

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

THE
STORY
AS IT'S
TOLD

FEBRUARY 2015 | VOLUME 17 | NUMBER 02



THE STATE OF THE BAND ADDRESS: PROTECTING THE GIFT

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artist Jerry Windorski, and Mille Lacs Band Elder Dave Matrious

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2015 State of the Band Address: Protecting the Gift

Melanie Mahndaamin Benjamin Chief Executive **Bob Pearl** Photographer

Each year the Chief Executive of the Mille Lacs Band addresses the community, reflecting on the previous year and looking forward to the one ahead. For her 2015 address, Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin focused on the theme of cultural sovereignty. We've reprinted Melanie's full remarks in this issue for those who may have missed the speech. Miigwech to everyone who made this special event happen!



Aniin, Boozhoo! Madame Speaker, Members of the Band Assembly, Madame Chief Justice, Judges of the Court of Central Jurisdiction, my fellow Band members and honored guests: It is my duty under Band law and my honor as Chief Executive to deliver the 2015 State of the Band Address.

In our culture, we count years from one winter to the next. Our new year began with the Winter Solstice, when the sun stopped moving in the sky. An Elder told me that on that day, the Manidoog in the sun stops and looks over all of us on earth, to see how we are living.

Like the sun, today is a time for us, as a Band, to look back on the last year, to talk about our hope for the future and the issues, challenges and opportunities we face as an Indian Nation.

We must always keep in mind that each New Year is a gift, just as every new baby is a gift. Gifts must be cherished. Gifts that are fragile must be protected. We begin this New Year with hope for better things.

For many of us, life may not seem much different from a year ago. But there have been significant changes. The most important event from 2014 was our tribal elections. We said Miigwech to our outgoing officials, and welcomed in three new officials, proving again, that our democratic system works.

I've appreciated working with Speaker Beaulieu and the new Band Assembly. Miigwech for your service!

I'd like to share a few of the brightest highlights from the Executive Branch last year:

- We expanded physician services to Districts II and III.
- We added two Native physicians to our staff, and one Native Nurse Practitioner.
- Wonderful work was done on our Oral History Project and new friendships were made between Band Elders, and Dakota Elders.
- We launched a Wrap-Around program for Band members and families in crisis.
- We created a Bridge Academy in the DNR to attract youth into natural resource careers.
- Important work was done to restore Ogechie and Nammachers Lakes.
- The Tribal College grew and expanded.
- We are very close to gaining federal approval to reopen Pine Grove Learning Academy as a satellite of Nay Ah Shing School.

Last year, I told our commissioners to work on programming to help Homeless Band Members. I'm pleased to announce that we have remodeled the old "Budget Host" on 169, and it is now available to those in need of transitional housing at a nominal cost.

Also, last year at State of the Band, I announced that our investigation of the Tribal Police Department was concluded, and we had just received our law firm's recommendations for moving forward.

The report called for the overhaul of our Tribal Police Department. I am very pleased to report that this work is in progress and has gone well. It is being led by our Interim Chief of Police, Jared Rosati.

Chief Rosati has done a great job building trust with Band Members, and has already built strong relationships with other county and tribal law enforcement agencies. The Band just entered into a data-sharing agreement with several other tribes, which should help us all reduce crime.

I am especially happy to announce that — for the first time I know of — violent crime on the reservation has decreased.

Our police officers have a difficult, sometimes dangerous job. To Chief Rosati and the other officers, Miigwech for your commitment to making our communities safe!

As you saw in the video earlier, for our businesses, 2014 was a good year for the Mille Lacs Band:

- Purchasing the two hotels in downtown St. Paul has proven to be a wise decision; both hotels performed very well this year.
- We now own an Embassy Suites in Oklahoma City, which should be equally successful. Many Elders have said they would like to see our new property, so we will be hosting a bus trip to Oklahoma City later this year when the weather is a little warmer!
- We opened The Rival House restaurant in St. Paul.
- Eddy's was torn down and is being rebuilt as an upscale resort.
- We purchased an internet marketing company
- We are building a commercial laundromat
- We are building a medical center in Hinckley.
- And while gaming revenue is down across the country and in the region, our two casinos still performed well.

