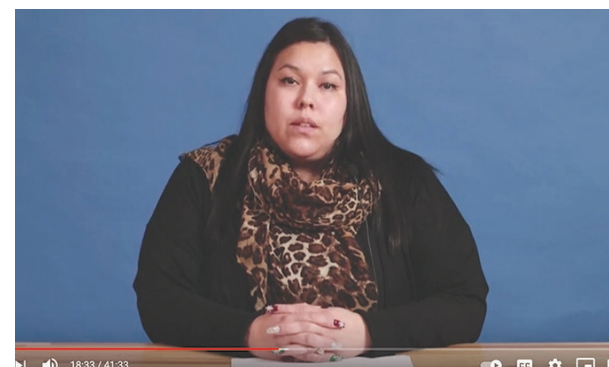
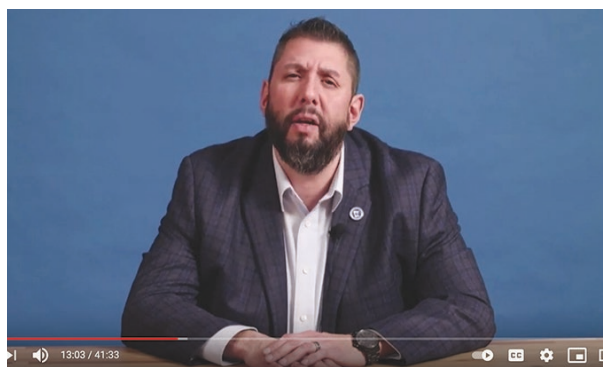
And so even after the most difficult year many of us have known, the State of the Band is still sound and strong.

The strength comes from all of you.

If there is one thing we have proven, it is that no virus can stop us as a Band or take away our spirit. Despite what we have lost, despite the grief and hardship, we will be stronger and more determined because of this.

We owe that to our ancestors and to future generations. We are Anishinaabe strong, but we are also Anishinaabe Resilient. And we always make a comeback.

I wish all of you the best in 2021. Miigwech!



Mille Lacs Band Commissioners provided video updates as part of the State of the Band broadcast. They also provided written reports that were sent to Band members prior to the event. Top: Joyce Shingobe (Education), Peter Nayquonabe (Administration/Community Development), Nicole Anderson (Health and Human Services). Bottom: Mel Towle (Office of Management and Budget), Caleb Dogeagle (Solicitor General), Katie Draper (Natural Resources), Joe Nayquonabe Jr. (Corporate Affairs). The videos can be found at youtube.com/millelacsband.



District I Representative Virgil Wind has gifted baby baskets to families of new Band members.

AN EMERGING COLLAGE OF HOPE

Baby baskets brighten lives during a difficult time

By Virgil Wind District I Representative

The year 2020 changed all our lives with every turn, whether it was the stay-at-home orders, mask mandates, or distance learning and teaching for all of our families. It was an unprecedented year full of uncertainty and fear. This pandemic intensified lots of the troubling things that we all face daily, and it led to an increase in the need for more and more support.

To me, life has always been about perspective. We can choose to wallow in the dark or we can choose to focus our energies on something new and bright. This new position wasn't without initial challenges. As I became acquainted with it, the realization came that the end-of-life ceremonies would always be part of this new venture. This is something that we take very seriously and are honored to be a part of. It is, however, one of the darkest times of our lives and can be very daunting. We want the families to know that we are always here to help in any way we can during these difficult times.

An awesome idea was suggested to me by one of my brothers during a conversation. He said, "If that is something that you will always have to do, then why not celebrate on the other end of it?" The conversation then shifted to the brightest time of our lives. We both spoke of the births of our children and how no matter what we were facing, just the simple thought of that day or those days could bring an instant smile and a feeling of gratitude and hope. With that came the idea that we would celebrate life. We would engage and welcome every new life into our district, and that would bring light to the darkness and tribulations of this new job.

In December, I was honored to be able to gift our first two baby baskets to a brand-new baby boy and girl in our district.



This basket included some necessities and also some very cool new gadgets to comfort the newborn. To those families, I thank you! I am proud to be your representative. For years to come, these and future recipients will represent the light in the darkness. We are currently working on the process for knowing when a baby is born to a Band member within our district and will need the families' help.

Please let our office know when a new bundle of joy arrives. The only return we ask is that we are able to take a picture to add to our emerging collage of hope. The first two recipients were gracious enough to allow us to use their pictures for this story.



LEGISLATIVE BRIEFS

Monday, December 28, 2020: Band Assembly participated in a Three Branch Meeting through conference call and Zoom. The meeting was attended by all Elected Officials, as well as Commissioners and staff from all three branches. The agenda consisted of an update and comments from Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd, and topics raised by District Representative, including judicial planning, funeral numbers, and communication. The Judicial Branch brought forward the topics of criminal jurisdiction and the Tribal Law and Order Act. Executive Branch commissioners and the Solicitor General also gave updates.

Band Assembly occurred through conference call and Zoom. A confirmation hearing was held for Joseph S. Nayquonabe, Commissioner of Corporate Affairs, whose term expired on December 31.

Eighteen amendments to land lease descriptions were approved.

Wednesday, December 30, 2020: Roll call votes confirmed Joseph S. Nayquonabe for a four-year term as Commissioner of Corporate Affairs and Darla Roache as a member of the Housing Board position. Three bills were introduced and confirmed:

— Band Assembly Bill 19-02-17-21: A Bill of Supplemental Appropriation for Disbursement of Long-Term Savings Investment Income Funds for an Adult Band Member Economic Support Payment for February and March 2021 in the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2021.

— Band Assembly Bill 19-02-18-21: A Bill of Supplemental Appropriation for February and March 2021 Tribal Per Capita Distribution for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2021.

— Band Assembly Bill 19-02-19-21: A Bill of Supplemental Appropriation and Budget Revision/Transfer for Health & Human Services, Natural Resources, and Judicial for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2021.

Two contracts were approved, along with five foster care licenses and three hardship requests.

A Joint Session of the Band Assembly occurred through conference call and Zoom. All elected officials were present. Valerie Harrington, Krista Klug, and Scott Tossey were approved to serve on the TERO Commission, and Susan Klapel was approved as Chairperson of the Gaming Regulatory Authority.

Wednesday, January 6: A confirmation hearing was held with Catherine Colsrud, who was nominated by Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin to serve in the at-large position on the Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures board.

A contract was approved for Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures to provide implementation of Tribal Economic Business Incubator through the Minnesota Disaster Recover Fund Grant through the St Paul & Minnesota Foundation in support of coronavirus recovery in the community. Contract end date is April 30, 2021.

Tuesday, January 12: In accordance with statutes, the session was convened at the Annual State of the Band Address and reconvened after the address. Band Assembly voted down a nomination from Chief Executive Benjamin for Catherine Colsrud to serve on the Corporate Board, At-Large Position. The nomination was taken from table with a roll call vote.

Legislative Briefs continued on page 9

STATE OF THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

PANDEMIC, LEGISLATIVE PROCESS, AND INVESTMENTS

By Secretary-Treasurer Sheldon Boyd

Good morning, all. We are doing things a little different this year due to national health issues we are all aware of, and, therefore, I would like to greet all those in attendance online, and all those in attendance here today.

It's that time again to talk about things and look forward to next year. The sun is low and the days are short, but the natural sense among people is the knowledge that the days will get longer, the sun will climb, and brighter days are coming. This gives people thoughts of renewal and hope for better days this coming year.

During these short days, the old people from years ago spoke about sitting around listening to Elders tell stories. It's those times, and even today, a person will remember a single phrase that stays with them for the rest of their life.

I'm going to refer to some of those phrases today from my past.

This is also the time chosen by our past leaders to speak about government, matters that affect the people of the Band overall, and to share a sense of renewal and better days ahead.

Hopefully these words will find you whether you are in historic communities across the north, or the homes and apartments of metro areas across the state and nation. Whether you're waiting for a ride, sitting at your kitchen table, or watching this on your phone someday in the future, it is with warm greetings and great respect that we in the Legislative Branch say to you all, "Boozhoo! We hope you are well today!"

This past year was unprecedented in memory for many of us.

I remember hearing an older person once use the word "fire" as a description of calamity, both natural and man-made, that can take lives, disrupt communities, and cripple nations.

There is a fire in the political world that needs to be sorted out in Washington, D.C. and nationally. We all can all help by not letting issues further divide us, agree to disagree, and continue our shared journey.

Locally, there were stories of confrontation and yelling in the old community centers in public meetings, where those same people would be seen outside after talking and sharing a good laugh.

There was a fire this summer of social statement nationwide, by people of all social backgrounds, continuing the uncomfortable conversation of lifetimes of inequalities in this country because of a person's skin-color. This stirred a nation to look in the mirror where many of us experienced a mental and emotional inventory.

But what did not discriminate for almost all of us is this pandemic.

The witness of human reactions to this pandemic now gives some insight to the pandemics in history books and the realization of the complexities of human behavior.

This pandemic can also be put into perspective regionally as one of many fires to befall the Anishinaabe and our neighbors over time.

We all must be thankful to health professionals, parents, grandparents, and our children for caring for one another. We also offer our condolences to those who lost loved ones during this mental and physical test of nature.

The old people talked of flood stories and smallpox, termination and removal. Recent generations have witnessed firsthand the fires of alcohol and powerful drugs. These are times to take stock in the strength of our communities, support each other, and try to remember and speak of the best of things.

Someone will remember a phrase you say that will stay with them the rest of their lives.

Improving the Legislative Process

Moving on now, I'll highlight some of the many accomplishments of the Elected officials of the Legislative Branch, and staff that I have the pleasure of working with.

And I'll close with what I believe to be the next major financial step for the Mille Lacs Band.

Under Mille Lacs Band Law, the Secretary-Treasurer has a dual role as Speaker of the Assembly for the Legislature.

All these positions of service and duty are tasked with being responsible for accomplishing set goals, and to improve the general welfare of the people within the specific authority granted by Mille Lacs Band law.

Among the duties of the Speaker of the Assembly are "To require the prompt recording of the Assembly's acts and deeds."

It is with great pride to announce on September 2, 2020, Legislative Order 30-20 was passed by this Band Assembly ordering live streaming of sessions to commence June 1, 2021.

The Band Assembly chambers have recently been retrofitted with five new large screens, a new audio video system, microphones, and a portable system for Band Assembly to broadcast from locations where connectivity will allow.

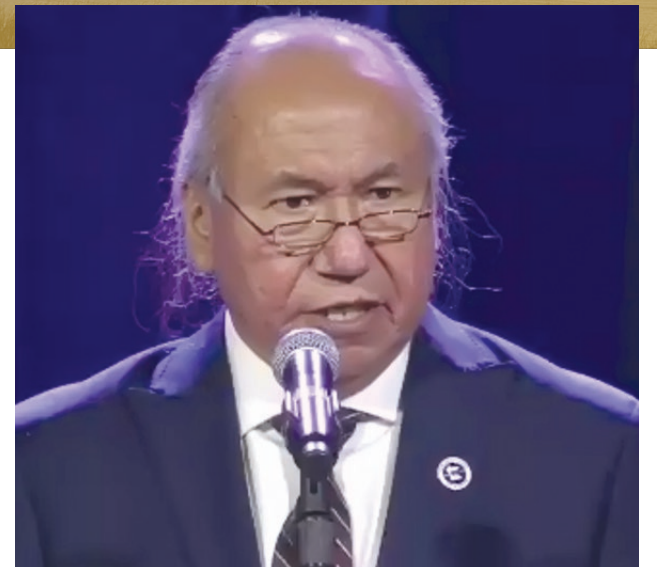
"THE OLD PEOPLE TALKED OF FLOOD STORIES AND SMALLPOX, TERMINATION AND REMOVAL. RECENT GENERATIONS HAVE WITNESSED FIRSTHAND THE FIRES OF ALCOHOL AND POWERFUL DRUGS. THESE ARE TIMES TO TAKE STOCK IN THE STRENGTH OF OUR COMMUNITIES, SUPPORT EACH OTHER, AND TRY TO REMEMBER AND SPEAK OF THE BEST OF THINGS."

This live streaming will change the experience of Mille Lacs Band members who choose to listen to the processes in legislative sessions. Membership will see that government is made up of people, with flaws and strengths, insight and emotion, and be able to observe the many issues that are involved with tribal government moving forward.

Also by Legislative Order 27-20, passed on July 8, 2020, some legislative staff positions were reclassified to permanent level status. This is intended to aid in the transition of power within the Legislative Branch by having institutional staff available to assist incoming elected officials with historic knowledge to impact the learning curve of elected office.

I remember an older person saying that a long time ago, there was a person that walked through the village and talked out loud about things that concerned all the people. This person kept people informed with a common message that helped people know what was going on.

On December 2, 2020, this Band Assembly passed a bill, then Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin signed into law the creation of an Office of the Revisor of Statutes within the



Legislative Branch of government. This was a project of Band Assemblies in years past that was brought across the finish line by the hard work and collaboration of this Legislative staff. Congratulations to all involved.

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes will independently care for the language in statutes for consistency and timeliness, prepare draft legislation for District Representatives, and the publication of statutes. Also key is the law authorizes the establishment of a Tribal Register where policies and official orders from the elected officials, appointed officials, and three branches of government can be accessed.

This leads to the announcement that the Statutes of the Laws of the Mille Lacs Band will be published for the first time in over 15 plus years in hardcover, soft cover, online, and searchable electronic form. Please congratulate staff attorney Hanna Valento for the hard work on this project, Legislative Counsel Adam Candler, Valerie Harrington, and the collaboration of all staff to make this possible.

An important addition last year was the first Mille Lacs Band member as Commissioner of Finance in over 15 years, Mel Towle. Mel brings the unique perspective of being a Mille Lacs Band member, voices that perspective, and has the skill-set to work productively with all involved and keep the finances of the Band his priority. Congratulations Mel.

Caring for Investments

No other elected position in Mille Lacs Band government is as specifically bound to overall financial matters than the Secretary-Treasurer.

There are two specific duties under Band law that were the driving force behind today's report: "To receive and receipt for all monies paid into the Band treasury and safely keep the same until lawfully disbursed by formal appropriation" and "Investigate financial irregularities."

In what may be the hallmark project of this term is a first-time independent assessment of five non-gaming financial entities of the Mille Lacs Band.

During the gaming era, the Mille Lacs Band has responsibly put revenue to work in investment portfolios — the "war chest" or "nest egg," if you will, for unforeseen times both natural and man-made.

While carrying out duties, the knowledge came that many tribes across the nation do not have the internal resources to effectively manage investments. Tribal governments have come to rely on outside people, investments advisors, and fund management resources over the years. The Mille Lacs Band has been no different.

State of the Legislative Branch continued on page 9

State of the Legislative Branch continued from page 8

Nationally, tribes are beginning to take a more active role in the management of financial assets.

Relying on outside financial investment services has existed for as long as the Mille Lacs Band has had money to invest, some 20 plus years, and resulted in long relationships built on friendship and trust. Within the first six months of taking office, it became apparent there needed to be review of those investment relationships.

