

# OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

THE  
STORY  
AS IT'S  
TOLD

JANUARY 2017 | VOLUME 19 | NUMBER 01



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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

MELANIE  
BENJAMIN  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Aaniin, Boozhoo! December seemed to fly by, as it always does. The Band Statutes charge the Chief Executive with conducting external relations with other governments, and a good deal of my time over the next several months will be spent establishing our working relationship with the new President-elect's administration. While civil servants employed by the federal agencies usually maintain their jobs when a new President is elected, most political appointees (there are several thousand) are planning their departures.

Maintaining strong working relationships with federal officials is essential to ensuring that our initiatives are not disrupted or progress lost during the transition. During the week of December 12, I held meetings in Washington D.C. with federal

officials toward that goal. I was also invited by Rep. Markwayne Mullin (R-OK), a Cherokee Congressman from Oklahoma, to attend a December 14th Listening Session he coordinated for tribal leaders with members of the President-elect's transition team in D.C. It was a good start toward laying a foundation to ensure that our sovereignty and legal rights are protected in this new administration. I asked the incoming administration to commit to protecting each tribe's homeland, sovereignty and the government-to-government relationship that exists between tribes and the United States.

Law Enforcement in District I continues to be a critical issue facing Band government. We have had multiple discussions with the Governor since the County broke its agreement with the Band over tired old arguments about whether our reservation exists. While I've had several conversations with the Governor about this topic, we have been dissatisfied with the State's response, until the Governor accepted my invitation to hear first-hand how this has impacted public safety for our Band members. On December 5, Governor Dayton came to the Government Center and talked with our police officers about their concerns for the public safety of Band members. He also met separately with the County. As a result of these meetings, the county has agreed to enter into mediation with the Band.

It should be noted that the Band has always been willing to mediate this issue. In fact, last summer a mediator from the Department of Justice came to the reservation and we agreed to

federal mediation. Mille Lacs County, however, rejected federal mediation. It remains to be seen whether the County will engage in good faith negotiations with a state mediator, but I am hopeful that we might come to some resolution soon.

In the meantime, our police officers are doing their best to keep Band members safe and will continue to do so, no matter how mediation goes. The Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) goes into effect on January 1, with or without cooperation from the County. Under the TLOA, our officers will be federally deputized and the U.S. Attorney will have the option of prosecuting offenses committed on the Reservation that fall under the Major Crimes Act in federal court.

Other business I conducted this month included meetings of the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, joint meetings with the Band Assembly, many meetings with individual Band members and economic development meetings with potential business partners. I am also spending time preparing for the State of Band Address, which this year will be on January 10 at the Grand Casino Mille Lacs Convention Center and I hope to see many of you there.

These are challenging times for the Band, but I remain hopeful that if we rely on our customs, culture and exercise our tribal sovereignty the way our predecessors intended us to, we will overcome all of these challenges. I wish all Band families a safe holiday season, and hope to see you on January 10! Miigwech!



Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin spoke at the December 14 Trump Transition listening session.

## Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin Holds Public Safety Meeting with Governor Mark Dayton

Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton made a visit to Mille Lacs Dec. 6 to meet with Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin and others about law enforcement issues, including Mille Lacs County's decision last summer to revoke a long-standing law enforcement agreement with the Band.

Earlier in the day, Dayton met with Mille Lacs County officials in Milaca.

Melanie released the following statement about her meeting with the governor.

"This week I had a meeting with Governor Dayton where we discussed the ongoing public safety crisis in Mille Lacs County resulting from the County's decision to revoke the cooperative law enforcement agreement with the Band. I was joined by the Band's Solicitor General Todd Matha, Police Chief Sara Rice and several tribal police officers, Government Affairs staff and others.

"During the meeting, Mille Lacs Band Tribal Police Officers shared stories about the devastating impact of the County's decision on the safety of Mille Lacs Band members and police officers. They told the Governor that the lack of a joint-powers agreement between the Band and the County is empowering criminals and drug dealers and reversing the real progress that

had been made combating gang activity on the reservation.

"I asked the Governor for his help in resolving this crisis; to date, the County has refused to put forward a law enforcement agreement that respects the sovereignty of the Band and gives law enforcement the ability to stop criminal activity in the region. Instead, the County has used the negotiations to try to diminish the Band's sovereignty and severely restrict our ability to provide meaningful law enforcement on and around the Mille Lacs Reservation.

"On behalf of the Band, I thank Governor Dayton and his staff for visiting the Mille Lacs Band Reservation and hearing our concerns; I hope that he can help us arrive at a solution that puts public safety first."

Dayton's press secretary, Sam Fettig, said of the visit, "Governor Dayton held two meetings (Dec. 6): one with the Mille Lacs county attorney, sheriff and administrator; and one with the chief executive of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and her Tribal law enforcement officials, to discuss a new joint-powers agreement. The meetings were constructive toward reaching an agreement. The Governor offered the support of state officials and himself to facilitate subsequent discussions."

According to the *Mille Lacs Messenger*, Mille Lacs Coun-



Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin and Governor Mark Dayton met with interim Mille Lacs Band Tribal Police Chief Sara Rice and other Tribal Police officers on December 6.

ty Attorney Joe Walsh said the purpose of meeting with the Governor was "to explain the facts of the current situation and Mille Lacs County's continued focus of working toward a new cooperative agreement with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. I am tremendously appreciative that the Governor chose to come to Mille Lacs County to hear from us and remain hopeful that productive negotiations will take place."

# Band Assembly Works on Revision of Revenue Allocation Plan



**Secretary-Treasurer  
Carolyn Beaulieu**

Band Assembly is amending the current Revenue Allocation Plan (RAP) to be submitted for Bureau of Indian Affairs approval by the end of the fiscal year in October 2017. As a result, Band members may see changes to government spending, including per capita payments, beginning as early as January of 2018. The authority to approve tribal RAPs has been delegated to the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs by the Secretary of the Interior.

The RAP, which defines how tribal governments spend gaming revenues, is required under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act if tribes intend to allocate per capita payments to individual members from revenue derived from tribal gaming activities.

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

In 2010, Chief Executive Marge Anderson and the Band Assembly (Herb Weyaus, Sandra Blake, Marvin Bruneau and Harry Davis) increased the per capita percentage of the RAP from 25 to 35 percent and decreased long-term savings from 25 to 15 percent. In addition, adult Band members were allocated 25% more than minors with the understanding that the extra percentage would allow adult Band members to provide the necessities required to adequately support their

households. The goal of the higher percentage to adults vs minors was to eliminate on-going loans, donations and other financial emergencies experienced by adult Band members.

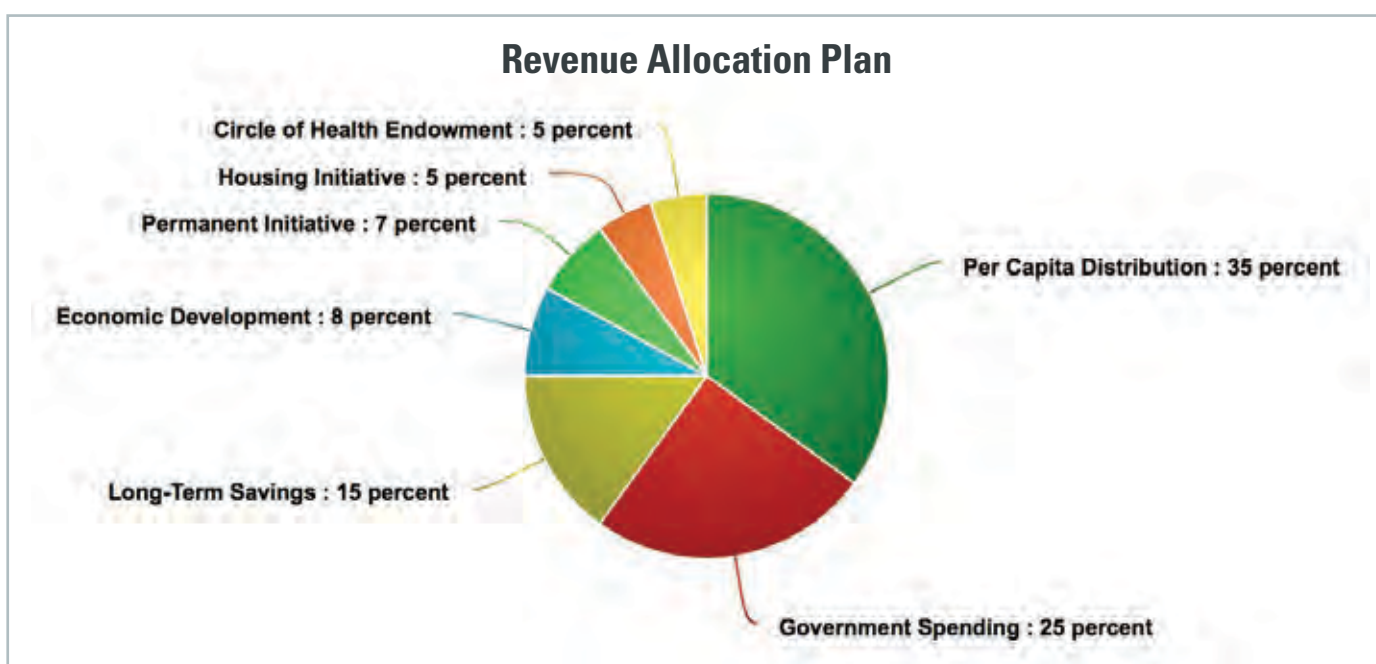
When per capita payments were introduced, they were intended to fluctuate based on casino revenue, as defined by the RAP. The amount available for per capita distributions would be 35% of available net revenue for any given month. Several years ago the Band Assembly set the payments at \$933 per month, and since then they have not tracked with casino revenue. On an annual basis, OMB conducts a true-up calculation to ensure that the Band does not pay out more than the 35% designated in the current RAP. Any shortfalls have to be made up from other revenue streams not associated with the Band's net gaming revenue.

Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu said, "At the time the casino revenue distributions were able to fulfill the flat monthly amount of \$933, but in recent years we have had to use other revenue sources to fulfill the per capita payments current-

ly being paid out to all Band members." Alternative payment options will be considered in the current revisions being contemplated by Band Assembly. Revenues from the Band's gaming operations have been flat and will continue to remain flat based on information presented by the gaming enterprises. In addition, an increase in the Band's population is also impacting the amount available for distribution.

The Band Assembly's goal is to revise the RAP with the expectation that the Executive Branch will scale back underutilized and ineffective programs.

One option being considered is that the per capita cycle year will begin each January, based on the previous fiscal year's net gaming revenues (October through September). The amount of per capita payments is expected to fluctuate based on net gaming revenues beginning in January of 2018, if the amended Revenue Allocation Plan is approved by then.



## Legislative Briefs

**Stimulus payments:** Stimulus payments to Band members began in 2009 using funds derived from Minnesota tax rebates. The Band continued to issue stimulus payments through 2014 when Band Assembly became aware that the balance in the taxation revenues would no longer support the stimulus payments. The Band Assembly then used unspent net revenues to fulfill the stimulus payments for 2015 and along with the Ramah settlement funds (explained below) were able to fulfill stimulus payments in 2016. Unspent net revenues are dollars remaining from budget surplus accumulated over many years. Stimulus payments are not guaranteed, but we have found ways to continue to issue them.

**Ramah Settlement Distribution:** Adult Band members received an extra economic supplemental payment with their December per capita checks. The extra amount came from the Band's portion of a \$940 million settlement of Ramah Navajo Chapter, et.al. v. Sally Jewell. The Band's share was \$1.9 million, which the Band Assembly and Chief Executive decided to distribute in its entirety directly to adult Band members. This was one revenue stream that was used to make the additional payment to adult Band Members in early December. The remaining portion of the December 2016 economic supplemental payment came from the Band's taxation revenues.

**Fees Eliminated:** The Band Assembly recently voted to eliminate the administrative fees charged to Band members who choose automatic deductions for rent and other payments. The Band was raising about \$60,000 per year from the fees, but Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu said the automatic deductions save the Band money in billing and collection costs, so Band members should not be charged for choosing that option. Fees will no longer be imposed effective with the January 2017 payment cycle.

**Fake Checks and Forgeries On the Rise:** Commissioner of Finance Adam Valdez has reported that forgeries have been on the rise in the local area, and that some forgers are attempting to pass fake Mille Lacs Band checks throughout the Band's business entities including its casinos and Woodland National Bank. There was one instance of a fake check being presented in the Minneapolis area. Forgeries end up costing the Band and

its members money. Several of these forgers have been band members. Anyone with information regarding forgeries is asked to contact Tribal Police or the Mille Lacs County Sheriff's Office. At this time, special monitoring procedures are in place at OMB, the band's casino cages, as well as Woodlands National Bank. OMB may publish a list of the forgers who have attempted to pass fake checks over the last few months.

**Minnesota Community Foundation:** Through the Band's charitable fund administered by the Minnesota Community Foundation, the Band is passionate about being a good neighbor and strives hard to partner up and support surrounding communities and agencies on important initiatives for the betterment of the overall community. The Band took over its share of the original Minnesota Tribal Government Foundation on January 20, 2011, after the original foundation was terminated.

The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians donates to U.S. organizations that are tax exempt and classified as a 501(c)(3) organization by the IRS, and to state or local governments including schools and other entities. All donations are authorized via a Joint Resolution process involving the Legislative and Executive branches of Band government.

In 2016, donations have been provided to the following organizations: Indian Legal Assistance Program, City of Isle, Minnesota (see page 4), Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, and Waadookodaading Charter School. "As the Band continues to grow its economic presence in the region, the Band's ability to give back to local communities grows," states Secretary Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu.

The Minnesota Community Foundation was founded in 1949 and is based in St. Paul, Minnesota. It is one of the largest community foundations in the nation.

**Information Available:** To protect the assets of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, financial information provided to the public is limited. All Mille Lacs Band Members can request a meeting with the Commissioner of Finance or Secretary-Treasurer to discuss and ask questions about the Band's finances.

## National News Briefs

### Standing Rock Wins Victory, Future Uncertain:

In a decision cheered by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, environmentalists and encamped protestors and their allies, the Army Corps of Engineers announced that it would be seeking an alternative route for the unfinished portion of the Dakota Access Pipeline. The project had sparked months of protests near Cannon Ball, North Dakota. Despite the announcement by the Army Corps, many worry about the impact of a Trump Administration on the fate of the pipeline; President-elect Trump has voiced support for the project.

### Standing Rock Contemplates Creating Utilities Commission:

Standing Rock Sioux Chairman Dave Archambault II announced that the tribe is considering creating a tribal utilities commission to govern all utilities projects that cross reservation land. Archambault said that the battle over the Dakota Access Pipeline had laid bare deficiencies in state and federal tribal consultation on such projects. The first step in the creation of the commission would be to draft a regulatory code and solicit feedback from tribal members. Archambault did not rule out the possibility of pipelines on the reservation, even if a commission was created.

### Last Surviving Mandan Speaker Walks On:

Edwin Benson, the last person to speak fluent Mandan, died at the age of 85. Known in Mandan as Ma-doke-wa-des-she, Benson learned the language from his grandfather who refused to allow English to be spoken in the house. Benson described being the last one to speak the language as profoundly isolating. "It's sad that I can't speak my language that I knew, the first language that I knew, and to grow old with, to no one today. To no one at all. And it's a lonely life," Benson told the Bismarck Tribune in 2009.

### Trump Advisors Float Privatizing Natural Resources in Indian Country:

Markwayne Mullin, a Republican U.S. Representative from Oklahoma and a Cherokee tribe member who co-chairs Donald Trump's Native American Affairs Coalition, is advocating the privatization of tribal lands to expand access to oil and gas reserves on Indian reservations. Mullin cited federal regulations as an impediment to accessing the estimated \$1.5 Trillion in natural resources on reservation land. The idea has drawn strong condemnation from many tribal leaders across the country, though there are some who support increasing natural resource extraction as a means of generating tribal revenue.

### Descendants of Canadian Indigenous People Fight For Recognition:

Thousands of Canadians who believe they are being wrongly denied access to classification as First Nations members have been waging battle with Canadian bureaucracy to have their ancestry recognized. Hundreds of years ago, many native peoples changed their names to escape the persecution of the British, and then Canadian, government. Now, many of them want access to the benefits that First Nation status brings with it. The complex legal process is expected to drag on for years, if not decades.

# Band Invests in Public Safety for Chiminising Residents

*Partnership will support expansion of emergency services in Chiminising community*

**Chad Germann** Photographer

With an increased focus on public safety for Band members and the community, the Band has made a donation toward the expansion of the Isle fire station.

"This donation continues the Mille Lacs Band's ongoing efforts to be good friends and neighbors," said Representative David 'Niib' Aubid, who represents the Chiminising Community near Isle. "Band members, residents and businesses all rely on the fast and professional emergency services and we are very happy to help the expansion move forward."

Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin, Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu and District Representatives Sandra Blake, David 'Niib' Aubid and Harry Davis joined the Mayor of Isle, Rod Schultz, Mayor-Elect Ernie Frie, Co-Fire Chiefs Tim Schug and David Miller and other city officials at the site where the new fire station will be built to present them with the donation.

"The Mille Lacs Band is committed to public safety and this donation is a symbol of that commitment," said Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin. "The expanded fire and emergency services

that the new fire hall will provide for the community will make all of us safer."

The new fire station will help expand the Isle Fire Department to 30 firefighters and provide fire and emergency services to 5,000 people over a 400 square mile area, including many members of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. The new building will allow the fire department to store all its equipment in one secure location, improving response times for local residents.



Representatives Harry Davis, David 'Niib' Aubid and Sandi Blake, Secretary-Treasurer Carolyn Beaulieu and Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin presented a donation to Mayor Rod Schultz, members of the Isle City Council, and Co-Fire Chiefs David Miller and Tim Schug.

# Band Members Join National Cohort Designed to Strengthen Leadership Skills

**Toya Stewart Downey** Staff Writer

Three Band members were selected to join a high profile leadership group called the Native Nation Rebuilders Program.

Raina Killspotted, LeAnn Benjamin and Catherine Colsrud were among the group of 25 who were tapped to join the eighth cohort of the national program that is comprised of Band members from 12 different tribes. Due to the death of her brother, Catherine had to opt out unexpectedly.

The Rebuilders' Program was designed to support tribes as they strengthen their governing capabilities. It is a part of a larger initiative launched in 2010 by the Bush Foundation.

The program was developed in response to the call from elected leaders who said that having community leaders who are engaged was important to help influence and support tribal governments in efforts.

The "Rebuilders" are emerging and existing Native leaders who seek to develop skills and nation-building knowledge. To date, there are about 140 people who call themselves "Rebuilders."

In early 2016 the Rebuilders Program moved from the Bush Foundation to the newly created Native Governance Center —

an independent, Native-led nonprofit organization. The Foundation will still offer support and collaboration to the effort.

Wayne Ducheneaux, the executive director of the Center, said that, "rebuilders are playing key roles working across the public, private and non-profit sectors." He completed the program in 2012 and was later elected to the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Council.

Rebecca Stratton, a member of the Shakopee Mdewakaton Sioux Community, said that many tribal governments have been shaped by outsiders but that tribes should use inherent authorities to "redesign our systems to align with our vision, expectations and values."

The Rebuilders Program, she said, "complements this effort by sharing lessons from other parts of Indian Country and strengthening relations between leaders through a shared learning experience."