Overall, I am happy to report that the financial State of the Band is strong.

Before our first casinos opened in 1991, Chairman Art Gahbow used to say, that gaming was a tool, but not the solution. Part of Art's vision was that we would not be dependent on gaming. Art wanted us to invest gaming revenue into rebuilding our economy around many businesses. If gaming ever failed, he wanted us to have something to fall back on. Art wanted a diversified economy.

For the past 24 years, that has been our goal. During that time, we've explored different businesses, some successful, some not so much. Sometimes we kept businesses open, not because they were profitable, but because they provided a service and jobs for Band Members.

Today, for the first time in our history, every single business we own is making a profit. Most important: Although gaming declined across the Nation this year, we did not have to reduce our budget for Band Member services, because our non-gaming businesses did well.

While some other tribes must cut services when gaming declines, the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe no longer depends on gaming alone.

We still have unmet needs, but due to careful, smart planning, the long-term financial outlook for the Mille Lacs Band has never been brighter. In that way, Art's goal has been achieved!

To Art Gahbow's family, I just want to say I am so grateful to have had a chance to work with Art, and to be mentored by him. I am also proud to have two of his grandchildren, Chasity and Christopher, working in my office. Miigwech to the Gahbow family for your contributions to our community.

We all stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. So I also want to acknowledge the dedication, hard work and commitment of former Chairwoman Marge Anderson. Marge devoted her life to this Band, and worked hard to carry on Art's vision, which she was part of creating. Miigwech to Marge's family for supporting her work and her sacrifice for the future of our Band.

In many ways, things have never been better. Today, many of us have nicer homes and better jobs than ever before. As Curt Kalk used to say, "You can tell things are getting better, because you don't hear the cars anymore when they're pulling into the parking lot."

Any Band Member can afford a college degree if they want one, and they can get Master's Degrees, or become doctors

or lawyers. This spring, two Mille Lacs Band Members will graduate from law school.

As a government and in business, we came very far, very fast. But the State of the Band is not just about economics. As Chief Executive, it is my job to look beyond the ledger sheet. Because our community is so much more than that.

We have used our tribal sovereignty to achieve great things: Self-Governance, gaming, and our treaty rights.

But when we look long and hard at our community, every one of us in this room knows that we still face serious challenges. There are still threats to our families, our children, and our unborn future generations.

A few weeks ago, Band Members received a letter from myself, Speaker Beaulieu, and Representative Blake. This letter was about a painful issue that has become a crisis for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe: The number of our babies born addicted to opiates.

This is currently the single greatest threat to the future of the Mille Lacs Band.

Minnesota has the highest rate of Native American, opiate-addicted babies in the United States. It was heart-breaking to learn that we are one of the hardest-hit tribes in the State.

In late December, I held a series of Elder Meetings in each District, and we discussed this crisis. The Elders were deeply moved, and extremely concerned.

One thing all agreed on: Babies are our most precious gift from the Creator, and our main job in life is to protect that gift.

I asked for feedback and ideas. I have been amazed by the many suggestions from Elders, expressions of support and commitment to do whatever they can to protect our babies.

Of the hundreds of ideas, there were a few common themes. First, protecting new life begins before a woman becomes pregnant. Our little ones are learning right now how to be parents, from the adults who take care of them.

Second, we all know women don't become pregnant on their own. Our young men are responsible for those lives as much as the women, and have a duty to help that baby come into this world healthy. As families, we must do more to hold all of our sons and grandsons accountable for raising, caring for, and providing for their children.

Third, protecting that sacred new life is also a community responsibility. Everyone has a role in stopping this epidemic, especially the family and Elders. I was told again, and again: The family members know who is using, and they know who is selling. Many Elders said that people who think they are protecting their family, by not turning them in, are just as responsible for these babies as those who are selling the drugs. It is not enough for the government to have a zero tolerance policy. Every family in this room must have a zero tolerance policy.