There were common sense questions about the investments of the Band where there were no ready answers — questions based on the duties of the Secretary Treasurer under Mille Lacs Band Law.

There is a basic position that has helped keep focus, and that is “Investment managers are not doing the Band a favor by simply investing our money; the Band is doing them a favor by allowing them to invest our money, and the Band must regularly inventory those services.”

Upon taking office, Commissioner of Finance Mel Towle believed financial services should be put out for bid regularly.

How does the Secretary Treasurer act in good faith and exercise great care in keeping the funds of the People of the Mille Lacs Band safe?

Staff began a nationwide search for a balance of financial expertise and experience of working with Native American tribes to perform a first-time-ever independent analysis of the investments of the Mille Lacs Band.

On July 16, 2020, the Mille Lacs Band Assembly authorized a contract between the Secretary-Treasurer and Sovereign Finance LLC to perform this evaluation.

Please extend thanks to Wendy Merrill, Christine Jordan, Adam Candler, Rich Berley, Mel Towle, Shawn O’Keefe, Brianna Boyd, and many others who offered advice, freely shared their knowledge on investments, and the unwavering support of our elected officials.

Finally, thanks also to the staff of Sovereign Finance LLC, Jeff Lamb, Todd Early, Courtney Monteiro, and their respective staff.

The scope of the evaluation included five financial entities: the Benefits or 401Ks of the Mille Lacs Band government, Woodlands National Bank, the St. Paul Foundation, where Band funds were invested in 2011 for philanthropic purposes, and finally long-term and minor trust investment portfolios.

“AN ELDER ONCE SAID THAT WHERE INVESTMENTS ARE CONCERNED, IT’S JUST LIKE THE TRADER AT THE TRADING POST A LONG TIME AGO. THEY HAD THE UPPER HAND, CONTROLLED PRICES, MADE HUGE PROFITS, AND ALL THE BUSINESS KNOWLEDGE WASN’T SHARED.”

Of the first three, and I’ll be brief here for purposes of time, the Mille Lacs Band 401k benefits package received passing grades, the St. Paul Foundation received high marks for investment management of the Band funds, and Woodlands Bank also received high marks when compared to banks of similar size and assets.

We should all congratulate Woodlands Bank President Ken Villebro, management staff, and employees of all branches of the Woodlands Bank system.

Please keep in mind, with the exception of the Woodlands Bank System, all these non-gaming financial entities need substantial restructuring and improvement. We have a lot of work ahead of us.

An Elder once said that where investments are concerned, “It’s just like the trader at the trading post a long time ago. They had the upper hand, controlled prices, made huge profits,

and all the business knowledge wasn’t shared.”

The Mille Lacs Band owes Sovereign Finance LLC an immeasurable debt because this report sheds light on 20-plus years of a financial relationship that was based on factors that were counterintuitive to proper and accountable oversight according to investment industry standards.

This report is several hundred pages long and was presented to the elected leaders of the band on October 14, 2020, on behalf of the Secretary-Treasurer. Due to the nature of the financial information and the economic security of the People of the Mille Lacs Band, at this time, this report remains under review.

The evaluation report has shown a need for improvement at every level of these investment management relationships. It’s time for the Mille Lacs Band to take a more active role in investment management.

Like other tribes, we have outgrown decades-old financial safeguards and must retool our internal processes and standards. We can and we will do better.

Now, this evaluation is just the first step. There is a steep learning curve of the investment management principals involved, and changes will be recommended moving forward. The internal investment structures of the Mille Lacs Band need to be redesigned to accommodate our investments now and in the future.

For now, these proposals are fluid in nature and will include a permanent investment fund management entity meant to endure changes in leadership and establish internal protocols to begin responsible management moving forward.

A call will be made to membership to begin career preparations to meet this potential new field in tribal government — a new field similar to the early 1990s when casino management was a just a dream.

We must begin managing our investments for the coming generations, and we can do it ourselves.

We can begin exploring the meaning of a phrase by Courtney Monteiro of Sovereign Finance during the report presentation: “Financial Sovereignty.”

That concludes an update on current matters within the Legislative Branch during the past year.

Recognition

It is with profound thanks to recognize current Legislative staff who have made my time here so enjoyable: Parliamentarian Darcie Big Bear, Legislative Staff Kiana Morrison and Semira Kimpson, Staff Attorneys Adam Candler, Joe Jensen, and Hannah Valento. These people under Legislative Order are meant to be the permanent core of the Legislative Branch moving forward.

Legislative Affairs Director Brianna Boyd and Chief Communications Officer Valerie Harrington are Mille Lacs Band members that have taken on critical roles and will continue to operate through leadership circles for years to come.

Special thanks goes to the Staff of the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, and Deanna Sam of the Department of Motor Vehicles. Unsung heroes, period.

Also, the overall accomplishments mentioned today are only made possible by the partnership of the elected leaders of the Mille Lacs Band and their staff: District I Representative Virgil Wind, District II Representative Marvin Bruneau, District III Representative Wally St John, who comprise the Mille Lacs Band Assembly, and Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin.

These individuals have shown a willingness to have frank discussions, sort out differences, and above all, compromise, and keep the interests of the People of the Mille Lacs Band a first priority.

Now on the business of the day. This is the start of the 3rd Session of the 19th Assembly. The Mille Lacs Band Assembly will now hear the State of the Band Address by the duly elected Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin and the State of the Judiciary Address presented by the Chief Justice Ramona Applegate.

LEGISLATIVE BRIEFS

Tuesday, January 12 continued from page 7

The following were approved:

— Band Assembly Bill 19-03-20-21: A Bill of Supplemental Appropriation for Administration for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2021. Sponsor: District III Representative.

— Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Housing Department Drug Policy.

— Five foster care licenses.

At a joint session with Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin, enrollment applications were approved and denied.

Wednesday, January 20: Band Assembly occurred through conference call and Zoom.

Band Assembly approved Legislative Order 31-21: A Legislative Order Establishing Procedure for When the Band Assembly Receives a Critical Nomination from the Chief Executive. The Order had been tabled on January 6.

Band Assembly approved a contract addendum to add additional funding to the Red Circle contract to complete nine videos and provide two additional video shoots and production pieces for Aanjibimaadizing language projects. The addendum also extends the contract end date from December 30, 2020, to September 30, 2021.

Band Assembly denied contracts with Keller Paap, Chato Gonzalez, Indigenous Enterprises, LLC (Anton Treuer), and Michael Sullivan Sr., to provide continued consultation for Language revitalization, serve on the Aanjibimaadizing Ojibwemowin Strategic Planning Board, and assist with the MLB book development project.

— Band Assembly Bills 18-04-16-20, 18-04-17-20, and 18-04-18-20 for Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures (“Corporate Ventures”), a corporate body politic of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (“Band”), for the purpose of appropriating funds and authorizing expenditures to Corporate Ventures.

Band Assembly approved the following:

— Resolution 19-03-43-21: A Resolution Approving the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Housing Department Drug Policy.

— A contract addendum for the Justice Service Agreement to provide the Tribal Court’s FullCourt Case Management System. Contract end date is December 31, 2021. Contract was approved.

Work sessions: the Legislative Branch held work sessions on Thursday, December 31, Thursday, January 7, and Thursday, January 14. Staff Attorney Joseph Jensen gave introductions to corporate law, partnerships, and LLCs. A road map for Title 16 (Corporate) statutory revision was presented.

On Thursday, January 21, the work session agenda included a line-by-line redline version of Bill: Advisory Committee (Title 17), followed by discussion, questions, and comments on Rules of the Band Assembly and Title 3. The road map for the Title 16 (Corporate) statutory revision was discussed.

On Tuesdays, Band Assembly held pre-Band Assembly meetings to discuss the agenda for the Wednesday meetings.

For more information on the Legislative Branch, see millelacsbandlegislativebranch.com or millelacsband.com/government/legislative-branch.

STATE OF THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

Boozhoo. It is my duty and pleasure to deliver the 2021 State of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Judiciary Address. 2020 was a year of unprecedented challenges for the Band's third branch of government. I am proud to report that the judiciary and court staff have responded and adapted outstandingly. We found ourselves needing to focus on the primary mission and purposes of the Court of Central Jurisdiction and strategizing how to fulfill those in the face of the stress and strain of a global pandemic.

The role of the Band's judiciary is multifaceted. The Court acts as the keeper of safety and peace in the Band's territory, resolves disputes in a culturally respectful manner, addresses the root causes of child neglect and family dysfunction, and creates opportunities for Band member and community healing. I will share with you the major ways in which the Court has adapted to continue to deliver services and our continuing progress toward creating a more user-friendly and effective justice system.

Before I delve into those efforts, I would like to introduce my fellow Justices. Associate Justice Elmer Nayquonabe is the District I representative on the Court of Appeals. We welcome Sylvia Wise, who was appointed on December 16, 2020, as the Associate Justice from District III, filling the vacancy left by Justice William Premo's resignation.

One of the most significant events of 2020 for the Court was the departure of District Court Judge David Christensen. Judge Christensen served as our trial-level judge for the past six years and, many years before that, in other legal positions with the Band. He answered the call of his tribe, the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara, to come home and serve as their Chief Judge. We are grateful for his many years of enthusiastic service, the concern and compassion he showed to all who came before him, and his initiatives designed to enhance the Court's operations to better embody Mille Lacs Band values, customs, and traditions.

Our new District Court Judge Richard Osburn, a member of the Cherokee Nation, returns to the position which he held from 2008 to 2014. He started his six-year term on October 13, 2020. In the intervening years, he served as a State of Minnesota judge hearing both unemployment and Department of Human Services matters, and as Assistant District Attorney for Muskogee County, Oklahoma. With his return to the Mille Lacs Band judiciary, he is fulfilling his goal of working in Indian Country.

Our deep appreciation goes out to our Special Magistrates Tammy Swanson, Joe Plumer, and B.J. Jones, who readily pitched in to hear and decide cases in the interim between Judge Christiansen's departure and Judge Osburn's arrival. Without their assistance, many cases would have been delayed for weeks or months.

The task of converting a court system that is accustomed to handling all filings and hearings in person, to one that is 100 percent remotely conducted was complex and further complicated by how quickly the transition needed to occur. We are so fortunate to have Band member Gilda Burr, our longtime Court Administrator, leading the Court's efforts. Gilda faced the challenge of having to accomplish this while furloughing in varying respects 70 percent of the Court staff. We thank her for her outstanding efforts and long hours dedicated to keeping the court running seamlessly. The court staff persevered and adapted to shifting shortened work schedules, reduced paychecks, new no-contact filing systems, and communicating remotely with numerous attorneys and litigants. To move to a system that was physically safe for judges, staff, attorneys,

clients, and witnesses while maintaining confidentiality took many steps. Chief Justice Orders were issued which adopted procedures to reduce physical contact in court proceedings, suspended the requirement that affidavits be notarized to avoid personal contact, and authorized the electronic filing of pleadings and orders. District Court Rule 134 was developed and approved to make the new e-filing system permanent. Gilda was able to access the Band's COVID-relief grant funds to contract for a new system, File and Serve Express, that will put a comprehensive professional e-filing system in place by mid to late February 2021.

Once a system was implemented to avoid the need to file documents in person, the Court then turned to implementing ways to conduct hearings and trials without personal appearances. The Court could not use ordinary conference phones or Zoom because those methods are not secure, and the confidentiality of the proceedings would be put at risk. After significant research and investigation, the decision was made to implement MiCol-lab for telephonic hearings and Web-Ex for video trials. Keith Modglin and the IS department staff deserve our profuse thanks for getting all this technology installed and running in record time. The new system has worked well; however, the Court needs to stress the importance of persons involved in the hearings and trials to call in. Failure to call in results in delays that prevent the completion of cases and may even result in children remaining in out-of-home care longer than necessary. The District Court will be instituting a new process utilizing appearance bonds in criminal matters to better ensure defendants appear for their arraignments. Additional information about the bond process will be distributed and posted on the Court's web page soon.

"THE COURT ACTS AS THE KEEPER OF SAFETY AND PEACE IN THE BAND'S TERRITORY, RESOLVES DISPUTES IN A CULTURALLY RESPECTFUL MANNER, ADDRESSES THE ROOT CAUSES OF CHILD NEGLECT AND FAMILY DYSFUNCTION, AND CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR BAND MEMBER AND COMMUNITY HEALING."

The silver lining to the pandemic cloud over 2020 may be that the Court of Central Jurisdiction is now one of the safest and most technologically advanced tribal courts in the United States. In 2021, we will continue this enhancement trend with a focus on automating court forms so that anyone can fill them out and file them from their computer or smartphone.

Despite shutdowns and stay-at-home orders, people were still in need of the protection and services of the Court. In 2020, 1,287 cases were filed, and of those, the Court closed 973. There were 1,435 hearings and the District Court issued 3,160 orders.

The Court takes seriously its obligation to keep the concept of *zhawenimaa* at the center of all its proceedings and practices. Title 24, section 2002 of the Mille Lacs Band Statutes states our judicial philosophy as follows:

"Peace and harmony between the people of the Band is necessary to ensure the survival of the Anishinaabe. At times, the circle of peace and harmony amongst the people will be disrupted. This circle of life needs to be restored in a manner



Chief Justice Ramona Applegate delivered the State of the Judiciary Address via Zoom on January 12.

that permits the integrity of the individual to be maintained so that the community will continue to grow and prosper ... [The goal is to] strengthen and help those who come before the Court so that they may experience a good life."

Unfortunately, we have seen the circle of life close for far too many Band and family members during 2020, be it because of the ravages of COVID-19 or due to increasing numbers of drug overdose deaths. The New York Times characterized COVID-19 as a "national relapse trigger." In the first half of 2020, drug overdose deaths increased by more than 30 percent in Minnesota from 2019. Even more alarmingly, overdose deaths of people between the ages of 25 and 34 were up 58 percent. The State believes that the increases are due to the introduction of fentanyl-laced oxycodone. Tragically, the opioid epidemic rages on in the shadow of the pandemic.

It is critical, therefore, that the Court of Central Jurisdiction strengthens its partnerships with tribal departments and state agencies to intensify its efforts to combat substance abuse and the devastation it wreaks on individuals' lives, their children, families, and the Mille Lacs Band as a whole. We know that the approach the Court has been using so far has been successful.

I would like to share the story of a young Band member mother and her children who have recently been reunited as a result of the Tribal Court child welfare process.

Several years ago, a Band member baby tested positive for opiates and methamphetamine at birth. The tremors and distress of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome set in immediately, and the little baby had to be transferred to the neonatal intensive care unit at Children's Hospital. Both of his parents were homeless and deeply involved in their drug use. The baby was fortunate that a sober Band member relative was willing to be a foster care placement. Even after their child was placed into foster care, the parents continued to use and became involved repeatedly with the criminal justice system. The parents' relationship was characterized by severe domestic violence. A few months after the baby was born, the mother separated from the baby's father and became sober. Unfortunately, her sobriety did not last. In the following year, she gave birth to another infant who also tested positive for methamphetamine and opiates. The mom admitted to having used heroin daily before her second child's birth. The second child joined the older sibling in foster care. After two years in foster care, the relative could not care for the children any longer, and the children were placed in non-relative foster homes. For varying reasons, they had to be moved twice to new foster homes after that. The case remained open for the next two years.