The newest members of the program will meet four times with partner organizations and experts in Indian Country as they develop action plans to share their knowledge with each other and their tribe's government.

## Interested in submitting to the *Inaajimowin*?

Send your submissions and birthday announcements to Myles Gorham at [myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com](mailto:myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com) or call 612-465-0653. Band members can receive pay for stories and photos that are used in the paper. *The February issue deadline is January 15.*

# Catholic Charities Seeks to Build Community to Work on Key Issues

**Brett Larson** Staff Writer



**Doug Scott of Catholic Charities has organized a steering committee including Band representatives to build community in northern Mille Lacs County.**

Catholic Charities and the Mille Lacs Band sponsored an event in Onamia on Dec. 8 called “Building Communities, Empowering Families in Northern Mille Lacs County.”

Over 60 people attended the program, which kicked off with pizza and a welcome from Doug Scott, who was hired by the Social Concerns Department of Catholic Charities, St. Cloud, to find ways to build community and act together on key local issues.

The rest of the evening was devoted to an entertaining and informative presentation by Jodi Pfarr designed to help those in attendance understand diversity and the “normalization” process that gives certain advantages to members of social groups deemed “the norm”: middle class, white, male, heterosexual, etc.

Pfarr offers trainings around the world to police depart-



**The first event included a presentation on diversity by Jodi Pfarr.**

ments, schools, communities, religious groups and social services agencies.

The event was the first in a series of five designed to give local residents a better understanding of diversity, culture and local issues. The goal is for participants to explore and name community concerns that are of interest to them, followed by development of an action plan for issues they would like to address.

The next meeting of the group is Jan. 19 at 5:30 p.m. at the Rolf Olsen Center in Onamia. The event will feature Roxanne DeLille, who will speak on “Developing a Deeper Understanding of Neighbors.”

The February meeting will feature Louis Johnston of St. John’s University, who will speak about state and regional economic issues.

## Elders Show Off Talents at Craft Fair

Bonita White, Theresa Schaaf, Carol Hernandez and Renee Bruneau were among those who sold their crafts at the Elders Craft Fair at the District I Assisted Living Units on Dec. 2.



**Theresa Schaaf**



**Bonita White**



**Carol Hernandez**



**Renee Bruneau**

### State & Local News Briefs

**Minnesota Group Files Federal Lawsuit Over Recognition, Land:** A group of descendants of the Mdewakanton Sioux Indians of Minnesota filed a lawsuit against the Department of Interior seeking recognition and land that they say was promised to them. The lawsuit claims that the 7,000 descendants of the Mdewakanton Sioux Indians of Minnesota should be granted a 12-square mile area of land in southwestern Minnesota. The group is also asking for recognition as a separate tribe from the existing Dakota tribes in Minnesota. A similar lawsuit filed earlier this year in Minnesota court was dismissed.

**Capitol Art Controversy Comes to an End:** The long-running battle over which pieces of art will hang in the Governor’s Reception room ended when the Minnesota Historical Society voted to leave several Civil War paintings in place while removing two pieces that were described as “insulting and biased” by American Indian groups. Both “Father Hennepin at the Falls of St. Anthony” and “The Treaty of Traverse des Sioux” will be relocated elsewhere in the Capitol and will have additional information explaining their context displayed alongside the paintings.

**Center for American Indian Resources in Duluth Reopens:** The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa celebrated the reopening of the Center for American Indian Resources in Duluth. The \$14 million new building in the heart of Duluth will provide expanded resources for Band members and will feature culturally-responsive, on-site behavioral health and chemical dependency treatment, as well an expansion of the center’s pharmacy and counseling and case management services. The Center first opened its doors in 1988.

**Battle Over Enbridge Line 3 Heats Up:** Native American and environmental activists with Honor the Earth have ramped up their opposition to the proposed replacement of the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline. Volunteers from the group have attended public meetings with signs and banners like those carried at the Standing Rock protests; one meeting was halted early due to protests. The route proposed by Enbridge would cross through watersheds vital to wild rice harvests; a legal settlement over oil spills mandates that Enbridge replace the existing Line 3 pipeline (see page 12 for more on this story).

**Peacemaker Resources Gets Grant From the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota:** Peacemaker Resources of Bemidji, Minn. was awarded a \$6,000 grant from the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota. The organization, founded 20 years ago, will use the funding to expand the GirlsLEAD program through partnerships with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwa, Red Lake Nation Band of Chippewa and White Earth Nation. Peacemaker Resources is focused on building community through social and emotional learning, cultural responsiveness and mindfulness.

# Opioid Epidemic Has Ripple Effects in Mille Lacs Band Communities

*Syphilis, hepatitis on the rise. Band members urged to get tested.*

**Brett Larson** Staff Writer

Mille Lacs Band communities are seeing many side effects of the nationwide opioid epidemic, including increases in hepatitis C and syphilis infection.

Cassie Helmin, the director of nursing at Ne-la-Shing Clinic in District I, is encouraging all sexually active Band members to get tested for infectious diseases.

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

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

Those who test positive are encouraged to inform their current and past sexual partners to get tested. This is important to stop the spread of infection to multiple people, since some may be asymptomatic, meaning they have the infection without even knowing it. Notifying partners will also prevent re-infection.

## Syphilis

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted disease that can also be transmitted through blood left on shared needles. It is increasingly common among intravenous drug users.

Symptoms include sores or lesions, but these may be internal or may not occur at all.

Several individuals have tested positive at Ne-la-Shing Clinic, so the risk of infection is very real, Cassie said. People can be carrying and spreading the disease without knowing they have it.

Those who have had contact with an infected person can receive treatment to cure the infection. It is very important that those receiving treatment get follow-up care to ensure the infection has been cured.

For many years, syphilis was very rare in the U.S., but the incidence has increased in recent decades, in large part because of the increase in IV drug use.

Women who are pregnant and have been exposed or tested

positive for syphilis need to get treated immediately and have follow up throughout their pregnancy to prevent spread of the infection to the unborn child, which could result in significant health problems for the child if left untreated. Syphilis can also result in miscarriage and stillbirth.

Untreated syphilis can eventually result in lack of coordination, paralysis, numbness, blindness, dementia and death. It can also increase the risk of HIV/AIDS. Having the disease once does not mean you can't get it again.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, "Syphilis is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that can have serious complications when left untreated, but it is simple to cure with the right treatment."

The risk of syphilis infection can be reduced by practicing safe sex and avoiding IV drugs.

## Hepatitis and other infections

Many who test positive for syphilis are also infected with hepatitis C. Both are increasingly common among intravenous drug users.

Hepatitis C is a blood-borne pathogen that results in inflammation of the liver, which can result in pain, yellowish skin, a fever and dark urine. Over time it can lead to liver disease and cirrhosis. Cirrhosis can result in additional complications like liver failure and cancer.

Hepatitis C can be spread by use of contaminated needles, and it is very common among intravenous drug users. It can also be spread from a mother to her baby.

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid intravenous drugs and unprotected sex.

Hepatitis C can be cured, so it is extremely important that everyone get tested.

Other diseases, like HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B, can also be spread by sharing of needles. Sexually transmitted diseases like herpes, chlamydia and gonorrhea are also more common among illegal drug users, who often practice unprotected sex.

IV drug users are also more prone to skin infections, which can have severe complications, especially in communities with



**Cassie Helmin is the Director of Nursing at Ne-la-Shing Clinic.**

a high incidence of diabetes. Skin infections spread by dirty needles can result in the loss of limbs.

The Band's Health and Human Services Department is planning to implement a needle exchange program to reduce the spread of infectious diseases. Cassie says needle exchange programs on other reservations and in the Twin Cities American Indian community have helped reduce the spread of infection.

HHS is also planning an outreach clinic where individuals can be tested for free. More information will follow on the Band's Facebook pages, website and newsletter.

## Ongoing crisis

Infection is just one of the many serious effects of illegal drug use. Mille Lacs Band communities continue to see overdoses, some fatal, as well as babies being born addicted to drugs, which is referred to as neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS).

In 2014, statistics showed that Minnesota Indian communities were the hardest hit in the country, and that Mille Lacs had the highest rates of NAS in the state.

Another result of the opioid epidemic has been a dramatic increase in the number of children in foster care or living with grandparents, aunts and uncles. There is a severe shortage of foster homes for Band children. If you are interested in helping Band member children by being a foster parent, contact Family Services at 320-532-7776.

Band members who are trying to quit have many resources available, including recovery groups in all districts (see page 14), counseling by behavioral health specialists, chemical dependency assessments, and a variety of treatment options.

**Call the Behavioral Health Clinic at 800-709-6445, ext. 7776, 320-532-4754 or 320-532-7776** if you or someone close to you needs help with addiction.

## Opioid Epidemic Increasing — and Deadlier Than Ever

According to Sergeant Derrick Naumann of the Mille Lacs Tribal Police, the Opiate/Heroin epidemic is steadily increasing and becoming more and more deadly.

"We have seen Heroin laced with Fentanyl, which is an opiate 100 times stronger than Heroin," said Derrick. "That's scary since the Heroin is some of the most pure which has been seen in many years." Purity, he explained, refers to the absence of other additives mixed in to increase dealer profits.

Mixtures of Heroin and Fentanyl are especially dangerous because the typical amount of heroin that could cause an overdose to an average adult is 30 milligrams, while the typical overdose amount of Fentanyl is 3 milligrams. "To put it in perspective, 30 milligrams is less than a quarter of a sugar packet," Derrick said. "And 3 milligrams is equal to several grains of salt. This poses a significant danger to anyone who may come in contact with the drug, since it can be absorbed through the skin, causing an overdose to an unknowing person."