Fourth, Elders also said that the family must do what it takes to get the woman help. If a woman gets medical help early, her chances of having a healthy baby are much higher. Also, I'm told that many of these girls have no support systems, and feel totally alone. Those suffering from addiction often iso-



late themselves. It can be hard to get involved when someone is pushing you away. But we must.

Fifth, Elders have said that this is a community-wide problem that requires a community-wide response. We are working right now to plan a Band-wide summit about this issue this winter, and we will include sessions for our youth as well. Our local Mille Lacs Band Chapter of Women Empowering Women for Indian Nations (or WEWIN), has taken a leadership role in organizing this conference. Miigwech to all the WEWIN members for their commitment to stopping this epidemic. They are passionate women who care deeply for our future, and anyone wishing to join them should contact Shelly Diaz.

Of all the suggestions, however, there was one common theme that came up time and time again: We MUST, as families, as a community and as a government, unify around our values, our culture and our language. We need our culture in order to live healthy lives.

I want to speak a bit about "why" this problem has hit us so hard. In 2015, we still deal with the aftermath of 150 years of attempts to destroy our culture and our identity. Forced assimilation, attempted genocide, relocation and boarding schools might be a thing of the past, but the ghosts of those policies still haunt us today.

Science has now proven what our Elders say is true — that we have "blood memory". This means that we carry the feelings and memories of our ancestors in our DNA. We can feel the hurt they felt when they were removed from their parents and placed into the boarding schools. We can feel how sad they were to be separated from their brothers and sisters, and not being able to speak their language.

People don't decide to ruin their lives with alcohol and drugs. Those who are addicted are trying to fill an emptiness inside of them. They are hurting inside. They are trying to numb the pain that our Elders say is caused by historical trauma.

Maybe we cannot ever be free of this blood memory. But we can begin to heal ourselves, and heal our children, by reclaiming our language and culture. Our Elders say that taking care of our Anishinaabe spirit is the only way to ease this pain.

I was told by a spiritual leader that a child's spirit asks permission from the Manidoog to come to this earth and sometimes chooses who her parents will be. He said the Manidoog love every single one of us, all the same, and if they go to ceremonies and are raised in our culture, they will understand how special they are from a young age. They will be less at-risk when they are teens, and they will pass that love to their own children.

Our spirits need to hear our language, to be in our ceremonies, and to live our culture. We can regain our strength

as a people. Because our strength as Anishinaabe is also part of the "blood memory." Our bodies remember who we were before the Great Trauma. Our resilience and strength are also part of our heritage!

How do we find this strength? In Federal-Indian law, tribal sovereignty is about territory our inherent right to govern ourselves. But the solution to this problem is and always has been a kind of sovereignty that we do not have to defend, because it can never be taken away by the Congress or the courts. It is not dependent on federal grants, or gaming revenue, or permission from any other government.

It is a kind of sovereignty that we can only lose if we choose to give it up. It is called Cultural Sovereignty.

Cultural Sovereignty is ancient, and predates the arrival of non-Indians. Cultural Sovereignty is our inherent right to use our values, traditions, and spirituality to protect our future. It goes much deeper than legal sovereignty, because it's a decision to be Anishinaabe, to not just protect a way of life, but to practice living Anishinaabe, every day.

Cultural sovereignty is practiced through ceremonies, through relationships, and especially through language. It is what unites us, inspires us, and gives us hope for the future.

Before gaming, we had 80% poverty, but we were Anishinaabe Strong and our culture was thriving. Today, our cultural survival is threatened. Our Elders say that loss of culture is what is causing people to harm themselves and their family.

When people receive negative messages about their identity, over many generations, they begin to internalize and believe those things which are lies. And when they believe those terrible things, they can act in terrible ways.

Our Elders say that it is our culture, our ceremonies, and our language that can overpower those negative messages. Because our spiritual beliefs teach our children how much the Manidoog love them, they learn how special they are, how beautiful they are.

There are no federal policies anymore forcing our children into boarding schools. There are no laws against us practicing our religion. Our cultural existence cannot be lost, or destroyed, unless we allow it.