Finally, the mother again finds herself in jail, and as a condition of probation, she is ordered to attend in-patient drug treatment. She enters into the Recovering Hope program in Mora, Minnesota.

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ROBERTA DUNKLEY

HAPPY TO GIVE

By Brett Larson Inaajimowin Editor

When the pandemic hit last spring, Roberta Dunkley knew the importance of providing first responders with masks and other protective equipment. That's because Roberta was a 911 dispatcher for 28 years in Minneapolis before retiring in 2015. In fact, she took the call in 2007 when the 35W bridge collapsed over the Mississippi River.



Roberta Dunkley

Roberta is a member of the Red Lake Nation and a Counselor Aide with the Mille Lacs Band's Substance Use Disorder program. When she retired from her job in the Twin Cities, she moved to Red Lake and took care of her mother, and then to Hinckley to be closer to her grandchildren, who live in Finlayson.

"I have a really good life. My mom taught me really well," said Roberta. "I grew up in Little Earth, graduated from South High, took a little college. I've been working since I was 13 years old."

Along the way, she took up sewing. "I learned to sew after I was an adult," said Roberta. "I wanted to buy a jingle dress, and I had given this lady half of the money for one, and she never came through. So I bought one and was looking at it, and I thought, 'I could make this.'"

Last spring, Roberta was visiting with a woman who knew of a boys and girls club in Montana that was looking for masks.



Roberta told her she sewed, and the woman gave her the address. Roberta made a few dozen and sent them off, receiving a kind letter back for her effort.

She's made masks for Chiminising and Leech Lake Elders and for nurses and CNAs in District III. She even left on one the door of the Chief Executive's office, and Melanie gave her a shout-out in one of her video updates.

Once she got started on masks, Roberta just kept sewing. "We were doing mask-making classes on Tuesdays so any community member could learn how to make a mask," she said. "We started in September because kids were going back to school. I sent my grandkids 20 masks for the bus drivers to keep on their buses in case somebody didn't have a mask."

She has accumulated a lot of material over the years, and friends keep giving her more.

"This fall, I made Halloween masks, and now I'm making Christmas masks," she said in an interview just before Christmas. "I made eight masks today and sent them off because people wanted masks for holidays."

As a counselor's aide, Roberta helps out the assessors with



Roberta's niece requested a mask in memory of George Floyd after he was killed in May. Roberta was happy to help.



case management and treatment coordination, and that spirit of service continues when she's off the clock.

"If anybody asks me for a mask, I just give it to them," she said. "It makes me happy to give to someone in need."

State of the Judiciary continued from page 10

This is a highly effective program that allows mothers to have their children with them as they work on their recovery. The mother seriously engages in the program, becomes sober, and earns the chance to have overnight and weekend visits with her two children. While in treatment, the mom discovers that she is pregnant for the third time. But this time she is drug-free and receiving regular prenatal care. She graduates from Recovering Hope, but she is homeless. She knows she can't be reunited with the children if she doesn't have safe, sober, and stable housing. Contact is made with the Wraparound Program, but unfortunately, there are no houses available.

The mother's parents, like so many parents of addicted children, had previously been afraid that their daughter would relapse, and consequently had been reluctant to have her move into their home. By this time, however, the mother has been sober for over a year, she has a job, and she is being an excellent parent to her children. Her parents welcome her and the children into their home. She maintains her sobriety and she gives birth to a healthy, drug-free third baby. In October 2020, the Court determined that the reasons that led to the children being removed from their mother had been addressed and that, as a result of the mother's hard work and commitment and her strong family supports, the Court and Family Services' oversight was no longer necessary, and Judge Osburn dismissed the case.

While this is a happy ending, it did not come about quickly or smoothly. It was approximately four years between the time the first baby was born and removed from the parents' custody and the day the case closed. Two different judges, three different Deputy Solicitor Generals, six different tribal social workers, and three different county social workers came and went on the case. In those four years, the two older children were moved to four different placements. It took several extended family members to come forward to care for the children.

There can be no dispute that the reunification process took too long. Even twelve months in out-of-home care in the short life of a child can seem like an eternity to him or her. It is docu-

mented that long-term out-of-home care can negatively impact a child's development. The Court hopes that using a different approach to child protection cases can be a vast improvement and achieve family reunification more quickly.

Our improved approach, the Family Healing to Wellness Court Program, also known as Noojimo'wigamig Inaawanidwag, or Healing Journey, has been in the planning stage for over three years. This will be an interdisciplinary collaborative team program that will have the participation of tribal departments, the schools, and relevant state courts and agencies. This approach will improve communication and speed service delivery to individuals and families suffering from the effects of substance abuse. We were thrilled to learn in November 2020 that the Band's application for funding for the program from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, was fully funded for \$877,477.00. We express our gratitude for the excellent work of the Grants Department that collaborated with court staff to prepare the successful application. The Band was one of the only 30 — out of a multitude of tribes applying — to be funded.

As we move through 2021, the Court of Central Jurisdiction will continue to meet the justice needs of the Mille Lacs Band community. We will be improving access to court services in ways that are safe, efficient, and compassionate. We know that even in the face of the pandemic, we need to redouble our efforts to address the opioid epidemic. We also know that the Court will need the continued support and collaboration of our fellow governmental branches, the Chief Executive, and the Legislative Branch, to bring about health and healing together. The Court is looking forward to working with Band member Elders and other community members who are willing to share their recovery experience, strength, and hope with others striving to become and stay sober. There is a post on the Sober Squad Facebook page that says, "If trauma can be passed down generation to generation, so can your healing." Working together, we can help this generation to heal.

Miigwech for the opportunity to give you this State of the Judiciary Address.

READY TO QUIT COMMERCIAL TOBACCO? HELP IS AVAILABLE!

Quit Partner, Minnesota's family of free quit-nicotine programs for people who smoke, vape, or use smokeless tobacco, offers an American Indian Quitline, which was developed with guidance from the community.

The American Indian Quitline offers free and specially designed support for American Indians to quit commercial tobacco while honoring the sacred use of tobacco in the community. Kim Akiwenzie, a Minnesota Ojibwe, is an American Indian Quitline coach.

"One of my Elders and medicine friends described working with medicine and gathering medicine as being a helper," Kim says. "In this same notion, I am here as your helper, to help you be commercial tobacco free."

"You are medicine, your life is sacred — you have gifts and talents to serve others and to live the good life our Creator intended for you."



STATE AND LOCAL NEWS BRIEFS

Committee seeks \$1 billion for racial reconciliation:

A Minnesota House committee formed in response to George Floyd's killing presented a 45-page outline of policy proposals on Tuesday that covered economic development, housing, education, public safety, health, and the environment. The committee's recommendations included a new \$1 billion fund to improve economic opportunities in communities of color, and the formation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to respond to deep-rooted issues of generational wealth loss and trauma based on racism. *Source: startribune.com.*

Minneapolis waterfront development to include Dakota:

The Mississippi riverfront around the Stone Arch Bridge in Minneapolis will begin to transform in the next decade, thanks to a new federal agreement signing over a portion of the Upper St. Anthony lock and dam. Friends of the Falls is working with the Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI) to engage the Native American community about the untold history of the area. "This whole area was very sacred to the Dakota people, who were here first," said Robert Lilligren, president of NACDI, who said NACDI and Friends of the Falls have been working to rethink how the riverfront can be accessed for both recreation and cultural education. *Source: kare11.com.*

U of M finally on track to return sacred objects:

Nine decades after the founder of the University of Minnesota's anthropology department dug up more than 2,000 Native objects in New Mexico, the university is finally taking concerted action to bring them home. The university's Weisman Art Museum has come under particular fire for dragging its feet on the process, launched 30 years ago when Congress passed the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), requiring federally funded institutions to return Native remains and sacred objects to tribes. The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council passed a resolution chiding the university for its "resistance" and accusing it of treating "sacred funerary objects ... as university property." *Source: startribune.com.*

Bands seek to halt Line 3 construction:

The Red Lake and White Earth Bands of Ojibwe have asked the Minnesota Court of Appeals to pause the construction of the Line 3 oil pipeline project until lawsuits challenging the project's approval can be heard. Construction has already begun in earnest on the pipeline with more than 3,000 people working on the project and another thousand expected to join them soon. The tribes argue that if a stay is not granted, then their lawsuits will be "pointless and moot," because they anticipate that the court would not issue a final order on their legal challenges until July 2021. *Source: mprnews.org.*

Art show highlights plight of missing and murdered:

"Bring Her Home 2020: Sacred Womxn of Resistance" opened at All My Relations Gallery in Minneapolis on January 11, by appointment only, and will run through February 12. It is also available for viewing via allmyrelationsarts.com. Fourteen Indigenous artists contributed to the show, including Minnesota-based Julie Buffalohead, Dyani White Hawk, Graci Horne, Lorie Pearson, and Cole Redhorse Jacobson. *Source: startribune.com.*

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

RESERVATION BOUNDARIES MARKED

For many years, the "Mille Lacs Indian Reservation" sign on Highway 169 didn't mark the border of the reservation; it marked the border of the Band's District I trust lands.

The reservation boundary is actually several miles to the south, where Highway 169 crosses into South Harbor Township in the City of Onamia.

On January 7, the Minnesota Department of Transportation erected several signs where state highways cross the boundary: on 169 in Onamia; on 169 at the border between Crow Wing and Mille Lacs counties; on Hwy. 27 at the western and eastern borders of the county and reservation; and on Hwy. 47 at the north boundary of Isle Harbor Township. The signs read "Misi-zaaga'iganiing / Mille Lacs Reservation / Established in 1855 Treaty."

The Band released the following statement on the signs: "These signs will not affect our pending lawsuit, but are an important reminder of the establishment of our Reservation. Our ancestors withstood a decades-long campaign by powerful timber companies, non-Indian settlers, and federal, state, and county officials to force them from the Reservation, which included acts of violence and the burning of the Band's homes and villages. They remained here against all odds. Given our history, and the modern-day efforts of Mille Lacs County to erase all memory of our Reservation, we greatly appreciate the State's public recognition of its establishment in 1855."

The original 61,000-acre reservation, as established in the Treaty of 1855, includes the townships of Kathio, South Harbor, and Isle Harbor — the whole south end of Mille Lacs Lake, including the cities of Isle and Wahkon and part of Onamia.

The federal government continued to recognize the reservation, but in recent decades, state and county politicians have



A new sign marks the boundary of the 1855 Mille Lacs Reservation south of Garrison on Highway 169.

claimed that it was disestablished. As a result, the highway sign marked the trust lands, not the original reservation.

On February 20, 2020, Attorney General Keith Ellison and Governor Tim Walz reversed the position of their predecessors by recognizing that the 1855 Reservation still exists.

In a written statement released on Friday, February 21, 2020, Ellison acknowledged that former state officials have expressed different positions. "But those positions did not take into account recent legal developments," Ellison said. "The State's current position is consistent with the federal government's interpretation."

FINDING NEW HHS FACILITY IS NOW EASIER

The new Health and Human Services Center, Ne-la-Shing Clinic, and District I Community Center have been completed in the Sher development on Timber Trail Road in District I. Visitors to the facilities are met with the natural beauty of the surrounding wild habitat and new homes.

However, due to the location, many clients and guests were having challenges finding their way to the campus, so staff in the Community Development Department conducted research on placement of directional signs on local highways.

They worked with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, which has consulted with tribes on a government-to-government basis to develop a Community Wayfinding Program that gives tribes the opportunity to include their name and logo on destination panels.

A lot of work went into designing the signs determining placement. The Mille Lacs Band, MnDOT, and TAPCO (the company the Tribe uses for signs) discussed the size, fonts, and wording in a months-long process. When the footwork was completed and approvals made by the Mille Lacs Band, the signs were put out for production.

During the week of January 12, Public Works started installing the first of 16 Community Wayfinding Sign panels. Public Works started close to the HHS campus and is working their way out.

Travelers will notice some differences between some of the panels. For example, the panels on US Highway 169 will not have dual language, but the signs off of the highway will. You will also not see the word "clinic" on the signs along Highway 169, since the Ne-la-Shing Clinic is not generally open to the public.

Public Works is able to install a couple of these signs per week with an approximate completion date of February 1. Public Works still follows all the same rules for general contractors when installing signs.

Due to cold weather, crews needed to use ground thawers to heat the ground in order to install the brackets to hold up the signs.



Signs on Highway 169 are entirely in English, while other signs will also be in Ojibwe.



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

A SMILING VOICE ON THE TRIAGE LINE

Jenna Kuduk came to Ne-la-Shing Clinic at a challenging time

Many Band members have come to know Jenna Kuduk — by name, face, and voice — since she joined Health and Human Services as Clinic Manager in December of 2019 — shortly before COVID-19 hit.



Jenna answers the COVID-19 triage line, and in that role she has fielded many calls each day to answer questions. Band members have come to know Jenna as someone who will always return calls and messages.

"I am very honored to work for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Health and Human Services," said Jenna. "The communities and lake have been a part of my youth and have given me great memories — memories I am now passing on to my two children as we return back to enjoy summer and winter activities on the lake. I enjoy the communities, the culture, and the stories and traditions that are so inspiring and powerful."

Nicole Anderson, Commissioner of Health and Human Services, wants Band members to know how much Jenna has given to the community in her brief but challenging time with the Band. "Jenna hit the ground running when she first joined Team HHS and has been such a great asset," said Nicole. "I am certain that when Jenna accepted her role with HHS, she never imagined she would soon be navigating through a global pandemic, but here we are, and we couldn't imagine doing this work without her."

As Clinic Manager at the Ne-la-Shing clinic, Jenna supervises the nursing team and lab staff at District I, II, and III clinics. She has also supervised the screen team beginning last fall.

"My role is diverse, and each day is different, which is something I really enjoy," said Jenna. "One of the highlights of my role is partnering with our public health team to plan and conduct Band-wide COVID-19 testing and vaccinations."

She has been impressed with the growth and teamwork the HHS staff have shown during the COVID-19 pandemic — everyone from the screen team at the front door to maintenance, scheduling, nursing (public health and clinic), lab, medical records, behavioral health, compliance, and pharmacy. "Everyone under our HHS umbrella has offered to help and support in some way and have always been there when a call for community work is needed. We live by the motto 'Team work makes the dream work.'"

Jenna was born and raised out in the country near Milaca, and her family spent many summers and winters on Mille Lacs Lake. "One of my favorite childhood memories was my futile attempt to swim to Spirit Island with friends," said Jenna. "Needless to say, we did not make it and were grateful for a rescue."

As she was growing up, her grandparents were her inspiration. They led by example, remaining true to their beliefs, which instilled in Jenna the values of perseverance and respect. "I started through nursing school as a single mother, and



"Team HHS" is glad to have Jenna Kuduk on board as Clinic Manager.

it definitely brought challenges and struggles, but in the end it was all worth it," Jenna said. "No matter the struggles and the obstacles, I knew that if I just kept pushing through, my grandparents would always be proud of me for my efforts."