Narcotics dealers across the country are now buying pill presses and manufacturing pills containing Fentanyl. They may be sold as Xanax, Oxycontin, Oxycodone, Percocet, or other drugs. "There may be deadly amounts of narcotics in these pills, and people who think they are purchasing an anti-anxiety drug will end up with a deadly dose of opiates," said Derrick. "The bottom line: If you didn't get it from a doctor, don't take it."

Prescription pills are still readily available on the streets and used in place of and in conjunction with opioids. Suboxone is used as an anti-withdrawal medication and is sold

to those who can't access opioids. Gabapentin is widely used in conjunction with opioids to extend the "high."

Other anti-anxiety medications similar to Xanax or Alprazolam are widely abused and sold.

Most Tribal Police officers have been trained in the administration of Naloxone. "Naloxone has been invaluable to our community and without question has saved countless lives," said Derrick. "However, lately we have seen some users who require two or even three doses of Naloxone to return to consciousness, which would be consistent with Fentanyl overdose."

Heroin has a very short life in the body, lasting 15 to 30 minutes, while Fentanyl can last up to two hours in the body. That means users who are brought back from an overdose with Naloxone but still have Fentanyl in their system need to go to the hospital. Otherwise they could overdose again without ingesting more Heroin/Fentanyl due to the Fentanyl still being present in the body.

Methamphetamine remains steady in the area with no marked increase or decrease, Derrick said. Meth is highly addictive and leads to permanent health problems. Birth defects and withdrawal symptoms occur in babies born to mothers who use meth. In high doses it can induce psychosis, breakdown of muscles, seizures, and bleeding on the brain. Chronic use can lead to violent behavior, delusions, and mood swings. Overdoses can lead to brain damage or death. Meth use also correlates with higher frequency of sexually transmitted diseases.

# New Doctor Is Happy to Serve in Indian Country

Bett Larson Staff Writer

Lacey Running Hawk, a new doctor at Ne-la-Shing Clinic in District I, confirms that medical school is as grueling as you'd expect. "When you look back, it's probably good that you are kind of naive about what you are getting into because it is a long road," said Dr. Running Hawk. "But when I look back on the process, I wouldn't change it. The reward of being in the position I'm in now — people trusting me, and being able to care for others — it's totally worth it."

Dr. Running Hawk's father is from the Standing Rock and Sisseton-Wahpeton communities in the Dakotas. He spent his career in the Marines, so Lacey moved around a lot during childhood, eventually graduating from high school in Pensacola, Florida.

When she was in college at the University of Minnesota—Morris, Dr. Running Hawk knew she wanted to work in health care, but she wasn't sure she wanted to be a physician until she had an internship with the Sisseton-Wahpeton Indian Health Service. She realized that she wanted to have the kind of relationship she saw between doctors and their patients, and she had a mentor who gave her the confidence to apply for medical school. "Seeing the need for doctors in Indian country — that was my motivation for getting through," she said.

She attended medical school at the University of Minnesota—Duluth and the Twin Cities campus and completed residency at United Family Medicine in St. Paul.

Among the highlights of her residency was an international

rotation in Belize. She was able to work with native Mayan people, who suffer from some of the same chronic diseases as North American Indians — in addition to tropical diseases like malaria, zika and dengue fever.

She finished her final year of residency in June and started at Mille Lacs on Sept. 12. It was not all new to her, since she had worked at Ne-la-Shing as a summer resident in 2015. "I enjoyed working with the staff here and enjoyed the patient population," she said. "It was an easy decision to come here full time."

After four years of college, four years of medical school, and three years of residency, she's ready to get to work, and so far her experience at Mille Lacs has been rewarding. "The support from the other clinicians has been great," she said. "I feel like I'm part of a team. I can consult others when I need to, and as a new physician it's important to have that support."

She especially enjoys working with children and women, including prenatal visits. She also looks forward to expanding the clinic's role in the community and social media.

Dr. Running Hawk is married and lives in the country in the Crosby-Ironton area with her husband, dog and cat. She loves being outdoors, hiking, biking and traveling. And she's also a big Vikings fan.

"I'm just really excited to work in this community," she said. "I feel like everyone I've met so far has been so welcoming. I'm excited to meet more people and connect with others."



**Lacey Running Hawk volunteered at the Standing Rock protests this fall. Dr. Running Hawk has roots in Standing Rock and Sisseton-Wahpeton, but she also proudly represented the Mille Lacs Band.**

## Doctor Reports on Standing Rock Visit

Dr. Lacey Running Hawk spent time at the Standing Rock protests last fall and had this to share about her experience:

"It was a huge honor just to be there — to stand in solidarity with others in the place where my ancestors lived and my relatives continue to live. I worked in the medical tents at all three camps, and we saw everything from common colds and asthma attacks to injuries from pepper spray, mace, rubber bullets and batons. It was intense at times. I was really impressed with how the tents were set up with both western trained doctors and herbalists to treat patients with an integrative approach that respected their culture and perspectives about medicine. It was also impressive to see all of the donations from outside people — everything from yurts and tents, to firewood and a huge variety of medical supplies and medicines. Since I have been there, the news has reported that the US Army Corps has denied the permit for construction under the river near Standing Rock. This is such a huge victory for Standing Rock, for Native people, and for citizens of the United States. I am so proud that I was able to be there even for just a week, and I feel privileged to work for an organization (the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe) that was willing to send me and donate my time to support such a worthy cause."

## Prescription Refills Are Now Available through RefillPro Mobile App

As of Dec. 5, 2016, the RefillPro Mobile Application can be used to refill prescriptions through Ne-la-Shing Clinic's pharmacy.

This service gives clinic patients a link for their phones to re-order prescriptions.

The "RefillPro" app is available for free download at Google Play and in the App Store. QR codes for Apple and Android are posted at the pharmacy.

With RefillPro, patients can:

- Connect with the pharmacy by phone.
- See pharmacy hours
- Refill prescriptions by entering the Rx number or scanning the bar code
- Request refill authorizations for Rx's with no refills or expired
- Access the HHS medical page of the Band's web site

All prescriptions are set for pickup. Those from outer districts and public health will be delivered as usual. Ne-la-Shing pharmacy does not mail prescriptions.

For more information or to download the application, go to [refillpro.com](http://refillpro.com).



## January is Cervical Health Awareness Month

Cervical cancer starts in the cells lining the cervix, which is the lower part of a woman's uterus. The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2016, 12,990 new cases of invasive cervical cancer will have been diagnosed. Of those cases they expect that 4,120 women will die from the disease. This is preventable! Early detection is very important. Pap tests are recommended starting at age 21. You will need to have them repeated every 2-3 years from age 21 to 29, depending upon your results and/or your lifestyle. Ages 30 to 65 should have them every 5 years, again depending upon results and lifestyle. Most cases of cervical cancer are found in women younger than 50, but it can still develop after the age of 50.

Risk factors for cervical cancer are:

- HPV infection
- Smoking
- Immunosuppression, such as HIV/AIDS
- Chlamydia infection
- Diets low in fruits and vegetables
- Being overweight
- Long-term use of oral contraceptives (birth control pills)
- Women who have had 3 or more full-term pregnancies
- Women who were younger than 17 years old when they had their first full-term pregnancy (almost 2 times more likely to get cervical cancer later in life)
- Having a family history of cervical cancer
- NOT GETTING TESTED. If you're a woman age 21 – 65 and have not been tested, schedule a pap smear today.

Ways to prevent pre-cancers:

- Avoid being exposed to HPV (causes 90% of cervical cancer)
- Get the HPV vaccine (females: age 11 – 26 and males: age 11 – 21)
- Do not smoke

**Early detection greatly improves the chances of successful treatment and can prevent any early cervical cell changes from becoming cancerous.**

## Parent Action Committee

The Nay Ah Shing Parent Action Committee is a group of parents and guardians dedicated to preserving culture and supporting high quality education for all Nay Ah Shing Students.

Parent engagement means parent input! It means parent feedback! It means parent involvement! We are seeking representatives who have the availability to attend a monthly meeting to discuss and support our parent advisory program. Meetings will be open to all Parents/Guardians as well as Staff members who are interested.

The most recent meeting of the group was Dec. 20 at noon in the Abinoojiiyag Conference Room.

Watch [millelacsband.com](http://millelacsband.com) and Facebook for information on the next meeting.

If you have questions, contact Ace Collie at 320-532-8460, extension 2160/2107 or at [acollie@nas.k12.mn.us](mailto:acollie@nas.k12.mn.us).

## Sixth-graders in Mankato

Nay Ah Shing sixth graders traveled to Mankato on Dec 26 to meet riders from the Dakota 38+2 Memorial Ride commemorating the mass hanging of Dakota men who were sentenced to death following the 1862 Dakota War.

The hangings — America's largest mass execution — were ordered by President Abraham Lincoln. Following the war, Dakota people were banned from Minnesota.

Each year since 2005, members of Dakota bands ride 330 miles from Lower Brule to Mankato over the course of 13 days, arriving just before the anniversary of the tragedy, which occurred on Dec. 26, 1862.

Students were up early for a 6:15 a.m. departure and arrived at Reconciliation Park in time to welcome the riders at 10 a.m.

They participated in a ceremony and shared lunch with the riders before heading home.

Students designed the sweatshirts they wore to the event. Two students did the artwork and one picked a quote.

## Snowplow Policy

Public Works and Housing departments are responsible for snow plowing in all districts of the Mille Lacs Reservation. After any snowfall event, Public Works crews will first open roadways, and when those are completed, they will move on to private residences of Elders and disabled Band members.

Vehicles parked on the roads will be towed.

Non-Elder private residences can be plowed for a \$25 fee, paid in advance. The Housing Department plows Elder rental units.

If you have questions about plow service, contact Public Works at 320-532-7448.