Through cultural sovereignty, we can reclaim our strength and protect the gift of our children. Think for a minute about the Elders we have lost, from the most recent Generation that practiced cultural sovereignty: Jim Clark, Raining Boyd, Millie Benjamin, Melvin Eagle just to name a few.

When we look at the way they lived their lives, these people did not care a lot about money. They did not care about better cars or nicer homes. They knew who they were. These people did not have to spend time thinking about culture —



they were too busy living it. This brought them contentment. They did not have to learn about their cultural identity — because it defined everything about them.

These people — and there are still many among us — carry their culture with them. But this is not just about age. Technically, I am an Elder now. I can guarantee you there is nothing magical that happens to a person when they turn 55. We do not become wise overnight.

We have young Elders who do not know who they are. But in contrast, we also have young adults who have devoted their lives to living Anishinaabe Strong, who do. Being Anishinaabe Strong is a state of mind, body, spirit and emotion, and everyone in this room can have that! We can all start now. Those who truly live our culture, regardless of their age, are the soul of our Nation.

For too many of us, there is something missing. Our political and economic universe might be governed by federal-Indian law, but we are defined by our moral vision and culture as Anishinaabe people.

If we save our culture, we save ourselves, we save our children, and we save future generations. Just like our schools teach students how to study and think in the tradition of western education, we need to reteach ourselves how to think, act and be the Anishinaabe Strong of traditional Elders and of our young people who live Anishinaabe culture. A few young people come to mind:

Algin GoodSky, is a 17-year-old Band Member from Minisnaakwaang who attended NCAI's national youth summit. He has been working to stop the Sandpiper Pipeline project. Last summer, Winona LaDuke convinced Algin and his brother Harvey to join their group on a 10-day horseback ride to Bemidji. Winona said that Algin and Harvey sang for the group every day and were the heart of this journey. Algin also attended an Open House in McGregor held by Enbridge, the company that wants to build the pipeline. Those corporate executives did not expect to see a young man in full regalia, speaking for the water, manoomin and earth attend their Open House. Algin was exercising his cultural sovereignty.

Trina Fasthorse, is a 16-year-old Band Member from St. Paul. No one in her family danced, but with their support, she taught herself how. Now, she teaches dancing every Wednesday night at the American Indian Center in Minneapolis to anyone who wants to learn. She also serves as a Peer Mentor for other Native youth, and is learning Ojibwe. Trina is exercising her Cultural Sovereignty.

Syngen Kanassatega and Aarik Robertson, who will graduate from law school this spring. Both were inspired to become attorneys because they wanted to make a difference. This is what happens when you have strong families who teach the importance of culture, our values, and serving the community. Those families were practicing cultural sovereignty in how they raised their sons, and I'm sure that one day those young men will be leaders of the Mille Lacs Band.

I also think of our little ones who are learning Ojibwe in our Head Start classrooms. One day I visited my 4-year old granddaughter, Danica, at school. I said something to her, and a teacher gave me a scolding look, and held up a sign that said, "No English!" That teacher was teaching cultural sovereignty!

Upon the advice of spiritual leaders and Elders, I am convinced that we must practice cultural sovereignty all day, every day, if we are to protect the gift of our future generations. This is the work of individuals and families, but Band government has a role.

For the Executive Branch, that work begins with our Commissioners. To fulfill my legal duties as Chief Executive under Band Statutes, I'm required to spend much of my time conducting relations with other governments. I provide leadership to the Commissioners, but under Band Statutes, only the Commissioners have authority to run the programs. I give them broad directives, but they make the decisions. These are big jobs.

I would like to introduce my Cabinet to you now, and ask

that each of you stand:

Catherine Colsrud, our Commissioner of Administration.

Michele Palomaki, our Assistant Commissioner of Administration.

Samuel Moose, our Commissioner of Health and Human Services.

Suzanne Wise, our Commissioner of Education.

Percy Benjamin, our Commissioner of Community Development.

Susan Klapel, our Commissioner of Natural Resources.

And finally, our Master of Ceremonies today, Joseph Nayquonabe, our Commissioner of Corporate Affairs.