Jenna's career path came as no surprise to those who knew her. "From a very young age, helping others was always something I enjoyed and did as second nature," she said. "My late grandmother always told me that my caring heart was going to lead me to do big things."

Her career in the field began at age 16, when she was hired as a nursing assistant at the nursing home in Princeton. "The 10 years I worked with the elderly taught me to see through their eyes," Jenna said. "I valued the stories I heard, the friendships I made, and the lessons I learned."

After completion of her LPN and then RN degrees at Central Lakes College, Jenna went to work in mental health, an area of nursing she is passionate about because it allows her to support families as they develop resiliency and skills to manage new life challenges.

Her first leadership position was as a supervisor in a mental health clinic in Minneapolis, where she managed staff and supported clinic operations and patient/client care. She is a strong advocate for care coordination, which supports patients/clients to ensure they are getting the services, education, and guidance they need.

"The inspiration of my grandparents is something I pay forward, encouraging individuals who have an interest in health care to consider nursing," Jenna said. "What is so awesome about a nursing career is you can take your career path many different directions, meet great people, and truly influence change in the life of others."

HHS Executive Director Jan Manary agrees that Jenna is a valued member of the staff and community. "Jenna is amazing," said Jan. "She is committed, she leads by example, she puts the patient/client/family in the center of all we do. We have had long days and not once have I seen Jenna not smile and offer help even when she knows she has more work than time at that moment. She has been on call more nights than not, and she when she answers the phone it is like that patient/family calling is the only thing she has to focus on, a true professional."



On January 15, District I Representative Virgil Wind hosted a luncheon for his office staff, event volunteers, and employees from the Community Development and Natural Resources departments in appreciation for their work and support of District I Office events and ceremonies. "We couldn't do it without you!" said Virgil.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

Hank Adams, Indian Country's "prolific genius," walks on:

Henry 'Hank' Adams passed away on December 21, 2020, at the age of 77. Adams was called "the most important Indian" by Vine Deloria Jr., because Adams was involved with nearly every major event in American Indian history from the 1960s forward, including the "fish wars" in Washington. Adams was a lay-lawyer representing tribal fishing people and was the last person to speak in the Tacoma case that led to the Boldt decision, which affirmed the tribal right to fish. Adams was also instrumental in resolving the 1972 takeover of the BIA and the standoff at Wounded Knee in 1973. *Source: indiancountrytoday.com.*

Standing Rock prioritizes vaccine for speakers of Dakota and Lakota:

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe is prioritizing the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to those who speak Dakota and Lakota languages. Frontline health care workers already had begun receiving the vaccine before priority was given for native language speakers in mid-January. Standing Rock Tribal Chairman Mike Faith said, "It's something we have to pass on to our loved ones: our history, our culture, our language. We don't have it in black and white; we tell stories. That's why it's so important." Only about 300 people on the reservation are fluent in the language. *Source: apnews.com.*

Will new appointees stop BWCA mine?

In 2016, the administration of Barack Obama halted a controversial mining project near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. President Trump revived it once he took office. President-elect Joe Biden chose Tom Vilsack, who was secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture under Obama, to return to the job. The USDA oversees the Forest Service, which manages the Superior National Forest, where Twin Metals wants to mine. Biden also tapped U.S. Rep. Deb Haaland of New Mexico to lead the Interior Department, which controls the mineral deposits in the forest. The moves were celebrated by those who want to stop Twin Metals and taken as a bad sign by the project's supporters. *Source: minnpost.com.*

Men trek across country to raise awareness of MMIW:

Running and biking daily with the name of a missing or murdered Indigenous woman or child painted in red on their arms — and with the red hand print that has come to represent the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women movement painted on their faces — Colville Tribal member Willi Bessette joined tribal descendant Duane Garvais Lawrence and Lakota member Ethan LaDeaux on a cross-country run and bike ride that started at the Peace Arch in Blaine, Washington, and ended on the Massachusetts coasts near Plymouth Rock. *Source: tribaltribune.com.*

Memorial Ride canceled, but not for all:

An annual trek to Mankato to remember tribal members who were executed following the U.S.-Dakota war was officially canceled due to the coronavirus, although a small group of horseback riders made the journey anyway. The annual Dakota 38 + 2 Memorial Ride begins when Dakota riders start a 330-mile journey from Lower Brule, South Dakota, to Mankato. Other riders, as well as runners, join them along the way. Despite the cancellation, at least some riders made their way to Mankato. *Source: mankatofreepress.com.*

GE-NIIGAANIZIJIG

COOKING CLUB — HEALTHY, TASTY, AND FUN!

Ge-niigaanizijig — a merger of the Niigaan and Wiidoo youth programs — was brand new when COVID-19 hit last spring, so the staff had to act fast to shift programming online and keep kids learning and engaged in positive activities.

Several clubs — art, books, fitness, cooking, and music — have been created for youth in all districts, in addition to a Youth Assembly (as described in the January issue of *Ojibwe Inaajimowin*).

In District 11a, clubs are led by Youth Mentors Rylea Durbin and Jackson Pratt under the supervision of Jen Gahbow.

Rylea has been a part of youth programs in Chiminising for many of her 22 years. After moving to the area with her grandparents at age 14, Rylea, a member of the Cherokee nation, participated in the program while attending Isle High School.

While still in high school, she worked as a temp with the elementary kids, and after graduation in 2017, she took a job with the Niigaan program, which morphed into Ge-niigaanizijig at the end of 2019.

Rylea was there for the transition to online programming through Zoom, which was challenging, but worth it in the end.

Just before COVID-19 hit, Rylea had come up with the idea of creating clubs for youth in the program.

"We decided to do that because some of our kids weren't very active," said Rylea. "They were bored and wanted things to do, and the clubs let them choose what they like and give them something to do besides play video games and hang out."

Although the fitness club hasn't taken off via Zoom yet, everyone has chosen at least one club, and several of the kids are involved in two. Rihanna has the record currently as a member of four clubs: books, art, culture, and cooking.

The cooking club is the most popular, with eight members from Chiminising. "Cooking club is something I really enjoy," said Rihanna. "I like the freedom we get and how we also get to learn how to cook. And I like that we get to try cooking new meals."

Makiah agrees: "I love the cooking club. It teaches me to make really good food, and my favorite dish was the pork chops in soy and honey sauce."

Rylea likes the fact that it teaches life skills — not just cooking, but safety in the kitchen, food safety, and nutrition. They expected it to be "a big mess, especially over Zoom,"

CHIEF TO YOUNG BAND MEMBERS: DREAM BIG!

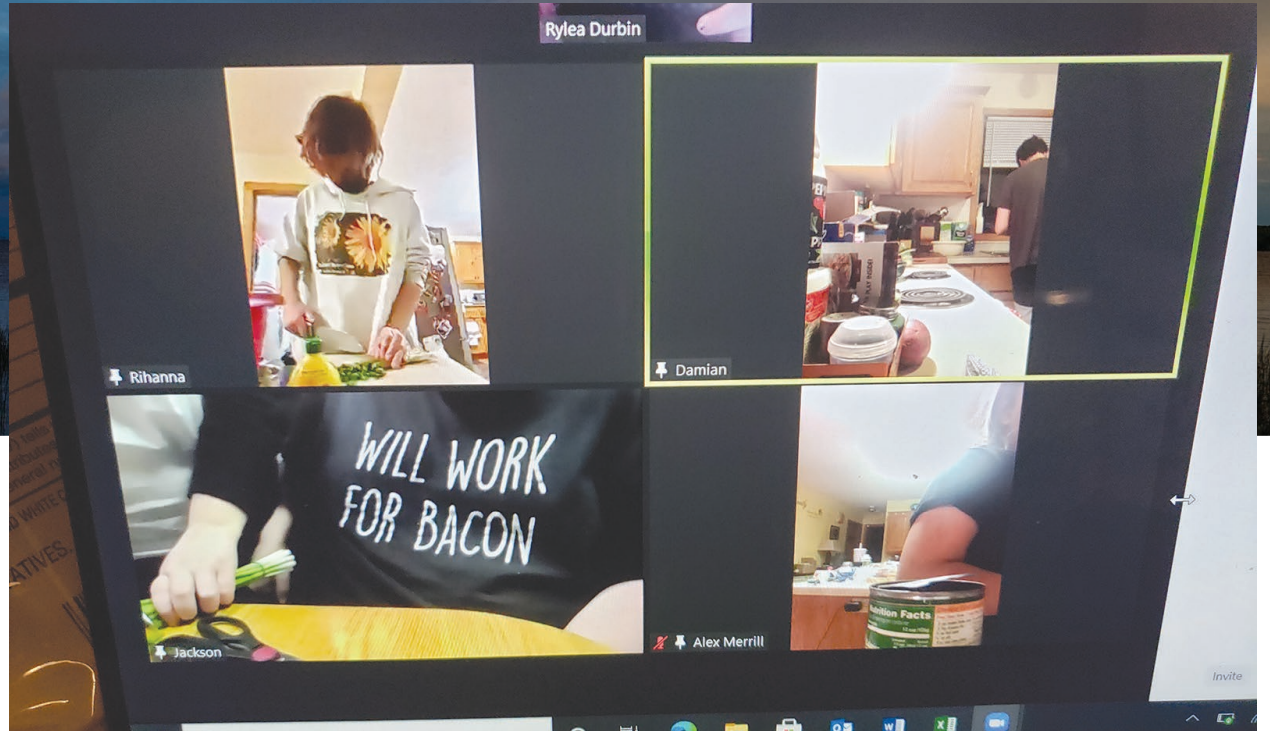
January 20 was a huge day for many reasons — the end of a tumultuous four years (not to mention the previous two weeks), and the start of a new era.

In her State of the Band Address on January 12, Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin cited one of the reasons she was looking forward to the day: the swearing-in of Kamala Harris as the first woman Vice President and the first Vice President of color.

"We are witnessing another glass ceiling being shattered forever by Kamala Harris," said Melanie. "To anyone who has a young daughter, granddaughter, or niece in your homes, there is one thing I ask you to do on that day. Please make certain your TV is on a channel showing the Inauguration. We need all our little girls to watch this historic event so they know their dreams — no matter how big — can come true."

(If you missed it, it's not too late to sit down with your kids and find a video online.)

When Vice President and President Biden won the election in November, Melanie said, "I'm excited for the day when I meet Senator Harris again and get to say, 'Madame Vice President.'"



Rylea said, but it hasn't turned out that way.

That may be because kids have some control over the content. They've chosen the dishes they've learned to cook, including chicken wings, Chinese pork chops, mac and cheese, apple pie, pasta, and burritos.

Program staff do the shopping and drop off supplies the day before or the day of the class.

"COOKING CLUB IS SOMETHING I REALLY ENJOY. I LIKE THE FREEDOM WE GET, AND ALSO HOW WE LEARN TO COOK."

— RIHANNA

One of the highlights for Rylea was a session imitating the show "Chopped," where cooks create dishes out of a collection of "mystery ingredients."

Mentors dropped the ingredients off at the students' houses, and the kids used their creativity to work wonders. "They did amazing," said Rylea. "It really got their minds flowing, and it was fun to see what they've retained from the previous classes. One made Zuppa Toscana, some made stir fry, some made Italian pasta. One made nachos, but using potatoes."

While the cooking club is the most popular, Rylea expects the others to catch on, especially once the pandemic subsides. (It's hard to teach beading via Zoom!)

She encourages youth in all three districts to get involved in the Ge-niigaanizijig program.

"It's a great opportunity for any kid who wants to be surrounded by peers and get experience they need in the future," said Rylea.



SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS MUST UPDATE RECORDS

Students who received funding in the fall of 2020 and are enrolled for spring term need to provide Michele Berger in the Scholarship office with a copy of fall grades, a new class schedule, and bill for tuition.

New students need to submit an application packet, along with a copy of class registration and billing that contains remittance information and student ID number.

Remember that FAFSA is a requirement of the Scholarship program, and the program is a NEED-BASED source of funding, rather than a scholarship that would issue max term amounts.

These documents may be faxed to 320-532-7826, emailed to mlb.scholarships@millelacsband.com, or sent via postal service to the Scholarship Program at 43408 Oodena Rd, Onamia, MN 56359.

Make sure your address is up to date with Enrollments and OMB. The Scholarship Office has had mail returned, including GED/HD academic achievement awards.



STOCKING PROGRAM HITS NEW HEIGHTS

From humble beginnings in 2015, the Mille Lacs Band's ogaa (walleye) stocking program has grown from small fry to keeper size — and anglers from all over central Minnesota are netting the benefits.

In January, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources gave a shout-out to Mille Lacs and White Earth Bands' fisheries programs in a news release about the state's stocking efforts. The Band works cooperatively with the State to release fry into lakes that the State lacks resources to stock — lakes like Sullivan in Morrison County and Ann in Kanabec County.

According to Katie Draper, the Band's Commissioner of Natural Resources, the tribe's hatchery has come a long way while costing relatively little to establish and maintain.

"We're in the process of building a really effective hatchery to help protect both the ogaa and our cultural traditions, and it's costing Band members very little," said Katie. "Miigwech to our former Commissioner, Susan Klapel, for supporting the program in its early stages, and to our biologists for getting it started and keeping it going."

Susan's work was prompted by a Joint Resolution from the Band Assembly and Chief Executive, who saw the need for the hatchery as surveys of the Mille Lacs ogaa population showed a troubling decline in the species.

Beginning in the spring of 2016, a team of biologists and technicians with help from Band member spearers, harvested walleye eggs and milt from speared fish, mixed them together, incubated them, and hatched them in a District I building.

From there, they were transferred to rearing ponds that were formerly part of the old wastewater treatment facility.

The original team of Fisheries Biologist Carl Klimah and Aquatic Biologist Chad Weiss has expanded to include Keith Wiggins, a Band member who was recruited from Oregon, where he had experience at some of the nation's top fish hatcheries. Commissioner Draper and Director of Resource Management Kelly Applegate oversee the program.

The original hatchery was built with donated equipment at a cost of about \$10,000. The first year, a million fry were produced, a total which has grown to 6.4 million fry, which have been stocked in area lakes and the Band's rearing ponds.

Namachers Lake in District III, which was devoid of walleyes, now has a healthy population, and other lakes are in line for restoration as well. Namachers will not just be a recreational fishing lake but will also be a storehouse for the unique Mille Lacs strain of walleyes, in case climate change or other factors continue to affect the Mille Lacs walleye population.

Some of the ogaa fry — along with yellow perch — are raised into fingerlings in the rearing ponds, which will provide tribal youth and Elders educational and harvest opportunities. These fish are now ready to be harvested by tribal members,



Mille Lacs Band Member Charlie Sam shows a Nay-Ah-Shing student how to mix ogaa eggs and milt together to fertilize them. "You are making life," said one of the Ojibwe teachers.

and a mini-aquatic ecosystem has been created.