# Education Department Seeks to Expand Immersion Opportunities

Brett Larson Staff Writer



**The 3- to 5-year-olds in the immersion room at Wewinabi Early Education learn a lot of Ojibwe, thanks to teachers Baabii'taw and Ningaabii'anookwe, but without a kindergarten immersion class it will be difficult for them to continue their progress.**

*Immersion: (1.) the action of immersing someone or something in a liquid. (2.) deep mental involvement. (3.) a method of teaching a foreign language by the exclusive use of that language, usually at a special school.*

Imagine a school where young Anishinaabe students are educated entirely in their own language. Teachers use Ojibwemowin to instruct students in all the required subjects: reading, math, science, social studies, physical education.

Students ask questions and converse with peers in their native tongue, and they grow up fully bilingual in both Ojibwe and English.

You don't have to imagine it — it's happening right now, and not that far from here, at Waadookodaading school on the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation near Hayward, Wisconsin. Seven full-time teachers instruct nearly 80 students from pre-school through 7th grade.

The hope is that over time a cohort of speakers will develop, and a new group of teachers, and more classes, and more schools — and a language once declining — will begin to expand.

Immersion in Ojibwemowin is also happening here at Mille Lacs, but on a smaller scale, in a classroom for 3- to 5-year-olds at Wewinabi Early Education in District I.

There is one problem, though: once those students graduate and head off to Nay Ah Shing, Onamia or Isle, they have no opportunity to maintain or expand their language skills, and what they learned is lost.

That's why a group of teachers and administrators in the Mille Lacs Band are hoping to expand immersion opportunities from early education into elementary, and eventually into middle school and high school.

Biidaanakwadookwe (LeAnn Benjamin) is the director of language and culture at Nay Ah Shing and has been tasked with expanding the immersion program.

"Our long-term vision is to have a full immersion school," said Biidaanakwadookwe, "and these are the people who will help to bring it about. I'm supporting them 100 percent."

She is referring to Baabii'taw (Melissa Boyd) and Ningaabii'anookwe (Jada Montano), who will use their teaching skills and knowledge of the language to bring the program to the next level — hopefully as soon as next fall, when an infant class and a kindergarten class will be added.

"We're committed to having a kindergarten class next year," said Baabii'taw. "The expansion has to happen for us to get the outcomes we want. Right now it stops too soon, and that's heartbreaking, to put so much energy in and not give our youth the opportunity to continue when they go to kindergarten."

After that, the dream is to expand the immersion program each year, so the infants and toddlers starting immersion next year will be able to continue in an immersion environment all the way through high school.

The first step is to put together a strategic planning committee composed of community members who are committed to the project. Government officials like Commissioner of Edu-

cation Ed Minnema are already on board. Other commissioners have already visited Waadookodaading, and Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin is scheduled to visit in January.

"The immersion track won't replace education in English, but will be an additional offering to families that are looking for a more intensive Ojibwe language program for their kids," said Commissioner Minnema.

Baabii'taw started the immersion classroom in 2012, when the new Wewinabi Early Ed building opened. In 2014, she felt the need to expand her own language skills while learning more about immersion, so she spent a year with Keller Paap in his classroom at Waadookodaading.

"My experience at Waadookodaading made me realize how much is possible," said Baabii'taw.

She also took part in Ojibwemotaadidaa Omaa Gidakiimi-naang (OOG), an adult immersion program. Nigaabii'anookwe is in the program now, and Biidaanakwadookwe is applying for the next cohort.

Another transformative experience for Baabii'taw has been learning from Hawaiians about language revitalization. Baabii'taw has traveled to Hawaii and also attended seminars with Hawaiian language revitalization experts at the National Indian Education Association convention in Reno last fall.

Like Ojibwe, the Hawaiian language was once in danger of extinction, but a concerted effort by individuals, schools and government has stopped the decline.

The same thing needs to happen here if essential aspects of Anishinaabe culture are to be preserved. Ceremonies crucial to the survival of the culture need to be conducted in the Ojibwe language, according to spiritual leaders like Obizaan (Lee Staples).

"I want our next generation of kids coming up to know the language so it's not lost," said Biidaanakwadookwe. "I want it to keep going because it's the way we lived before contact. Our language is part of who we are as a people."

Baabii'taw points out that Mille Lacs is fortunate because there are still some native speakers left. "There are communities who have no fluent speakers left as resources, and we don't want to put ourselves in that position," she said. "If we don't create a culturally competent curriculum with the speakers and resources we have today, we will suffer greatly. Doing the minimum is not fostering the language. In order to balance the pendulum that has swung so far away from the language, we are going to have to do twice as much to get it back."

Community members interested in immersion classes for their children should contact Wewinabi Early Ed or Nay Ah Shing Abinoojiiyag for more information. The Band's education department plans to offer immersion classes for infants/toddlers, pre-kindergartners and kindergartners next year.



# Nay Ah Shing Students Learn to Walk in Two Worlds

**Brett Larson** Staff Writer



Jason Wind rattled off the numbers 1 to 25 in Ojibwe.



Lehtitia Weiss and Antonio Aguilar enjoyed a game of Monopoly together.



Nay Ah Shing social studies teacher Amanda Sorby and students Jennie Mitchell, Dajatay Barnes and Ronni Jourdain held a bake sale on Dec. 9 to raise funds for a trip to New York and Washington, D.C.



It was a busy afternoon of hands-on learning and experimentation for Nay Ah Shing Abinoojiyag students on Dec. 2, thanks to Sam Horak, an outreach educator with the Science Museum of Minnesota.



Since its founding in the 1970s, the mission of Nay Ah Shing schools has remained consistent: “To teach Ojibwe Language, Culture, Tradition, History and Skills to live in two Cultures by: Educating Students academically, socially, emotionally, and physically in a safe and supportive environment; Building relationships and socializing skills by teaching respect for themselves, for Elders and for all individuals; Creating a strong partnership with parents; Accommodation of learning styles and teaching life skills.”

This year, Nay Ah Shing is working to bring that mission to fruition by reinvesting in its language and culture program while providing a 21st century education in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM).

Education Commissioner Ed Minnema said, “Since I first came in 1996, we’ve accomplished parts of that mission, but now the pieces are in place to help kids to walk in two worlds, like the founders of the school envisioned. Nay Ah Shing has become a school of choice for Band member students.”

Nay Ah Shing staff are working to strengthen the language and culture programs by expanding an Ojibwe immersion program from Wewinabi Early Education to the elementary school, with the goal of eventually offering immersion education through high school (see page 7).

As those plans take shape, exposure to Anishinaabe traditions continues. Pipe and dish ceremonies expose students to traditional spirituality; language and culture classes give students a sense of identity as Anishinaabe; dance and drum classes allow students to express and enjoy themselves in uniquely Indian ways.

As sixth grade student Seth Kegg said, “We get to learn Ojibwe so we can keep our culture alive.”

His friend Jarvis Nickaboine enjoys singing at the drum and

participating in Ojibwe Knowledge Bowl.

Ronni Jourdain, a Knowledge Bowl teammate, said, “The thing I like about Nay Ah Shing is how we practice the culture here with the powwows and cultural classes and pipe and dish. The staff people are really friendly and always willing to help with anything. If you’re feeling down, the teachers ask you what’s up. You can tell that they care.”

With grounding in tradition, Nay Ah Shing is implementing a curriculum focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM), to give students a hands-on education in foundational skills and knowledge that will continue to increase in importance in coming years. Students are taking field trips, studying robotics and learning from guest speakers and performers.

The school also has a new art room for students like Ronni, who dreams of becoming an artist, and a new home economics room where students learn basic living skills.

Another advantage Nay Ah Shing students receive is personal attention. With a low staff-to-student ratio, teachers and other adults get to know students well and give them guidance in academics as well as personal development.

Tenth-grader Jennie Mitchell enjoys being at a small school. “If you’re at a big school, the teachers may not know if someone’s being bullied,” she said. Jennie is considering a career in the military, law enforcement or auto mechanics.

Upper School Principal Noah Johnson stresses the dedication and experience of the staff. “They’ve worked with our kids for many years,” he said. “They always go the extra mile. That’s the way it is with all the staff here. It’s not just 8 to 4 — we pour our hearts into our jobs.”

Bugs Haskin has been working with Nay Ah Shing students for 20 years, and she’s a strong believer in the value of a tribal

school. “If people in the community are saying negative things about the school, they need to get their butts in here and check it out,” she said. “This is our school, and they’re getting a great education here, with lots of individualized attention.”

A case in point: At the lower school, Antonio Aguilar plays Monopoly with Principal Lehtitia Weiss when he needs a break from the classroom. The two developed a bond when Lehtitia was his teacher last year, and now with her assignment as principal, they’ve kept their friendship intact.

Every week, in fact, adults in the school have breakfast with a small group of “breakfast buddies” — students they get to know on a personal level.

Lehtitia knows them all by name, including Jason Wind, who is famous for his knowledge of Ojibwe. Asked to say something, he says, “Gaawiin gego nabadabi a’aw apabawining” (Don’t sit in that chair), which he learned from his Grandpa Sonny.

Jason loves to share what he’s learning this year — everything from the Wizard of Oz in reading to Sitting Bull in social studies to density, mass and buoyancy in science. “Sitting Bull was a great chief of the Lakota,” said Jason. “Crazy Horse was in a different band, but they helped each other.”

Like most fifth graders, he’s not sure what he wants to do when he grows up. “I might actually try to be a medicine man,” said Jason. “Or else I might try to be in the NBA, ‘cause I’m really good at basketball.”

Contemporary dreams and traditional values complement each other in Jason’s mind, and in the halls of Nay Ah Shing. That was the vision for a tribal school when Nay Ah Shing was founded, and that vision is being realized today.

# Band Member Brings New Ideas and Energy to a New Role

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer



Leaving corporate America behind for a new role at Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures (MLCV) was an easy decision for Band member Tawnya Stewart.