In 2020, the hatchery also successfully reared over 100,000 fathead and sucker minnows that were used to feed fingerling walleye as well as to increase forage bases in reservation lakes. Despite setbacks in 2020 due to COVID-19, the program still managed to hatch and stock around 1 million walleye fry into a local lake and pond.

"When fingerlings are desired, we stock our walleye fry into our fish ponds and raise them to a size between 3 and 6 inches," said Carl. "We then stock them into lakes within and outside the 1837 Ceded Territory. In total, over 71,681 walleye fingerlings have been stocked, which provided key support for recreational and subsistence fisheries. Walleye fingerlings are currently being produced to maintain tribal lake walleye populations. In addition, the walleye fingerlings are also being used to restore walleye populations in smaller tribal lakes that no longer have walleye in them."



Mille Lacs Band Member Cameron Weous shows Nay-Ah-Shing students how to pull a fyke net to collect ogaa.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE SHARES LAWSUIT UPDATE


On Wednesday, December 23, after the January issue of *Ojibwe Inaajimowin* went to the printer, Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin shared a message with Band members via YouTube and the website regarding the Band's current lawsuit with Mille Lacs County et al. In case you missed it, the update is as follows:

On Monday, December 21, the Federal Court issued a ruling on the Band's lawsuit against Mille Lacs County, the County Attorney, and the County Sheriff. The ruling addresses several threshold issues in the case. It does not address the merits — that is, whether the Mille Lacs Reservation still exists and the scope of the Band's law enforcement authority within the Reservation.

In the ruling by Judge Susan Richard Nelson, the court determined that it has "jurisdiction" to hear the Band's case, that the Band has "standing" to pursue its case, and that the County Attorney and County Sheriff are not "immune" from the Band's claims. In ruling that the Band has "standing," the court agreed with the Band that the actions of the County Attorney and County Sheriff had interfered with the Band's law enforcement authority and that their actions had harmed Band police officers, the Band police department, and public safety on the Reservation.

These rulings mean that the Band's case can proceed to a decision on the merits. The parties are currently preparing motions that will address the Reservation boundary issue. Those motions will be filed in February and argued in March 2021.

For the Chief Executive's video update, see youtube.com/millelacsband.





WAAWAASHKESHI (VENISON) TENDERLOIN WITH MASHKIIGIMINI-BAASHKIMINASIGAN (CRANBERRY SAUCE)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb Waawaashkeshi
- 1 cup cranberry juice
- 3 Tbsp mustard (Dijon or other)
- 8 ounces chicken stock
- 4 ounces cranberry sauce
- Salt/pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Make the marinade by mixing cranberry juice and mustard. Salt and pepper the venison. Cover with marinade and place in the refrigerator for at least six hours. When ready, remove the meat from the marinade.
2. Heat a skillet (preferably cast iron) with two tablespoons of low fat butter and one tablespoon of oil. Brown the tenderloin over medium-high heat until it reaches medium-rare (approximately five minutes on each side).
3. Remove and cover tenderloin with tin foil to rest the meat (it will still be cooking).
4. Deglaze the pan with chicken stock; reduce by half and add the cranberry sauce. Cook until the marinade thickens; slice, drizzle marinade over venison and serve with a bed of manoomin.



The Band's decommissioned wastewater treatment ponds in District I are being redeveloped into rearing ponds and youth/Elder fishing ponds. The map shows future plans for the site.

GET THE VACCINE — FOR YOURSELF, AND FOR YOUR ELDERS

By Dr. Arne Vainio *Mille Lacs Band Member*

My wife's grandmother is almost 95 years old and we visit her and her husband Rainbow on a regular basis. Both of them grew up in poverty and their strength and their humor rises from that. We have meals there as often as we can and they tell us stories of hard times and past lives.

At least, that's how it used to be before the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, we talk to them on Skype and they figured out how to set that up on their computer. It's good to see them face to face, even if it's on a screen.

It doesn't help when their house lost water pressure or when the oven quit working. The temptation to go into the house to fix things is strong, but I want to keep our distance. I am around sick people in the hospital and I'm careful to wear the proper personal protective equipment I need. I wash my hands often and I keep my distance from people as much as I can.

Still, I know I am a risk.

Elders and those with chronic illnesses are most in danger of complications from COVID-19. There are people who don't think this is a dangerous disease because it only kills a small percentage of those who get it. So far that translates into over 300,000 deaths from this virus, and the daily death count in the United States is in the thousands.

There are parallels to the 1918 influenza pandemic. There were mask mandates then and there were protests against them. There were conspiracy theories that a popular brand of aspirin contained the virus. Travelers and gatherings spread the virus and over 50 million people died worldwide.

The science wasn't there in those days. Now it is. The COVID-19 vaccine was first delivered in the weeks before Christmas. The vaccine has been extensively studied in clinical trials. This is over 30,000 people for the Moderna vaccine and over 43,000 for the Pfizer vaccine.

Both vaccines use new technology and are messenger RNA vaccines. This means no virus particles are given. What is given is a message to your cells to make the spike protein we all know from the images of the virus. That spike protein causes your immune cells to form protection.

The first dose of the vaccine primes the immune system. When the second dose is given 21 or 28 days later, optimal immunity happens. When the immune system reacts to the second dose, some people can feel sick for 24 to 48 hours.

This can be a headache, body ache, chills, fever and other symptoms. These symptoms are NOT COVID-19, but a side effect of your own body's immune response. Medicines like Tylenol and Ibuprofen can help, and overall side effects from the vaccine have been mild.

With all the advances in medicine over the last century, the most impact has been from public health, clean air, clean water, and vaccines.

Right now, there isn't enough vaccine for everyone, and this means it will take time to build up immunity in the population. That means we need to continue to wear masks, keep our social distance, wash our hands frequently, avoid public gatherings, and sanitize frequently touched surfaces.

Is this a sacrifice?

Not compared to losing an Elder. Ivy and I go to her grandmother's house and we stand outside the window and we wave and we can talk on the phone. I can see the sadness and longing in Ivy's eyes and in her grandmother's. I can see the distance that pane of glass puts between them.

Hugs are out for now. Meals together are out. Setting up the air mattress and making pancakes in the morning is out.

We keep our distance because we want them to get through this pandemic. We need all of us, and we need our Elders. Our stories live in them.

We've been through pandemics before, but never with a resource like the COVID-19 vaccine. Don't believe the myths. I'll talk about the myths next time. Getting vaccinated not only protects you, it prevents the spread of the virus. Get the vac-



Dr. Arne Vainio, a Mille Lacs Band member, encourages Native Americans to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

VACCINE FACTS FROM YOUR PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Researchers around the world have been working at record speed to develop vaccines to combat COVID-19. Less than a year after the start of the pandemic, that goal is now a reality. The U.S. is among the countries that have begun vaccinating people against the virus. Two vaccines, one from Moderna and another from Pfizer-BioNTech, are now being distributed worldwide. Both vaccines need two shots to be effective. In December, both vaccines received an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the Food and Drug Administration.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccination options in the Mille Lacs Band Community, call the Ne-la-Shing Clinic at 320-630-0855.

Can the COVID-19 vaccine give you COVID-19? No. The COVID-19 vaccines currently being developed don't use the live virus that causes COVID-19.

Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have a history of severe allergic reactions? If you've had a severe allergic reaction to other vaccines or injectable medications, ask your doctor if you should get the COVID-19 vaccine. If you have a severe allergic reaction after getting the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, don't get the second dose.

Can pregnant or breastfeeding women get the COVID-19 vaccine? There is no research on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant or breastfeeding women. Talk to your health care provider about the risks and benefits.

Is there anyone who should not get a COVID-19 vaccine? There is no COVID-19 vaccine yet for children under age 16. COVID-19 vaccination might not be recommended for people with certain health conditions. Ask your doctor if you have questions or concerns.

Can I stop taking safety precautions after getting the COVID-19 vaccine? Keep in mind that it will take a few weeks for your body to build immunity after getting a COVID-19 vaccination. As a result, it's possible that you could become infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or after being vaccinated. Experts need to learn more about the protection that the vaccine provides before changing safety recommendations. Factors such as how many people get vaccinated and how the virus is spreading will also affect future recommendations. Information on this page taken from the Mayo Clinic website at www.mayoclinic.org.

Possible Side Effects of the COVID-19 Vaccine: The vaccine can cause mild side effects after the first or second dose, including fever, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, and pain, redness, or swelling where the shot was given. You'll likely be monitored for a few minutes after getting a COVID-19 vaccine to make sure you don't have an immediate reaction. Most side effects happen within the first three days after vaccination and typically last only one to two days.

Source: mayoclinic.org.

cine. Both doses.

This is going to allow all of us to cross that threshold and go inside without costing us our Elders.

Arne Vainio, M.D. is an enrolled member of the Mille Lacs

Band of Ojibwe and is a family practice physician on the Fond du Lac reservation in Cloquet, Minnesota. He is a member of the Association of American Indian Physicians and he can be contacted at a-vainio@hotmail.com.

GAMING REGULATORY AUTHORITY



Dedicated to providing protection, value, and regulatory excellence in gaming for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

UNDERSTANDING FRAUD

One of the express purposes of Section 1 of Title 15 — Gaming Regulatory Act is “to provide a statutory basis for the regulation of gaming on Band Lands to ensure that gaming is shielded from organized crime and other corrupting influences, to ensure that the Band is the primary beneficiary of the gaming operation, and to assure that gaming is conducted fairly and honestly by both the operator and the player.”

GRA-promulgated regulations, our operating procedures, and our mission is to provide protection over the tribe’s biggest revenue sources. Our casino operators and countless different industries face many of the same occupational fraud threats. Understanding fraud, its red flags, and its impact help us and casino operators prepare for and detect fraud. We hope you find the following statistics interesting and helpful as we do.

The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) 2020 Report to the Nations shared the following data on occupational fraud and abuse:

- Organizations lose 5 percent of revenue to fraud each year. That’s over 4.5 trillion lost to fraud globally each year;
- Typical fraud case lasts 14 months before detection at a loss of \$8,300 per month;
- Forty-three percent of fraud schemes were detected by a tip, and 50 percent of tips come from employees;
- Lack of internal controls contributed to nearly 1/3 of all fraud cases;
- Men committed 72 percent of all occupational fraud and also caused larger losses than women;
- Presence of Anti-fraud controls is associated with lower fraud losses and quicker detection;
- Twelve percent of fraudsters did not employ any attempts to conceal fraud;
- Occupational fraudsters who had been with their organization at least six years caused twice the loss of less-tenured employees;
- Sixty-four percent of occupational fraudsters had a university degree or higher; and
- Older occupational fraudsters caused much larger median losses.

At least one behavioral red flag was present in 85 percent of cases, and multiple red flags were present in 49 percent of cases. The seven most common red flags were:

- Living beyond means;
- Financial difficulties;
- Unusually close association with a vendor or customer;
- Excessive control issues, unwilling to share duties;
- Unusual irritability, suspiciousness, or defensiveness;
- General “wheeler-dealer” attitude involving shrewd or unscrupulous behavior; and
- Recent divorce or family problems.

For more information on occupational fraud and abuse, visit the ACFE 2020 Report to the Nations: <https://www.acfe.com/report-to-the-nations/2020/>.

To report any Mille Lacs Band Gaming Enterprise fraud, please call 320-384-4519.

The Mille Lacs Band Gaming Regulatory Authority (GRA) is an independent regulatory agency of tribal government established to separate the government’s regulatory function from the management function of the Gaming Enterprises.

More information and contact numbers can be found at <http://www.millelacsband.com/government/gaming-regulatory-authority>. You can also LIKE us on Facebook at Mille Lacs Band GRA.

GRA Board meetings are open to the public. Due to COVID-19, meetings are currently being conducted remotely using Zoom.

BAND MEMBER VOICES

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

By Randell Sam Mille Lacs Band Member

Aaniin. I’m Randell. I am a recovering alcoholic and addict. I want to share with you what helps keep me walking on the Red Road today.

There are a lot of ways to begin your journey on the Red Road to Wellbriety. One thing that I have noticed in Native communities is that a lot of people that start their journey to the minobimaadewiin want to give back to the communities that they had previously struggled in. That begins with service work. They say there is nothing stronger than the heart of a volunteer, but I say that there is nothing stronger than an addict in recovery that wants to give back as a way of making amends for any wrongs they may have done to their people.

I struggled with active alcoholism and addiction for over 30 years. It took a near-death experience for me to come to the realization that this was the wrong way to live. I was at the point in my addiction that I was throwing in the towel every single day. The issue I was having was that Creator continued to wake me up every morning. One day I decided enough was enough and that I had to get sober. It was through others in recovery, in my community, who entered my life when I needed them most, that I was able to achieve my goal of sobriety. It was because of them believing in me and accepting me just as I was, and witnessing how their service work accomplished miracles that I found hope that I too could recover. That I too could make a difference in my community. With that I want to give a shout-out to Sober Squad. Miigwech!

“ONE DAY I DECIDED ENOUGH WAS ENOUGH AND THAT I HAD TO GET SOBER. IT WAS THROUGH OTHERS IN RECOVERY, IN MY COMMUNITY, WHO ENTERED MY LIFE WHEN I NEEDED THEM MOST, THAT I WAS ABLE TO ACHIEVE MY GOAL OF SOBRIETY.”

As I started participating in local recovery groups on the Mille Lacs Reservation, and witnessing how others were giving back to my community, I was inspired to do the same. The more sobriety time I achieved, the more confident I became in my abilities to make a difference. My we’eh, Obizaan, mentioned to me years back that he had a vision that “I was here to help the people.” I didn’t fully understand this until I hit my rock bottom and started my journey on the Red Road. With the help of others, I began coming up with ideas to make a difference, and began putting them into action. It was our thoughts that we would recover so loudly that no addict would have to die quietly and alone. With that I came out of my shell and starting leading others to the Red Road. I do my best to lead by



Randell Sam with his friend in recovery Chaunte Ford.

example. This comes with discovering something about myself every day that will strengthen my recovery. Today I hold myself accountable.

Service work and participating in all community events is where I’ve found that I can be of the most use. I do this because I no longer have to live alone and isolated. Volunteering with Drum and Dance, Smudge Walks, and Recovery events all over the state of Minnesota is where I find the knowledge and skills that I can bring home to Mille Lacs and put into action to better our community. I have found that in service work I am filled with gratitude and joy. I am learning that a leader for Anishinaabe people listens to their people ... helps all their people. I have learned from my mentor, Joe N., that we must treat all people equally. I am no better or worse than any other person.

You will find me participating in our community, in events on and off the reservation, and supporting everyone and anyone that has a desire to find a better way of life. With the difficult times of this pandemic, I have had to become creative in ways to support recovery while keeping others safe. This is how Zooming Towards Recovery (ZTR) came about. With daily NA Zoom meetings, morning meditation meetings on Zoom, a Facebook page, and a group chat, we are supporting others and bringing people together in recovery so that they never have to feel alone and isolated. I’m happy to announce that the NA meeting “The Rez” will be starting back up immediately. This meeting will be held every Friday at 6 p.m. at the old District I community building on the Mille Lacs Reservation.

With that I want to say chi miigwech to everyone out there that is doing their best to make a difference in these unprecedented times that we are living in today. You know who you are! I may not have the answers to all the situations that we are going through today but I have the experience and knowledge of what not to do, and I will continue to be of service to my community and everyone that needs support.



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

As part of the Band’s Community Risk Reduction or CRR efforts, family services staff attended a full day of First Aid and CPR/AED training in January. 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.

GUEST SAFETY MEANS HOUSE RULES... AND A LOT OF SANITIZING.

Check out all we're doing at grandcasinomn.com.



Let your story begin.™

GRANDCASINOMN.COM



DID YOU KNOW?

WHY 'SUCKERFISH MOON'?

A 2017 article in *Indian Country Today* explains the name of this month like this: "The month gets its name in honor of the sucker fish, which sacrifices its life to sustain the Anishinaabe people," states a January 26 weekly e-newsletter from the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. "As the teaching goes, as the month of January gradually becomes February, the burden of hunger afflicted the Ojibwe. It was a time of great hardship, for food and game were scarce during Gichii Manidoo Giizis — The Great Spirit Moon (January). It was at this time that sucker fish, seeing the Anishinaabe suffering, decided to give his life so that the Ojibwe may live on. February was traditionally a time when the women would begin netting more and more suckers through the ice. Likewise, the men would increasingly find the sucker more plentiful when spearing through the ice or in open running water. This is why the sucker fish continues to hold great importance to the Ojibwe today. To everything is a place and purpose as the Ojibwe journey through the circle of life."

AAZHWAAKWASING NAMEBINI-GIIZIS 2021

By Nazhike Mille Lacs Band Member

Across

- 3. a lot of snow
- 10. misty, sprinkling rain
- 12. make a hole in the ice
- 13. spear fish through the ice
- 14. Snow
- 15. S/he has a cold face
- 16. Sucker(fish)
- 18. it melts
- 19. wet snow falls
- 20. crust on the snow

Down

- 1. a fish spear
- 2. S/he has cold hands
- 4. S/he eats snow
- 5. full moon
- 6. big snowflakes
- 7. the sun warms
- 8. ice
- 9. low clouds
- 11. late winter
- 17. rain is on the way

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

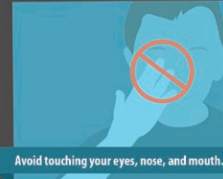
Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.



Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



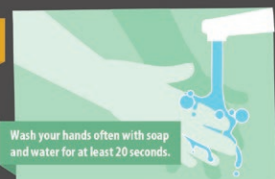
Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



cdc.gov/COVID19

BINGO WITH THE BAND.



MILLE LACS CORPORATE VENTURES

Every first Thursday of the month at 2 p.m.

Join us at Grand Casino Hinckley for a special bingo session exclusively for Mille Lacs Band Members.



Let your story begin.™

GRANDCASINOMN.COM



OPWAAGANAG — CEREMONIAL PIPES

By Lee Staples Gaa-anishinaabemod Obizaan and Chato Gonzalez Gaa-anishinaabebii'ang Ombishkebines

This article was originally published in the February 2016 issue of Ojibwe Inaajimowin. It is reprinted here to give Band members a chance to reflect further on Obizaan's teachings.

Mii dash noongom ani-dazhimagwaa ingiw opwaaganag gaa-miinigoowiziyangig anishinaabewiyang ge-ni-apenimoyan-gig giniigaaniiminaang.

Today I am going to talk about the ceremonial pipes that we were given as a people to rely on for our support in our future.

Ishke inendaagoziyan da-miinigoowiziyang a'aw opwaagan ge-aabajj'ad, mii-go gomaapii da-miinigoowiziyang. Ishke aanind a'aw Anishinaabe niwaabamaa adaawed inow opwaaganan waa-aabajj'aaain. Gaawiin i'iw akeyaa daa-izhichigesiin a'aw Anishinaabe. Inendaagoziyan a'aw opwaagan da-ayaawad, mii-go da-miinigoowiziyamban. Giga-miinigoog ingiw Manidoog. Gaawiin memwech gidaa-o-michi-gagwedwesiin da-miinigooyan gaye.

If it is meant for you to have a ceremonial pipe, at some point the Manidoog will provide one for you. I see some of our Anishinaabe purchasing the pipes that they want to use. Anishinaabe should not do this. If it is meant for you to have a pipe, you will receive one. The Manidoog will give you one. You do not necessarily go and ask for one either.

Azhigwa dash oshki-miinigoowiziyang a'aw opwaagan, booch a'aw asemaa miinawaa wiisiniwin gidaa-atamawaag ingiw Manidoog dabwaa-aabajj'ad a'aw opwaagan. Ishke dash a'aw opwaagan, niizhiwag ingiw Manidoog gaa-nakodangig da-ni-aabajjichigaazowaad ge-onjikaad dash a'aw opwaagan. Mii dash a'aw Gimishoomisinaan, mii a'aw bezhig a'aw Manidoog gaa-nakodang wii-naadamaaged o'ow akeyaa. Mii dash imaa asiniwid a'aw opwaagan, mii dash a'aw Gimishoomisinaan ezhiwiinind.

Once you are given a new pipe, you need to put tobacco and food for the Manidoog before you use the pipe. When it comes to the pipe there are two Manidoog that agreed to come together in this way and to form the pipe as we know it. One of the Manidoog that agreed to help this was our Grandfather Rock. That is the stone part of the pipe, his name is Gimishoomisinaan.

Mii dash awedi bezhig a'aw Manidoog gaa-nakodang gaye wii-naadamaaged o'ow akeyaa, mii dash a'aw Mitigwaabiwinini ezhiwiinjigaazod. Mii i'iw okij gii-ozhichigaadeg, mii imaa gaa-ondinigaadeg imaa mitigoong.

The other Manidoog that agreed to help in this way is Mitigwaabiwinini. That is where the pipe stem is made from, it comes from the tree.

Azhigwa dash dabwaa-aabajj'ad gidooopwaagan, asemaan gidaa-o-ininamawaa a'aw Anishinaabe netaa-apagizomaaged inow asemaan zagawed'idid a'aw Anishinaabe. Mii dash a'aw ge-bi-gaagiigidod, weweni da-apagizondamawaad inow Manidoon enabinid inow gidasemaaman naa i'iw giwiisiniwin. Mii imaa naaniigaan ge-ni-apagizondamawind gidasemaaman naa gaye giwiisiniwin ingiw niizh Manidoog gaa-nakodangig wii-maamawinikeniwaad imaa dash gaa-onjikaad a'aw opwaagan.

Before you use your pipe, you should take tobacco over to someone who knows how to talk at Anishinaabe ceremonies. That person can come talk and offer up your tobacco and food to where those Manidoog sit. The first place your tobacco and food is sent to is to those two Manidoog that agreed to come together to form the pipe.

Mii gaye imaa nanaandomindwaa ingiw Manidoog da-wenda-mashkawaamadaginig imaa ge-onjikaamadaginig azhigwa ani-aabajjichigaazod a'aw opwaagan. Miinawaa gaye mii a'aw ge-ni-naadamook giniigaaniiming da-ni-maminoseyan.

The Manidoog are asked to help making sure that the strength and power is there as the pipe is used. It is also asked that this is the pipe that will help you to live a good life in the future.

Ishke dash gaye wayeshkad a'aw Bwaan gaa-nagadenimag, mii a'aw opwaaganan gaa-miizhid. Mii dash iwapii gaa-miizhid inow opwaaganan, geget nigii-kagwaadagitoo iwapii. Nin-gii-wenda-onzaamiikaanaaban i'iw minikwewin enigaa'igod a'aw Anishinaabe. Mii dash imaa gii-mikwendamaan gaa-onji-naadamaagoowizid gigege-anishinaabeminaan. Mii i'iw wiin gaa-izhichiged, mii-go apane endaso-giizhik gii-asemaakawaad inow Manidoon.

It was a Sioux friend that gave me my first pipe. At the time he gave me the pipe, I was going through a difficult time. I had been drinking heavily at the time. It was at that time that I remembered how the old Anishinaabe got their help. What the old Anishinaabe did was put their tobacco out everyday for the Manidoog.

Ingi-kotaan da-aabiinj'igoyaan i'iw minikwewin, mii dash imaa gii-inendamaan endaso-giizhik da-aabajj'ag a'aw in-dooopwaagan. Mii dash imaa endaso-gigizhebaawagak imaa aabita-diba'igan awashime gii-tazhitaayaan gii-mooshkina'ag a'aw in-dooopwaagan. Mii imaa bangii asemaa gii-mamag gii-ininamawagwaa bebezhi ingiw Manidoog weweni gii-kanoonagwaa biinish dash imaa gakina ingiw Manidoog gii-asemaakawagwaa, mii dash imaa gii-saka'wag in-dooopwaagan. Mii dash i'iw ginwenzh eni-izhichiged a'aw Anishinaabe, mii-go iwidi eni-apiichitaad da-ni-asigishininid inow odasemaan enabinid inow Manidoon. Booch igo gomaapii oga-naadamaagooon inow Manidoon.

At the time I was afraid that the alcohol would get the best of me. So it was then that I decided to use my pipe on a daily basis. So what I did was every morning I sat there for a half-hour or more filling my pipe. What I did was take a pinch of tobacco and offer it to each of the Manidoog until I did that to all the Manidoog that I knew. It was then that I lit my pipe. As Anishinaabe does this on a continuous basis, his tobacco collects where those Manidoog sit. Eventually those Manidoog will help him.

Ishke dash i'iw akeyaa niin gaa-izhi-naadamaagoowiziyang i'iwapii, ingii-odisigoog imaa nibawaajiganing ingiw Manidoog. Mii-go gaa-izhi-moozhitooyaan inigokwekamig i'iw zhawendagoziwin gegigaabawiwaad ingiw Manidoog gaa-pi-naazikawijig, mii dash i'iw gaa-piingishkaamagag imaa niijchaagong. Mii dash i'iw gaa-miinonigoyaan.

The way I was helped by doing this, the Manidoog began to appear in my dreams. I could feel the compassion of those Manidoog stand with and I could feel that energy go into my spirit. It was that which straightened my life out.

Ishke dash i'iwapii gii-wenda-inigaawendamaan bimaa-diziyang. Ishke dash ingiw Manidoog gii-pi-naazikawiwaad imaa nibawaajiganing, mii imaa gii-moonendamaan zhawenimiwaad ingiw Manidoog. Mii igo awegwen a'aw Anishinaabe i'iw akeyaa eni-izhichiged, mii-go gaye wiin da-naadamaagoowizipan.

It was at that time that I was really pitiful. And when those Manidoog appeared in my dreams, it was then that I realized how much compassion they had for me. Any of our Anishinaabe who wants to do this will be helped in the same fashion.

Mii gaye gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amaagooyaan ani-aabajj'ag a'aw in-dooopwaagan, mii i'iw gaa-igooyaan, "Mii i'iw akeyaa ezhi-ganawenimad a'aw gidooopwaagan, mii i'iw akeyaa ge-ni-izhi-ganawendaman gibimaadiziwin." Ishke weweni doodawad, weweni gashkapinad, weweni biini'ad, miinawaa weweni nanaa'inad ani-giizhi-aabajj'ad a'aw gidooopwaagan, mii gaye gaawiin debinaak giga-ni-doodanziin i'iw gibimaadiziwin.

The teaching that I was given when I was first given my pipe, I was told, "The way you take care of your pipe, is the way you will lead your life." If you treat your pipe in a good way, take care in tying it up, doing a good job cleaning it, and putting it away in a good way once you are done using it, you will also do a thorough job in taking care of your life.

Mii gaye gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amaagooyaan da-ni-ganawaabandamaan aaniin ezhichigeyaan ani-biini'ag a'aw in-dooopwaagan. Weweni gidaa-doodaan i'iw akakanzhe. Gego imaa endazhi-apagiji-zigwebinigenig gidaa-atooiin i'iw akakanzhe. Mii-go izhi-bezhigod a'aw asemaa naa i'iw akakanzhe. Weweni dash gaye akakanzhe gidaa-doodaan.

I was also taught to be careful as I clean my pipe. You need to treat the ash respectfully. Do not throw it in the garbage. The tobacco and the ash are one in the same. So as a result you need to treat the ash respectfully.

A'aw nizigosiban Amikogaabawiikweban nigii-wiindamaag, baanimaa niwing midewid a'aw Anishinaabe, mii owapii ge-ni-aabajj'aapan inow mekadewizinin inow opwaaganan. Mii i'iw akeyaa nebowa a'aw Anishinaabe gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amaw-



ind. Mii gaye gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amawid a'aw nizigosiban, mii imaa niwing medewid, mii imaa niwing achigaazonid inow asemaan ani-mooshkinachigaazonid inow odoopwaaganan. Mii dash gaye nising medewid, nising achigaazowan inow asemaan ani-mooshkinachigaazonid dash odoopwaaganan. Mii-go aaniin minik medewid, mii iw minik dasing echigaazonid inow asemaan a'aw Anishinaabe.

My aunt Julie Shingobe had told me that it is not until Anishinaabe became fourth degree Mide that they are allowed to use a black pipe. Many of our Anishinaabe had been taught that same way. My aunt also taught me that that if you are fourth degree Mide your pipe will be filled with the fourth pinch of tobacco. Third degree Mide-person will take three pinches to fill their pipe. Whatever degree Midewiwin you are that is how many pinches it will take to your pipe.

Ayaapii-ko nibi-gagwejimigoo maajaa'iweyaan, "Daa-achigaazowan ina odoopwaaganan da-ni-maajinaad a'aw eni-aanjikiid?" Ishke dash mii iw mikwendamaan a'aw Nizigozisiban gii-ishkwaa-ayaad gii-nandodamaaged da-ni-maajinaad inow odoopwaaganan. Ishke gaye a'aw chi-mookomaan owapii gii-moonikaadang iniw anishinaabe-jii-begamigoon. Mii imaa gii-mikigaazowaad nebowa ingiw opwaaganag miinawaa wawaaj igo inow omidewayaan. Ishke mii imaa gii-wiindamaagoowiziyang mewinza a'aw Anishinaabe gii-na'ingaaazod, mii imaa gii-achigaazonid inow odoopwaaganan miinawaa omidewayaan.

Sometimes when I do funerals I am asked, "Can a pipe be buried with an Anishinaabe?" I remember when my aunt passed away; she had asked that she take her pipe with her. Also when the white man dug up a lot of the Anishinaabe graves, there were a lot of pipes and Mide-hides found in those graves. It was there that we were told that a lot of our Anishinaabe of the past were buried with their pipes and their Mide-hides.

Ishke gaye babaamaadiziyaan iko ani-naadamaageyaan imaa Anishinaabe ani-asemaaked, mii-ko imaa wenda-ayaangwaamiziyaan gaanag a'aw in-dooopwaagan da-baazhiji-dakokaanaasig a'aw ikwe. Geget mashkawaadiziwag ingiw oshkini-gikweg azhigwa wii-ni-ikwewiwaad. Naa-go gaye biinish i'iw a'aw ikwe apii eni-izhiwebiziwaad ikwewag endaso-giizis. Ishke imaa baazhiji-dakokaanaawaad inow opwaaganan, mii-go imaa da-aatenimawind i'iw ezhi-mashkawaadizid a'aw opwaagan. Noongom nebowa ingiw ikwewag gaawiin ogikendanzinaawaa ezhi-mashkawaadiziwaad ikwewiwaad.