When the call came for her to consider the role as Chief of People and Culture Officer for Corporate Ventures Tawnya, who was living in Chicago, decided to head north for a new challenge.

"I've wanted to work for the Band for a long time, but it was a matter of timing and finding the right fit and opportunity to make a difference," said Tawnya. "When I learned about this position I knew that it was the right time and the right job."

"There are many aspects to this role, but the first is to be a culture champion," she said. "This means I continue to build a culture of Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures through initiatives, programs, and leadership."

"We are currently weaving the Ojibwe culture into the corporate culture, through various activities such as Ojibwe language classes, monthly dish settings, Asemaa and asking that our leaders teaching an Ojibwe word as an icebreaker at meetings, in addition we are working on offering a class about our culture."

Tawnya is also the champion for Band members to ensure they are getting the coaching, mentoring and job experiences they need, so they can take on key positions within the MLCV.

"Another aspect of my role is to increase awareness and share opportunities to Band members who may not be aware that our goal is to bring as many Band members as possible into the business."

She is also excited that she gets to continue to build Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures as a fun and cool place to work.

Until she began working for the Band a few months ago Tawnya had spent her long career working for high-profile global companies including BP and Accenture.

As a human resources professional, Tawnya had many different roles that included HR Director, Recruiting Manager and working as Talent specialist. She is well versed in corporate culture and large-scale business operations.

Her goals in her new role are multifaceted.

"I want to engage with all associates as well as Band members, and continue to build upon the culture that currently exists," she said. "For example, one of my most recent activities was the partnership with St. Cloud State University-Business Leadership Series.

Through that partnership we wanted to give Band members and associates an opportunity to get a sense of what it takes to run a business."

Another goal is to implement MLCV clubs and groups that will foster associate engagement, career advancement and recruitment and retention and help the communities.

To start with, the clubs will focus on specific groups — Band members, veterans, women — and will be tailored to interest of those groups.

"We'll have a club focused on energizing people in the work place," she said. "We'll have another group led by Commissioner Joe Nayquonabe that will be running club that is focused on health and fitness."

Another goal that Tawnya has is to create the Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures University which will focus on training, classes and experiences for Band members and associates.

Her work will impact Band members in a variety of ways, she said. Specifically, she will be able to get to know Band members, what their career objectives are and where they are with their education. From there she can provide coaching and mentoring to help them achieve their next step or offer feedback on their current performance through support and coaching.

"What's most important about this role is that it's not about me. It's about our Band members and associates and what I can do to help them grow and develop."

"I think one thing people should know about me is that I'd like to see others succeed, grow and change to whatever extent they are willing to do so," she said. "People should also know that I like to have fun, I have a lot of get-up-and-go and look for the best in everyone."

Tawnya added that she's thrilled to work for the Band.

"It is an honor and privilege to be here doing this work," she said. "I want to share my knowledge and experience with our Band members."

She said she is thankful for the long-term associates that have worked for Corporate Ventures and have helped it grow to the powerhouse it is today. She looks forward to being a part of the growth and development in the future.

For now, Tawnya is still focused on learning the business and thinking about how she can impact and drive the cool

factor for MLCV and being an example where the associates come first.

"I'm also looking forward to getting to know as many Band members as possible and working collaboratively and strategically."

Tawnya's long-term goals are to implement ideas, programs, and innovations. She wants to make sure they are sustainable and that they make a difference for everyone.

"There so many exciting things going on and I'm just glad to be a part of it," she said "I want to continue to learn and share my knowledge — that's what is most important."

*Tawnya lives with her 14-year-old son in the Twin Cities. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Speech and Business from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and her Master of Science Degree in Human Resources from Loyola University in Chicago.*

## Bold Flavors Come to Onamia with Opening of Taco John's

You don't have to go south of the border to get great Mexican food — just to the south shore of Lake Mille Lacs. Taco



John's®, a fast-growing Mexican quick-service chain dedicated to fresh ingredients and original flavors, is now open and serving customers at 38668 Highway 169 in Onamia.

"We're excited to bring something new to the area," said John Weiers, Director of Non-Gaming Operations for Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures, the company that owns the new restaurant. "Taco John's® will provide a delicious, convenient option for visitors and local residents alike."

"Taco John's® is located in the Mille Lacs Super Stop along Highway 169, which sees thousands of motorists each day," says Weiers. "Whether you live or work nearby, are just visiting or passing through, the restaurant is conveniently located near some of the best tourist attractions East Central Minnesota has to offer."

Taco John's® celebrated the grand opening by giving away Golden Tickets good for a year's worth of their fan favorite Potato Olés® to some of the store's first guests. Customers can still put themselves in the running to win a Golden Ticket online — visit [TacoJohns.com/Onamia](http://TacoJohns.com/Onamia) before Sunday, December 25 to enter.

## Property Improvements Continue at Grand Casinos

The next project at Grand Casino Mille Lacs is the 1991 Kitchen, which will begin January 2, 2017. The 1991 Kitchen will take the place of the Grand Northern Grill at Grand Casino Mille Lacs. This 7,075 sq. ft. casual 24-hour restaurant will be sit-down service and will offer breakfast, lunch and dinner. On January 2, the Grand Northern Grill brand will retire, and renovations will begin to transform the space into the 1991 Kitchen.

At Grand Casino Hinckley, the Grand Buffet has closed, and work continues to transform the space into Grand Provisions, a food hall concept that will feature multiple kitchens offering a

variety of American, Mexican, Italian and Asian inspired meals, along with home-made pastries and dessert selections. Diners will roam from station to station and select their desired food and are able to pay for it in one transaction.

What separates this concept from other food halls is the restaurant's ability to flip to a unique all-you-care-to-eat experience on Fridays, Saturdays and special occasions that allows Grand Casino Guests to enjoy their favorites like the popular Seafood theme night.

# New Director of Housing is Jack of All Trades

**Brett Larson** Staff Writer

Six years with the Mille Lacs Band and a lifetime of do-it-yourself experience will serve Daniel Boyd well in his new role as Director of the Mille Lacs Band's Housing Department.

Daniel was asked by Community Development Commissioner Percy Benjamin to take the position, which he started in December.

Daniel, who grew up in the Crosby area, worked as maintenance coordinator for the Band and attended Dunwoody for training in weatherization.



"I've always done a lot of stuff around my own house — landscaping, plumbing, electrical. You name it, I can probably do it," said Daniel.

That's a good thing, because the Housing Department does just about every kind of renovation work, not just on the Band's 529 rental homes, but on other Band buildings and private homes owned by Elders and other Band members.

"We've been into 760 buildings to address issues. We're not responsible for a lot of them, but we get calls and go fix stuff. We do it all: furnaces, electrical problems, windows and doors. ... But we don't do dishes," he joked.

The Band owns 273 rental units at Mille Lacs (District I and II — Chiminising), 90 in the Minisinaakwaang area (District II) and 166 in Aazhoomog and Hinckley (District III).

Daniel supervises a staff of 22 maintenance workers and 10 carpenters.

Resident services staff work with tenants, visit them, educate them and address needs they have, like filling out work orders and contacting the people who can help with issues.

The maintenance workers work on day-to-day upkeep while the carpenters focus on major renovations.

"We have a great core group of guys," said

Daniel. "A lot have been here longer than me, and I foresee them staying. My hat's off to them. They're up to the challenge, and I'm happy to work with them all, and I respect them all."

The Department is limited in some of the work it can do because of federal funding. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds can only be used to fix HUD homes, for example.

The Housing Department is looking at changes to policies in coming years. Commissioner Percy Benjamin hopes to find ways to increase home ownership among Band members in order to reduce some of the problems associated with renting. The Band has great mortgage opportunities for members who want to buy.

Daniel would like the Band to hire more carpenters, not just to get more work done in a more timely fashion, but also to work on more properties. "Right now, our carpenters are federally funded, so they can only work on HUD homes. When we renovate regular homes, we put them out to bid, and we're spending an exorbitant amount of money compared to doing it in house."

Daniel is determined to maintain the Band's housing infrastructure and to find ways to improve the Housing Department, for his staff as well as the residents of Band homes.

"We go 24 hours a day, 7 days a week," he said. "We're like the unsung heroes of the Band. If you put a \$100,000 value on each home, that's \$52 million dollars in assets we're responsible for, and the health and safety of the occupants. That's a big asset, and a big responsibility, and we get it done."

## Great Taste Is on the Menu at Two New Restaurants

In April of this year, Grand Casino Mille Lacs and Grand Casino Hinckley announced plans to make significant property enhancements — mainly in the food and beverage areas at each property — to mark the casinos' 25th Anniversary.

As of today, two restaurants — Brand Burger Bar at Grand Casino Mille Lacs and Stories Diner at Grand Casino Hinckley — are open to the public.

### Brand Burger Bar

This 4,600 sq. ft., 170-seat sports-centric restaurant is an ode to sports fans. Guests can place their favorite burger order and settle into a fun atmosphere where favorite sporting events can be viewed on one of 30 big screen TVs throughout the restaurant.

"When we decided to retire the Woodlands Steakhouse concept, we knew we wanted to replace it with something fun that reflects the energy of the space and helps connect diners in the restaurant with the entertainment spaces that surround them," said Tracy Sam, general manager of Grand Casino Mille Lacs. "The Brand Burger Bar concept fits so well in this space you'd swear it's always been there — yet the energy that the new restaurant brings is unmistakable."

A delicious meal seems much more appetizing when paired with appealing seating areas, trendy finishes and alluring lighting. While the new restaurant makes use of the old footprint of Woodlands Steakhouse, it uses some interesting architectural choices to enhance the dining experience.