Also in my travels to help Anishinaabe in putting their tobacco, I am extremely careful in hiding my pipe making sure that one of our women does not step over it. Our young girls who are in the process of becoming women are very powerful. Our women are also very powerful at their time of the month. If these women were to step-over a pipe, they would wipe out the power that exists within that pipe. Many of our women do not know how powerful they are as women.

AROUND THE RESERVATION

HHS OFFERS HELP DURING DIFFICULT TIMES

The Department of Health and Human Services understands that these are difficult times. The Behavioral Health Department (Mental Health) is here for the community. Our therapists offer services that assist people experiencing a wide range of mental health concerns. We want to make sure that all community members have the support that they need during challenging times. The Mille Lacs Band Behavioral Health Department also offers a crisis line. When you call, you will talk to one of our Mille Lacs Band therapists. The number to call is 320-674-4385.

We recognize that sometimes it is hard to reach out to people in your own community. If you need referrals or numbers to other agencies we can help with that, too.

ELDER FOOD DISTRIBUTION IS FEBRUARY 10 AND 11

The next Elder food distributions will take place on Wednesday, February 10, from 1 to 3 p.m. in reservation communities and on Thursday, February 11, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Urban Office, 1404 E Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis.

The February 10 distribution will take place at the following locations:

District I and IIa: Grand Casino Mille Lacs on the south side of the Convention Center

District III: Grand Northern Inn Hinckley parking lot

Items will include chicken breasts, frozen hash-brown potatoes, fresh apples, green beans, bread, soup, pancake mix, salad oil.

SUD DEPARTMENT OFFERS GRIEF SUPPORT

A Community Grief Support Group meets Wednesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. via Zoom. Meeting ID: 950 0668 4301. Passcode: Support!

Contact Allison at 320-630-9243 or sudinfo@hhs.millelacsband-nsn.gov.

STRONGHEARTS HELPLINE RECEIVES 10,000TH CALL

StrongHearts Native Helpline (1-844-7NATIVE) today announced 10,000 callers have now reached out to the helpline for safe, confidential support and resources for domestic, dating, and sexual violence.

Since March 2017, StrongHearts Native Helpline has offered a culturally-appropriate helpline for Native American and Alaska Native victim-survivors, their relatives and friends, service providers, and those questioning their own abusive behavior. StrongHearts is a collaborative effort of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center.

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, calls took a slight dip as more people were forced to shelter-in-place with abusive partners. Native victim-survivors were more isolated than ever and struggled to have a safe opportunity to reach out for help. In response, StrongHearts added online chat advocacy and adjusted their marketing strategy to reach more Native Americans and Alaska Natives. As a result, calls and chats have increased as more people realize that StrongHearts is here to help.

BAND MEMBER VOICES

AN INTRO TO OJIBWE LANGUAGE LEARNING

By **Nazhike Mille Lacs Band Member**

As I was beginning my Ojibwe Language Learning, I would put words together with good intentions, but deep down, they did not feel right. I was having issues connecting what I heard as a child and what I thought in my own mind. I knew English seemed insufficient to express my thoughts. The Ojibwe language was very comforting even though I was not understanding what was said. I was in a life crisis and I knew that the Ojibwe language was going to save me. Somehow.

My deep yearning led me to ask questions. And the more I learned, the more I wanted to know. And the more I learn, yet today, the more I realize that I don't know. There is still quite a bit that I don't know that I don't even know. Some questions I don't know how to ask. One thing I did learn is that the Ojibwe language is expressive and descriptive. I changed my questions from "How do you say...?" to "How do I express...?" This has led to deeper understandings and rooted connection to more than my way to communicate. It has led to a way to feel, to see the world and to interact with Manidoog.

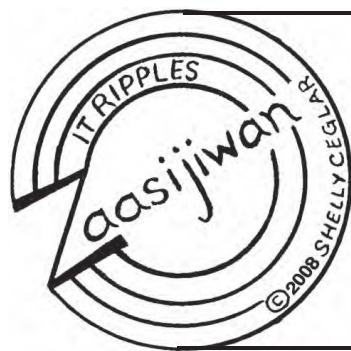
The deep yearning. What does that mean? For me, I had a pull, an attraction and a propulsion to seek the language. I could not understand it. It was more than knowing what was being said. It was more than learning how to speak to Elders. It was knowing who I am as an Anishinaabe. Like a magnet being

pulled to another, it must have been my spirit's last-ditch effort to save itself. I was in a life crisis, remember? Although I did not understand at the time, I trusted the pull.

In the beginning, what I thought I was going to learn ended up not being what I was learning. I got frustrated. I thought that I am not meant for the language (internal oppression). I thought I was going to be able to poetically combine words with such tempo one would be able to think that I have been speaking since birth. That definitely was not the case. An example of unreasonable expectations that my subconscious uses to further demonstrate that I am incapable of knowing the language. Internalized trauma that I further uncovered.

I thought I was going to learn how to just communicate. I knew no better. I didn't know I was going to need to change the way I feel about myself. I was going to need to change how I feel about and view the world. I was going to need to address the embedded historical trauma. I wanted to say "I am hungry" and tell funny jokes that seemed to cause my Elders to ROTFL.

The Ojibwe language is meant for the Anishinaabe whether born and raised on the rez or relocated two generations before. The Manidoog already gifted it to us. It is already in you. You need to remove the trauma, internal oppression, and free yourself from the americanized view of the world. Then Intro to Ojibwemowin takes on a whole new meaning. Miigwech.



Biboon—It is Winter

Mitigoog gaawin nagamosiwig noongom. Nibaawag. Gii-miskobagaa. Biitoosinon akiing. Zoogipon. Makwa indoodem. Ogemaa. Makwag, nibaawag waanzhang. Biboong ningitimishk. Apane nimbakade dash niwii-wiisin. Niwii-nibaa gaye. "Noogishkaan!" ninikid. "Bimosen! Ogimaawin!" Gemaa gaye anishaa nindaa-zhozhkwaada' e agwajing zaaga' ganing. Wii-minwendaagwad mii nange.

(The trees they are not singing today. They are sleeping. There were red leaves on the trees. They lie in a layer on the earth. It is snowing. Bear is my clan. A leader. Bears they are sleeping in the den. When it is winter I am a lazy bones. Always I am hungry and I want to eat. I want to sleep also. "Stop!" I say. "Walk! Be a leader!" Or maybe just for fun I should skate outside at the lake. It will be fun for certain.)

Bezhiq—1

OJIBWEMOWIN (Ojibwe Language)

Double vowel system of writing Ojibwemowin.
—Long vowels: AA, E, II, OO
Aaniin—as in father
Miigwech—as in jay
Niibowa—as in seen
Noongam—as in moon
—Short Vowels: A, I, O
ldash—as in about
Imaa—as in tin
Omaa—as in only

—A glottal stop is a voiceless nasal sound as in A'aw.

—Respectfully enlist an elder for help in pronunciation and dialect differences.

VAI—Verb
(action) Animate Intransitive
Root verb is 3rd person; He or She.
Conjugate the <root> verb.
Ojibwemo.—S/he speaks Ojibwe
Nindojobwem.—I speak Ojibwe.
Gidojobwem ina?—Do you speak?
Maajaa.—S/he leaves.
Nimaajaamin.—We leave.
Babaamoode.—S/he crawls about.
Gibabamoodemin.—We all crawl.
Zhizhoobii'ige.—S/he paints.
Gizhizhoobii'igem.—You all paint.
Gashkigwaaso.—S/he sews.
Gashkigwaasowag.—They sew.

Niizh—2 Circle the 10 underlined Ojibwe words in the letter maze. (Translations below)

- A. Aaniin waa-izhichigeyan biboong Ojibwewakiing?
B. Niwii-pabaa-mawadishiwe nindinawemaaganag.
C. Niwii-akwa'waamin giuwedinong zaaga'iganing.

D. Giwii-izhaa na aabita-biboon niimi'id ing gizibiigiisaginige-giizhigak?

E. Niwii-zhooshkwaagame Nagaajiwawong noongom.

F. Abinoojiyag wii-zhooshkwajiwewag.

G. Niijii wii-wanii'ige megwaayaak.

A N B A
A N O J A L
B I B O O N G
I I Z T N C I I
T J C H S G R I Z
A I K D A A O M N O
E I U ' V A Q M X H P
M A W A D I S H I W E N
F G I I W E D I N O N G
Y A W A N I I ' I G E G
A B I N O O J I I Y A G

Niswi—3

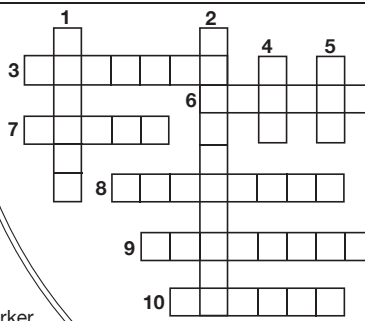
IKIDOWIN ODAMINOWIN (word play)

Down:

- How or in what way.
- S/he is tall.
- Future tense marker.
- It is thus that.

Across:

- S/he is short.
- Friend.
- S/he sleeps.
- I leave.
- It is snowing.
- It is winter.



Niiwin—4

Vai Conjugation Practice

Bakaakadoz.—S/he is skinny.
Wiinino.—S/he is obese.
Dakoozi.—S/he is short.
Ginwaakozi.—S/he is tall.
Nimbakaakadoz.—I am skinny.
Gidakooz.—You are short.
Niwiinomin.—We are obese.
Giginwaakozi.—You all are tall.
Bakaakadozowag.—They are skinny.
Drop the short vowel when in 1st person—I, and 2nd person—you.

Goojitoon! Try it! Translation below.

- ___maajaa na? Gisinaa dash zoogipon.
- Michisag abinoojiyensag babaamoode ___.
- ___ojibwemo ___ ina ishkoniganing?
- ___zhizhoobii'ige nibaawigamig biboong.
- ___gashkigwaaso ___ gabe onaagosh.

Translations:

Niizh—2 A. What do you want to do when it is winter in Indian country? B. I want to visit around with all my relatives. C. We want to spear fish to the north on the lake. D. Do you want to go to the mid-winter dance on Saturday? E. I want to ski at Fond du Lac today. F. The kids want to go sliding. G. My friend, he wants to go trapping in the woods.
Niswi—3 Down: 1. Aaniin 2. Ginwaakozi 4. Wii 5. Mii Across: 3. Dakoozi 6. Niijii 7. Nibaa 8. Nimaajaa 9. Zoogipon 10. Biboon
Niiwin—4 1. You leave are you? It is cold and it is snowing. 2. On the floor the babies they crawl. 3. Do you all speak Ojibwe on the reservation? 4. I paint in the bedroom when it is winter. 5. We sew throughout the evening.

There are various Ojibwe dialects; check for correct usage in your area. Note that the English translation will lose its natural flow as in any world language translation. This may be reproduced for classroom use only. All other uses by author's written permission.

Some spellings and translations from *The Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe* by John D. Nichols and Earl Nyholm. All inquiries can be made to MAZINA'IGAN, P.O. Box 9, Odanah, WI 54861 pio@glifwc.org.

Originally published in *Mazina'igan* Winter 2008. Reprinted by permission. Miigwech to GLIFWC and Shelly Ceglar.

HISTORY

THE GREAT MIGRATION — PART NIIZH

This is an excerpt from *Against the Tide of American History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinaabe* published by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe in 1985. See the January issue for Part 1.

Other stories having to do with the teachings of the Midewiwin religion also speak of a great migration of the Anishinaabe from the east. In one story given by an Elder at Mille Lacs many years ago, the movement of the Anishinaabe is traced further west. He tells of movement from LaPointe Island village into Wisconsin and Minnesota. In this version of the migration story, the final stop was said to be near Sandy Lake, Minnesota.

Oral traditions alone do not tell of the history of the Anishinaabe. There are pieces of information in these traditions, however, which offer clues into the past. One of these says that there may have been alliance between the Anishinaabe and the Ottawa and Potawatomi people. Each group has kept a tradition of calling one another "The People of the Three Fires." Sharing a common fire showed the unity of a people. Thus, talking of three fires suggests these tribal people once may have been part of a political alliance. The oral traditions speak of the three groups leaving one another at the Island of Michilimackinac (now called Mackinac Island). It is in the straits between Northern and southern Michigan. The main body of Ottawa stayed there. The Potawatomi moved to the shores of Lake Michigan. The Anishinaabe came to the area around Lake Superior.

Another clue into the distant past of the Anishinaabe is found by looking at the names they gave to neighboring tribal

people. They called members of the Iroquois confederacy "Nadowa" (snake or adder). This unfriendly name may mean that one time the two groups were at war. They called the Abanaki, who lived on the east coast of North America then, "the eastern people." The Shawnee, who were at the southern edges of the Great Lakes, were called "the southern people." All three groups knew these names. Perhaps long ago the Anishinaabe, Abanaki, and Shawnee were one people. Over the years they may have moved apart into different directions.

There are other name and story connections which link the Anishinaabe and other Great Lakes Algonkian tribes to the Delaware. There was a confederacy of Algonkian people who lived near the Atlantic seaboard at the time the Europeans came. The ancestors of the Chippewa and the Delaware had closely related names that they used to talk about themselves. For the Chippewa, this name was Anishinaabe; for the Delaware, the name was Leni Lenape.

The Chippewa and Delaware also share an old story of how they joined together to defeat an enemy. This enemy lived in a large town or village near a great lake or river. The details of the Chippewa and Delaware stories are very close. It is easy to think that years ago the two tribes were one people or close friends.

Finally, the Anishinaabe and other Great Lakes Algonkians had a tradition of calling the Delaware "our grandfather." This particular kinship term implied a close relationship. There may have been historic migration from east to west, just as told in Chippewa oral tradition.

BACK IN TIME

10 years ago — 2011

Brad Kalk was sworn in as Commissioner of Natural Resources. Secretary-Treasurer Curt Kalk, in his State of the Legislature address, said, "I never want to see a Solicitor General of the Mille Lacs Band with a gun at the government center. The Solicitor General's job is to serve the Band with justice, not a weapon." Band member Joycelyn Shingobe has assumed a new role as the interim director of the Workforce Center/Department of Labor. The Band launched a new Tribal Child Support Enforcement Department. When asked "What is your dream vacation?" Bugs Haskin replied: "Ireland, because of Bono. Of course, I'll be there and he'll be here headlining at the casino." Carmen Behnkie, Terry Smith, and Dawne Stewart agreed on Hawaii. Pete and Erik Gahbow, Adrian Bugg, and Dan Pewaush were making new sticks for the ceremonial drums.

15 years ago — 2006

At the State of the Band, Band member Aaliyah Davis sang the Star Spangled Banner, and the Little Otter Singers performed the honor song. Valereya Leecy, Kelly Friend, Shayla Livingston, and Winona Thunderchild shared a jingle dress dance, introduced by Steven Aune and accompanied by Anthony Buckanaga and Christopher "Spud" Gahbow on hand drum. Secretary-Treasurer Herb Weyaus announced that the Band Assembly planned to sponsor a community-wide methamphetamine awareness conference in 2006. A new brochure reported the Band's impact on the East Central Minnesota economy since the opening of Grand Casinos, including 4,500 people covered by insurance plans and an increase in jobs by nearly 70 percent in Pine County and approximately 35 percent in Mille Lacs County.

20 years ago — 2001

Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin delivered her first State of the Band Address on January 9, calling on leaders and Band members to stand together and make changes that will benefit the Band. The Lake Lena Boxing Club hosted an amateur boxing show with boxers Fred Davis, Weylin Davis, Matt Hatfield, and Tim Taggart Jr. The Band was seeking staff for two Elder Assisted Living Units. The Corporate Commission purchased the Holiday Inn Express in Hinckley and renamed it the Grand Northern Inn. The commission also purchased Toby's Mill. The East Lake Conoco was open for business.

The information above is from the February 2001, 2006, and 2011 issues of *Ojibwe Inaajimowin*. Many back issues of *Ojibwe Inaajimowin* are available at millelacsband.com/news. Click on "Inaajimowin Archive."



Nay Ah Shing students sang the National Anthem at the 2006 State of the Band. Left to right: Brandon Wade, Marquis Fisher, Thomas White, Wyatt Oswaldson, Toni Weous, Hevin Shingobe, Meghanne Benjamin, and Chelsea Benjamin.



2021 CALENDAR — BY BAND MEMBERS, FOR BAND MEMBERS

Band member heads of household have received in the mail a 2021 calendar that includes 12 photos by Band members who submitted their work as part of a photo contest last fall. The winners were chosen from over 70 entries. The contest was announced on Facebook, at millelacsband.com, and in the *Inaajimowin*. Winners were chosen by three judges, who were not informed of the photographers' names before making their choices. Miigwech to all who submitted work. Many beautiful photos were received, and we hope to bring recognition to more of our talented photographers in the future! Congratulations to the winners: Ben Sam, Dena Staples, Robert L. Boyd III, Rhonda Mitchell, Amanda Kubat, Carmen Kalk, Val Harrington, Bradley Roache Jr., Dana Sam, Naomi Weyaus, Dan Thomas, and Sher Benjamin.

TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

FEBRUARY ELDER BIRTHDAYS

Bruce Alan Anderson
 Laura Ann Ashcroft
 Mahlon Scott Barnes
 Maurice Wayne Benjamin
 Melanie Ann Benjamin
 Debra Jean Blake
 Sandra Lee Blake
 Judy Ann Carlson
 Dennis Wayne Davis
 Harry Richard Davis
 Dawn Marie Day
 William Carl Erickson
 Eileen Frances Farah
 Nicole Anne Froemming
 Beverly Ann Graves
 Mary Louise Hoffer
 Richard Nolan Holm
 Donald Ray Houle
 Sharon Louise Howard
 Colleen Michele Johnson
 Kurt Drew Keller
 Carolyn Dawn Lewis
 Ornorfo Zachary Lyons

Wesley Dean Merrill
 Scott Armond Meyer
 Victoria Gina Mitchell
 Lawrence Mark Nickaboine
 Debra Lee Northrup
 Patricia Ann O'Brien
 William John O'Brien
 Viola Marie Olson
 Robert Halvor Oswaldson
 Robin Lou Oswaldson
 Rhonda Lynn Peet
 Alan Pindegayosh
 Ellen Marie Roth
 Bette Sam
 Darrell Duane Sam
 Gladys Diane Sam
 James Allan Sam
 Pauline Marie Sam
 Kelvin Ray Shingobe
 Alvera Marie Smith
 Bennie David St. John
 Edward Louis St. John
 Stanley Conrad St. John
 Richard Jay Staples
 Robert Lee Staples
 Gary Marshall Thomas

Kenny Jack Towle
 Michael Leo Towle
 Valetta Irene Towle
 Ramona Joyce Washington
 Patrick Weyaus
 Marilyn Jean Whitney
 Clyde Manuel Wind
 Rose Marie Wind
 Dorothy May Wistrom

HAPPY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday **Chris Jr.** on 2/7 with love from the Harrington family • Happy birthday **Baby Jacob** on 2/13 with love from the Harrington Family • Happy birthday **Jacob** on 2/16 with love from the Harrington Family • Happy birthday **Princess** on 2/22 with love from Auntie Val • Happy birthday **Braelyn** on 2/22 love Dad, Daphne, Payton, Eric, Wes, Waase, Trin, Bryn, Gally, Bam, Binesiikwe, Papa Brad, Grannie

Kim, Papa Kyle, Gram Kim, Auntie Val, Dan, Kev, Pie, Myla, Auntie Randi, Bruce, Jayla, Lileah, Rachel, Rory, Jay, Taylor and Guy • Happy birthday **Cordell** on 2/23 love the Harrington Family

OBIZAAAN VIDEOS

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Elder Obizaan shares insights about the COVID-19 virus through his eyes as Anishinaabe. He shares his thoughts about the current virus and how Anishinaabe ancestors have dealt with previous viruses. The videos can be found on the Band's YouTube page at youtube.com/millelacsband.com.

COME TO 'THE REZ'

'The Rez' NA meeting has started back up on Fridays at 6 p.m. at the old District I Community Center.

IN MEMORY

For the love of my lovey, John Pike. I am in such disbelief that it has been 10 years already since you have left this cruel world we live in. Life has not been the same without you. You are, have been, and always will be in my heart, soul, and thoughts every day. Until we meet again, I love you. Your babe, Jackie Pike, on what would have been our 26th anniversary, 2/14/2021.



IMPORTANT TRIBAL GOVERNMENT PHONE NUMBERS

On November 12, the Mille Lacs Band implemented enhanced safety procedures, which means government services will still be available although some Band employees will be working from home or on furlough. While these measures are in place, please refer to the following list to find answers to your questions or to reach the individuals or departments you need.

Mille Lacs Band Government Center: 320-532-4181

Mille Lacs Band Tribal Police: 320-532-3430

Non-Emergency Phone: 320-630-2994

Commissioners:

Commissioner of Administration Baabiiyaw Boyd: 218-670-0745

Asst. Commissioner of Administration/Community Development Peter Nayquonabe: 320-630-3118

Commissioner of DNR Katie Draper: 320-515-0846

Commissioner of Education Joyce Shingobe: 651-354-4900

Commissioner of Finance Mel Towle: 320-532-7475

Commissioner of HHS Nicole Anderson: 320-364-9969

Chief Executive Office

Maria Costello: 763-260-0164

Court Administrator

Gilda Burr: 320-532-7401

Legislative Inquiries

Brianna Boyd, Legislative Affairs Director: 320-532-7536 (work); 320-630-8702 (cell); 320-532-7506 (fax)

Band Assembly Inquiries

Darcie Big Bear, Parliamentarian/Clerk of the Assembly: 320-532-7420; darcie.bigbear2@millelacsband.com

Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Inquiries

Deanna Sam at 320-279-0178 or 320-532-7498 to make an appointment.

Aanjibimaadizing

District I — Candace Benjamin, Director of Case management: 320-362-0014; Kaari Weyaus, Case Manager: 218-316-2437

District II — Winona Crazy Thunder, Case Manager: 320-364-3049

District III — Renee Allen, Case Manager: 320-591-0559

Urban — Wahbon Spears: 612-360-5486

Housing Emergency On-Call

Districts I and IIa: 320-630-2498

District II: 320-630-2492

District III: 320-630-2497

Dan Boyd, Housing Director: 320-630-2620

Brian Schienost, Public Works Director: 320-630-2624

Tony Pike, Roads/ Solid Waste Supervisor: 320-980-5367

Sean Racelo, Waste Water Supervisor: 218-838-8391

Mike Moilanen, Director of Planning: 320-630-2623

Chad Dunkley, Earthworks: 320-630-4763

Health and Human Services

24/7 Nurse Line: 320-630-0855

Provider appointments: 320-532-4163 option #2

Nurse Line Clinic: 320-630-0397

Mental Health appointments: 320-532-4163 option #2

Mental Health call line: 320-674-4385

Substance Use assessments and Counseling: 320-532-7773

Pharmacy: 320-532-4770

Dental Emergencies: 320-532-4779

Commodities: 320-630-8362

Emergency Services: 320-532-1755 or 320-532-1756. After hours: 320-630-2432 or 320-362-4672

Family Violence Prevention 24/7 Crisis Line: 866-867-4006

Elder Advocate: 320-630-7666

Office of Management and Budget

Economic Support and Per Cap: Email address updates to: kathy.heyer@millelacsband.com or call Danni Jo Harkness: 320-532-7592

NOTE: The Office of Management and Budget will continue to provide essential services with further increased efforts toward a virtual and paperless environment.

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 from Enrollments (320-532-7730) and OMB. You can download a Change of Address form at millelacsband.com/services/tribal-enrollments.

SEND US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS!

The Government Affairs Department, which is in charge of communications with Band members, is compiling a list of email addresses so we can send weekly news summaries and breaking news updates to Band members. This will be used for weekly news summaries and important updates that need to be shared immediately. Send your email address to news@millelacsband.com so we can add you to the list!

ELDERS NEEDED!

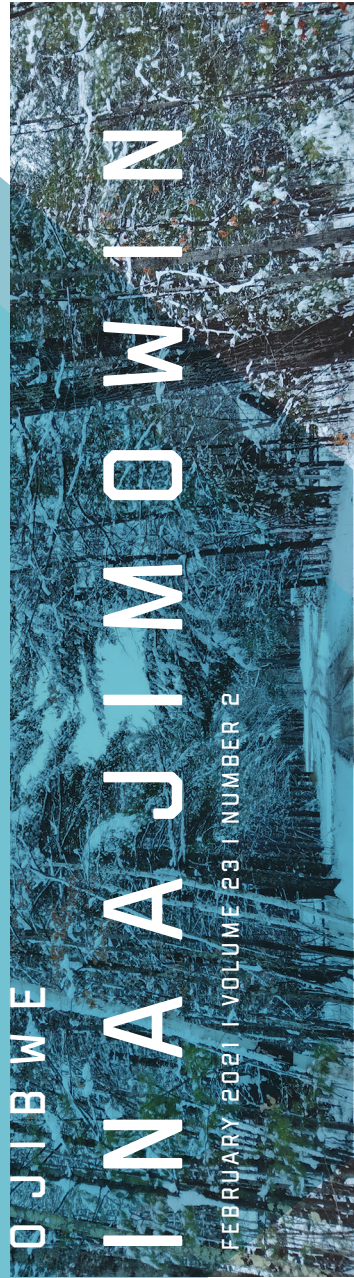
The Government Affairs Department is seeking Elders to tell their stories for a new Moccasin Telegraph series as well as to preserve video and audio in the Mille Lacs Band archives for future generations. If you are willing to participate in a two-hour video interview to share your memories, please email news@millelacsband.com or call 320-237-6851.

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.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>Millelacsband.com is updated regularly with news, job postings, events, and information about programs and services. The homepage, millelacsband.com, has links to all of those pages as well as government departments, programs, and services</i></p>	<p>1 Migizi Meeting 7 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>2 Wellbriety Celebrating Families 6 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>3 Red Brick AA/NA Meeting 7 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>See below.</i> Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>See below.</i></p>	<p>4 Wellbriety 6-8 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>See below.</i> Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>See below.</i></p>	<p>5 "The Rez" NA meeting 6 p.m. Old District I Community Center. Zooming into Recovery NA <i>See below.</i> <i>Check out these materials for kids (and adult learners) from GLIFWC: https://www.glifwc-inwe.com</i></p>	<p>6 AA 2 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>See below.</i> Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>See below.</i></p>
<p>7 Wellbriety Talking Circle 10 a.m. via Zoom conference. AA 2 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>8 Migizi Meeting 7 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>9 Wellbriety Celebrating Families 6 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>10 Elder Food Distribution 1–3 p.m. Districts I and III <i>See page 20</i> Red Brick AA/NA Meeting 7 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>11 Elder Food Distribution 1–3 p.m. Urban Office <i>See page 20</i> Wellbriety 6-8 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>See below.</i> Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>12 "The Rez" NA meeting 6 p.m. Old District I Community Center. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>13 AA 2 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>Play Indigenous educational games at www.7generationgames.com</i></p>
<p>14 Wellbriety Talking Circle 10 a.m. via Zoom conference. AA 2 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>15 Migizi Meeting 7 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>16 Wellbriety Celebrating Families 6 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>17 District III Community Meeting (subject to cancellation) 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley Red Brick AA/NA Meeting 7 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>18 Wellbriety 6-8 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>See below.</i> Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>19 "The Rez" NA meeting 6 p.m. Old District I Community Center. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>20 AA 2 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>
<p>21 Wellbriety Talking Circle 10 a.m. via Zoom conference. AA 2 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>22 Migizi Meeting 7 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>23 Wellbriety Celebrating Families 6 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>24 Red Brick AA/NA Meeting 7 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>25 Wellbriety 6-8 p.m. via Zoom conference. <i>See below.</i> Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>26 "The Rez" NA meeting 6 p.m. Old District I Community Center. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>27 AA 2 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>
<p>28 Wellbriety Talking Circle 10 a.m. via Zoom conference. AA 2 p.m. via Zoom conference. Zooming into Recovery NA 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p>RECOVERY GROUP MEETINGS HELD VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE Recovery meetings are held via Zoom conference during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Monday night Migizi meeting ID is 856 8473 0121, and the password is 56359. The Wednesday night Red Brick meeting ID is 895 631 97923, and the password is 56359. The nightly Zooming Towards Recovery code is 601-532-2869, and the password is zoom800.</p> <p>NEW RECOVERY GROUP ON THURSDAY EVENINGS A new Wellbriety group is meeting on Thursdays from 6 to 8 p.m. on Zoom. Contact: Roberta Dunkley at 320-674-4165 or sudinfo@hhs.millelacsband-nsn.gov. Meeting ID: 966 0395 9591. Passcode: 944772. <i>Connect – Support – Learn – Heal.</i></p> <p>CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS! Mille Lacs Band members and community members from other tribes can be paid for news stories published in <i>Ojibwe Inaajimowin</i>. For stories of 500 words or more, compensation is \$400. The deadline for stories is the 15th of each month. If you have a story to submit or would like more information, please email news@millelacsband.com or call 320-495-5006.</p>					



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



ANISHNAABE RESILIENT

A "virtual" State of the Band event on January 12 was one of many pandemic-inspired accomplishments

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 from Enrollments (320-532-7730) and OMB. You can 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 news@millelacsband.com or call 320-237-6851. The March issue deadline is February 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 at one of the following on-call numbers:

District I and IIa: 320-630-2498

District II: 320-630-2492

District III: 320-630-2497

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.

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