A massive, circular LED-changing ceiling element, which was inspired by the rings of a dart board, serves as a beacon for guests on the gaming floor. Other refined sports-related design elements include a basketball net feature wall between seating areas; dimpled golf ball-like textured panels; and textiles on the back booths resembling athletic apparel. The restaurant also features the latest technology, including tablet ordering and USB ports at every table to promote and enhance the fantasy sports experience.

The Brand Burger Bar kitchen is open daily 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sunday — Thursday and from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Hours may be extended later depending on sporting events.

**On the menu:** All beef burgers feature six ounces of a fresh, never frozen, blend of chuck and brisket, seasoned and seared to a perfect medium for ultimate juiciness.

#### Staff Favorites:

- Tailgater: crispy pork belly, fried egg, tomato, arugula, roasted garlic aioli on a brioche bun for \$10.50.
- All-Star: smoked pork shoulder, sweet and spicy cue, pepper jack cheese, bread & butter pickles, crispy onions on a brioche bun for \$10.
- Tie Breaker: sweet Italian sausage, provolone giardiniera, smoked paprika aioli on a French roll for \$9.75.
- Pickle Fries: masa battered kosher dill pickles for \$5.

To complete any meal, guests may add hand-cut fries or gourmet breaded onion rings to their order for a nominal charge or order a signature Brand Burger Bar Shake for only \$5.

### Stories Diner

Stories Diner is a 24-hour, 236-seat sit-down restaurant that features classic American diner fare with a twist. This timeless, modern bistro has open dining seating overlooking the gaming floor. Keeping up with the American tradition, Stories Diner will quickly become the hot spot for locals and casino guests alike.

"For many years our brand has related to telling Grand Casino stories. Stories Diner is a play on that — it's the perfect place for our Guests to take a break from the action, tell stories and enjoy a meal from this newly crafted menu," said Mel Towle, general manager for Grand Casino Hinckley. "This diner is keeping up with the American tradition of

good food, friends and fun."

Design elements pay homage to Hinckley's history as a lumber and rail town which is reflected in the diner's abstract art murals and rich wood ceiling detail.

Stories Diner is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**On the menu:** Stories Diner menu will feature breakfast, lunch and dinner entrées.

#### Staff Favorites:

- Short Rib Melt: braised short rib, crispy onion straws and provolone cheese on grilled cheddar cheese bread for \$10.49.
- Hot Turkey Commercial: roasted turkey, served atop mashed potatoes and wheat bread with gravy and chipotle cranberry sauce for \$9.99.
- Buttermilk Fried Chicken: a double breasted, boneless chicken breast and thigh served with mashed potatoes and gravy for \$11.49.
- Morning Poutine: fresh cheese curds and triple smoked bacon served with our crisp hash browns with sausage gravy and two eggs for \$8.49.



# New Resource Officer Hired for Nay Ah Shing Schools

**Brett Larson** Staff Writer

Josh Hemsworth has been hired as the new School Resource Officer serving the students, staff and families of Nay Ah Shing schools.

Josh is relatively new to law enforcement, but he comes to the Tribal Police Department with a strong background in mental health and work in the school setting, making him a perfect fit as a police liaison in the schools.

"My job will be to maintain an environment that promotes safety for students, faculty and staff," said Josh. "I'll be a liaison between the police department, the schools and the community, and a go-to person if students are experiencing problems of a criminal nature. As a school resource officer, you have an ability to develop a rapport with students in ways that other cops don't. You're there every day as a part of that environment, so you can gain trust and be there for them to express concerns and ask for help."

Josh began his career in a state-run mental health facility in Brainerd before starting school at Central Lakes College. He continued his studies in the Twin Cities and moved home to start a family while working in the mental health field and the public schools as a behavior intervention specialist and mental

health practitioner.

Eventually he determined that a career in law enforcement would allow him to help people and build on his experiences. He went back to school at CLC for his Criminal Justice Certificate and Law Enforcement Skills training and worked for the city of Lakeshore before taking the position with the Band.

"The Band had a need for a school resource officer, and I was a good fit because of my experience working in the high school setting and in the mental health field with people diagnosed with mental illness and developmental disabilities, addiction issues, as well as kids deemed 'at risk'," Josh said.

Since starting in July, he's been going through training as a Tribal Police officer in District I and District III, and he's doing additional shadowing and training for his role in the schools.

Like most school resource officers, he'll also continue to patrol the community and respond to calls as needed, in addition to working to reduce truancy and develop relationships between the schools, the police and the community. His start



**Josh Hemsworth had a long career in the mental health field before he became a police officer.**

date at Nay Ah Shing has not been determined, but it won't be long before District I families see him as part of the team at the schools, and Josh is looking forward to the day.

"I've got a heart for people — that's the bottom line" said Josh. "I definitely want to make an impact, and one of the most effective ways to do that is with the up-and-coming generation, to help demonstrate that staying in school is not just the right thing to do, but that it will have a positive effect on your future."

# DNR, MCT Plan Environmental Impact Statement for Pipeline

**Brett Larson** Staff Writer

Mille Lacs Band Department of Natural Resources employees are determining the Band's involvement in a Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Line 3 pipeline.

The MCT Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) voted 11-0 on Nov. 3 that the MCT should be given the responsibility to administer the EIS for the project.

The TEC also voted 9-1 on Nov. 30 to request that the Army Corps of Engineers enact new rules under the Clean Water Act to require consent of tribes for infrastructure projects with serious potential impacts to tribal cultural and natural resources.

A permit for the pipeline is being sought by Enbridge Energy, a Canadian company that seeks to ship tar sands oil from

Alberta, Canada, through Minnesota to Superior, Wisconsin.

After an Environmental Impact Statement, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission will determine whether to grant the project a certificate of need and a permit to start construction.

The MCT's EIS will focus on the project's potential effects to natural and cultural resources in the pipeline corridor. The Nov. 30 resolution states that the 1855 Treaty preserves tribal members' right to hunt, fish and gather throughout the ceded territory, giving the tribes the authority to prevent pipelines from crossing the region.

The pipeline would pass through Rice Lake and Sandy Lake watersheds and rice habitat near the Band's District II commu-

nities. Enbridge proposes to abandon its existing Line 3 pipeline, which follows Highway 2, and build a new line through a new corridor. Opponents want Enbridge to remove its old pipeline before it can apply for a new one.

Enbridge initially planned a second pipeline, called the Sandpiper, through the same corridor, to transport oil from the Bakken region in North Dakota. Enbridge abandoned its Sandpiper plan in September of 2016 in order to invest in the Dakota Access pipeline, which the Standing Rock Sioux tribe has protested near the site where the pipeline would cross the Missouri River.

## DNR Briefs

**Hatchery Update:** The Band is planning to expand its walleye hatchery next year and is also considering a partnership with the state to stock fry in Mille Lacs Lake. The Band decided to use its hatchery to stock other lakes in the region in order to avoid disruption of the Minnesota DNR's tagging study of stocked walleyes from the state's hatchery. Walleye fingerlings stocked in Namachers Lake in District III have grown more quickly than expected, according to DNR Executive Director Susan Klapel.

**Beware of Thin Ice!** Two new windmills (technically called "dual diaphragm aeration units") have been erected at Namachers Lake to keep the water oxygenated. The units may create unsafe ice conditions in parts of Namachers, so Band members should use caution when venturing onto the lake during the winter.

**New Enrollments Staff:** The staff of the Enrollments Department has turned over in recent months. Debbie Mitchell took over as Enrollments Manager in November, and Maria Powell and Michelle Saice came on board as Enrollments Specialists last summer. All three said they are enjoying their new positions while getting up to speed on Progeny software and department policies and procedures. The Enrollments department issues Band ID cards and processes change of address forms, applications for membership, and changes to blood quantum, which are subject to approval by Band Assembly and the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. Band members are encouraged to keep the Enrollments staff updated on address changes.



# Celebrating the Season: Districts Host Holiday Parties

**Brett Larson, Bill Jones, Toya Stewart Downey** Photographers

In each district, community members came together to celebrate the holiday season, mingling with their fellow neighbors at Districts I, II, III, and the Urban area. We hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable holiday season with your friends and family. Sending our best wishes for the New Year!

At the District I party, Auntie Beachress (aka Tonia Jo Hall) was a hilarious hit, Rep. Sandi Blake and her staff handed out

a wealth of door prizes, and Rodney and Melissa Boyd and daughter Chelsea showed off the new little one.

At the District II party, which was held at Grand Casino Mille Lacs Dec. 9, attendees heard from motivational speaker James Anderson before hitting the dancefloor and competing with their friends at Karaoke. Chilah Brown, Mary Sue Anderson, Mary Boyd and Mary Colton were among the singers, and

Kelly Sam had fun dancing with little Jaxon Crawford.

Rep. Harry Davis welcomed District III Band members to their annual holiday party at Grand Casino Hinckley Friday, Dec. 9. A large crowd of Hinckley and Aazhoomog residents and their families enjoyed delicious food and warm conversation.

## District I



## District II



## District III



## Urban Area



# TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

## Happy January Birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Bellonger, Mary Anne  
Benjamin, Art  
Benjamin, Gladys Marie  
Bush, Edith Ruth  
Clark, Patricia Jean  
Crown, Ronald James  
Day, Lorna Jean  
Dorr, Bonnie Jean  
Duran, Dora Ann  
Eubanks, Isabel  
Gahbow, Janet Lee  
Granger, Evelyn M.  
Holmquist, Rose Marie

Jackson, Katherine Ann  
Johnson, Charles Ted  
Johnson, Grover Joseph  
Johnson, Patty Jo  
Kegg, Richard Duane  
Kuntz, Lucille  
Lowman, Priscilla Joann  
Lowrie, Gloria Jean  
McLain, Temperance Yvonne  
Merrill, Michael Samuel Jr.  
Noonday, Rosalie Ann  
Olson, Dorothy Marie  
Pardun, Donna Jean  
Potter, Patricia Marie  
Sam, Dora Ann  
Shingobe, Joycelyn Marie  
Shingobe-Neeland, Bonnie

Smallwood, Larry Marion  
Staples, Joseph Alex  
Vanheel, Kathleen Marie  
Weyaus, Walter James Sr.  
Wood, Nancy Lee

## Happy January Birthdays:

Happy 14th birthday to my son **Jay Bigbear** on 1/2! Love, Mom. • Happy 14th birthday to our brother **JayBear** on 1/2, love you bro! Love your sisters Rosiebear and Annette. • Happy birthday **Jimmy** on 1/4! Love, Auntie Val, Pie and Kev. • Happy birthday **Jimmy**

on 1/4! Love the Harrington Family. • Happy birthday **Adam Parker** on 1/15! Love Dad, Missy, Granny Kim, Papa Kyle, Papa Brad, Auntie Val, Pie, Kev, Auntie Randi, Uncle Bruce, Jayla, Lileah, Auntie Rachel, Uncle Waylon, Rory, Uncle Brad, Baabitaw, Braelyn, Peyton, Eric, Wes, Waase, Bianca and Henry. • Happy birthday **Worm** on 1/22! Love the Harrington Family. • I want to wish a happy birthday to my favorite Auntie **Priscilla Lowman** on 1/30. Love your niece Michelle and great nieces Rosiebear

("Patsy"), Annette ("Tammy") and Jay aka "Conway". Have a Wonderful birthday. We love you and miss you Auntie!

## Submit Birthday Announcements

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

## Mille Lacs Band Recovery Groups

### District I Mille Lacs

#### Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition

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

#### Wellbriety Migizi Meeting

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

#### Wellbriety Celebrating Families

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

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

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

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

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

#### Wellbriety Sons of Tradition

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

### District II East Lake

#### AA Group

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

#### District III Hinckley & Aazhoomog

##### NA Meeting

Mondays, 7 p.m., Aazhoomog Community Center

#### Wellbriety 12 Step Group

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

#### Wellbriety Meeting

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

## Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Summary of Expenditures and Financing Uses:	Approved Budget for FY 2017	Expenditures through 11/30/2016	% of Budget Expended
Administration (1)	15,365,437	1,621,775	10.55%
Department of Labor	22,836,917	1,431,627	6.27%
Judicial	1,259,872	144,503	11.47%
Department of Justice	5,870,105	678,548	11.56%
Education	16,378,647	2,161,027	13.19%
Health and Human Services	23,128,251	2,437,905	10.54%
Circle of Health Insurance	9,981,504	677,173	6.78%
Natural Resources	5,638,133	1,099,277	19.50%
Community Development	33,604,772	3,693,794	10.99%
Gaming Authority	5,465,107	734,862	13.45%
Bonus Distribution	15,262,819	5,431,366	35.59%
Economic Stimulus Distribution	3,742,161	–	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>158,533,725</b>	<b>20,111,857</b>	<b>12.69%</b>

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

## RECURRING EVENTS

### District I Open Gym

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

### Healer Herb Sam is Available in the Urban Area

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

### Mino Minwaadizii Ikwewug (Lead a Good Life Women)

Fridays, 6 p.m. at the Mino Bimaadiziwin Hotel (Old Budget Host)

### Ojibwe Language Tables

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

### Aazhoomog Clinic Hours

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>Government Offices Closed</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition</b> 1 – 4 p.m. Onamia</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>Government Offices Closed</b></p> <p><b>AA Group</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Migizi Meeting</b></p> <p><b>NA Meeting</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety 12 Step Group</b> 12 p.m. Aazhoomog Clinic</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Celebrating Families</b> 6 p.m. MLBO Halfway House Group</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>N.A./A.A. Welcome</b> 8 p.m. Onamia</p> <p><i>Aaniin ezhwebak agwajiing? What's the weather like outside?</i></p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Meeting</b> 6 p.m. Hinckley Corporate Building</p> <p><i>Zoogipon: It's snowing.</i></p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>Mino Minwaadizii Ikwewug</b> 6 p.m. Old Budget Host</p> <p><i>Gaawiin zoogiposinoon: It's not snowing.</i></p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>Ojibwe Mitten 2-Day Workshop</b> 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. <b>Storybook Time</b> Noon – 1 p.m. <b>Corn Husk Dolls</b> 1 – 3 p.m. ML Indian Museum</p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition</b> 1 – 4 p.m. Onamia</p> <p><b>Ojibwe Mitten 2-Day Workshop</b> 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. ML Indian Museum</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p><b>AA Group</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Migizi Meeting</b></p> <p><b>NA Meeting</b></p> <p><b>DII Spay and Neuter Clinic</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p><b>State of the Band</b> 10 a.m. Grand Casino Mille Lacs</p> <p><b>Wellbriety 12 Step Group</b> 12 p.m. Aazhoomog Clinic</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Celebrating Families</b></p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p><b>DI Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. DI Community Center</p> <p><b>N.A./A.A. Welcome</b> 8 p.m. Onamia</p> <p><i>Aagime: S/he snowshoes.</i></p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Meeting</b> 6 p.m. Hinckley Corporate Building</p> <p><i>Ganabaj wii-soogipon noongom. I think it's going to snow today.</i></p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p><b>Mino Minwaadizii Ikwewug</b> 6 p.m. Old Budget Host</p> <p><i>bimaagime S/he snowshoes along or by, goes snowshoeing.</i></p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p><i>Gisinaa agwajiing noongom: It's cold weather outside today.</i></p>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition</b> 1 – 4 p.m. Onamia</p> <p><i>babaamaagime S/he snowshoes about.</i></p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p><b>AA Group</b> 5 – 6 p.m. East Lake Community Center</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition</b> 5:30 – 7 p.m. Onamia</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Migizi Meeting</b> 7 p.m. Grand Casino Mille Lacs Hotel</p> <p><b>NA Meeting</b></p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p><b>Executive Branch Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. Nay Ah Shing Upper School</p> <p><b>Wellbriety 12 Step Group</b> 12 p.m. Aazhoomog Clinic</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Celebrating Families</b> 6 p.m. MLBO Halfway House Group</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p><b>DIII Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley Event Center</p> <p><b>N.A./A.A. Welcome</b> 8 p.m. Onami</p> <p><i>Makwasaagim: A bear paw snowshoe.</i></p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p><b>Executive Branch Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. East Lake Community Center</p> <p><b>Roxanne DeLille Presentation: Developing a Deeper Understanding of Neighbors</b> 5:30 p.m. Rolf Olsen Center in Onamia</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Meeting</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p><b>Mino Minwaadizii Ikwewug</b> 6 p.m. Old Budget Host</p> <p><i>Indaagime: I snowshoe.</i></p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p><b>Beading 101 2-Day Workshop</b> Noon – 4 p.m. ML Indian Museum</p> <p><i>Aagim: A snowshoe.</i></p>
<p><b>22</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition</b> 1 – 4 p.m. Onamia</p> <p><b>Beading 101 2-Day Workshop</b> 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. ML Indian Museum</p> <p><i>Indaadizooke: I tell a sacred story.</i></p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p><b>AA Group</b></p> <p><b>DII Sobriety Feast</b> 5 p.m. East Lake Community Center</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Migizi Meeting</b></p> <p><b>NA Meeting</b> 7 p.m. Aazhoomog Community Center</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety 12 Step Group</b> 12 p.m. Aazhoomog Clinic</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Celebrating Families</b> 6 p.m. MLBO Halfway House Group</p> <p><i>Aadizookaan: A sacred story.</i></p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p><b>DII-A Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p> <p><b>N.A./A.A. Welcome</b> 8 p.m. Onamia</p> <p><i>Ningii-aadizooke: I told a sacred story.</i></p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p><b>DII Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. East Lake Community Center</p> <p><b>Urban Area Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. All Nations Church</p> <p><b>DII-A Sobriety Feast</b> 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Meeting</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p><b>Mino Minwaadizii Ikwewug</b> 6 p.m. Old Budget Host</p> <p><i>Aadizooke: S/he tells a sacred story.</i></p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p><i>biidaagime S/he snowshoes here, comes snowshoeing.</i></p>
<p><b>29</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Sons of Tradition</b> 1 – 4 p.m. Onamia</p> <p><i>Niwii-aadizooke: I will tell a sacred story.</i></p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p><b>AA Group</b></p> <p><b>DIII Sobriety Feast</b> 5:30 p.m. Aazhoomog Community Center</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Mothers of Tradition</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Migizi Meeting</b></p> <p><b>NA Meeting</b></p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety 12 Step Group</b> 12 p.m. Aazhoomog Clinic</p> <p><b>DI Sobriety Feast</b> 5:30 p.m. DI Community Center</p> <p><b>Wellbriety Celebrating Families</b> 6 p.m. MLBO Halfway House Group</p>	<p><b>Want your event here?</b> Email <a href="mailto:myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com">myles.gorham@redcircleagency.com</a> or call 612-465-0653.</p> <p>Visit <a href="http://millelacsband.com/calendar">millelacsband.com/calendar</a> for additional Mille Lacs Band events.</p> <p>See page 14 for Recurring Events and for details on calendar items.</p>			



## THE MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE

*Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin*

*Cordially Invites You to Attend  
The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual  
State of the Band Address  
10:00 a.m.*

*Tuesday, January 10, 2017*

*Grand Casino Mille Lacs  
Events & Convention Center*

*Dignitaries and Non-Band Member Guests are Warmly  
Welcome & Encouraged to R.S.V.P. to (320) 532-7486*

Band Members need not R.S.V.P.

### Reporters Wanted, Submissions Accepted

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

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Onamia, MN 56359

[millelacsband.com](http://millelacsband.com)



### Commissioners and Staff on Call

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

Susan Klapel, *DNR Executive Director*,  
320-362-1756

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

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

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

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

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