I also invite Todd Matha, our Solicitor General, and John Gerdener, our Commissioner of Finance, to stand.

We are not always very good at thanking those who have the courage to take on leadership positions, but each of these people works hard for the Band. To all of you, Miigwech, for all you do.

As Chief Executive, my role is to assign the Commissioners goals. And so, for 2015, I have the following directives for the Commissioners:

To the Commissioner of Health and Human Services, Samuel Moose: You have your work cut out for you. But let me be clear: The opiate crisis is everyone's issue. I hereby direct my entire Cabinet to collaborate with you, as the lead, in fighting this epidemic.

For 2015, I direct you to work with our spiritual leaders to develop a culturally-based prenatal program for pregnant women and their partners, with a focus on our spiritual and cultural traditions around childbirth and parenting for both partners.

I further direct you to develop a program for expectant mothers who need help with addiction, so as to provide the greatest chance of delivering a healthy baby, and recovering as a family, after the baby's birth.

We need a program for foster care families to help them meet the spiritual and cultural needs of the children they take care of. We need an intensive cultural parenting program for those trying to be reunited with their children. And we need more social workers. With an average of 40 client cases per social worker, our staff are spread too thin.

Finally, several years ago, you and I developed a proposal that would provide one-stop services for families in crisis, but it was not adopted. Last November, Speaker Beaulieu and I with other Band officials toured a center in Arizona that achieves that goal. I direct you to bring back our proposal and work with the Band Assembly and the Courts to see if we can make this happen here at Mille Lacs.

To the Commissioner of Natural Resources, Susan Klapel: Our ancestors made great sacrifices to protect our land and preserve our rights. It was Art Gahbow's dream to restore the reservation. I direct you to continue work toward that dream through purchasing lands important to the Band, so we can pass on that gift to our children.

We were here, taking care of Mille Lacs Lake, hundreds of years before Mille Lacs Lake became a sport fishery and we will be here hundreds of years from this day. Nobody cares more about the lake than the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Continue to partner with the State to restore the health of our wall-eye population.

The Creator gave us the sacred gift of manoomin, our wild rice. While the Nation's attention has been focused on the Keystone XL pipeline, Enbridge has been quietly building capacity to pump even more oil than Keystone right through a path that could harm the Big Sandy Lake and Rice Lake watersheds. Your top priority in 2015 is to make sure we do everything in our power to protect this gift from the harm that could result from pipelines or mining.

To the Commissioner of Education, Suzanne Wise: Knowledge is a gift that once given, can never be taken away. For your position, exercising cultural sovereignty means that, above all else, your top priority for 2015 must be our tribal

schools and the children attending them. We must see improved attendance, performance and graduation in the schools we run.

Teachers have such hard jobs. Our staff are committed, but they need more support to do the work they've been trained to do. We also need our best teachers to feel secure and want to work here. We should never have teacher vacancies like we have had recently, for so long. Our schools must become the kind of schools that teachers compete against one another to get into.

I direct you to develop a teaching recruitment plan. To attract and keep the best teachers, especially those who speak Ojibwe and to make sure our schools can afford to compete with the best schools in the State and the Nation.

To Commissioner of Community Development, Percy Benjamin: You have a very big job. Perhaps the biggest hurdle is outdated policies that no longer work for the Band or Band Members.

Just because we've always done something the same way doesn't mean it's the right way. I direct you and your staff to work with Commissioner Colstrud and the Housing Board to overhaul Community Development policies. Deliver a proposal to the Band Assembly that streamlines our policies to better work for Band Members.

We know it can be done. A great example is the recent change doing away with interest for home mortgage loans. Miigwech to you, Commissioner Colstrud and the Housing Board for that excellent work. We need more creative changes like that.

To protect the gift of family, we must make sure Band Members have safe neighborhoods. I further direct you to work on a plan that will provide more healthy recreation for kids and youth in Districts I, II, and III.

To Commissioner of Corporate Affairs, Joe Nayquonabe: Your biggest challenge in 2015 is to create well-paying jobs for Band Members in District II. While our businesses are doing very well, we need economic development for the East Lake area. We need creative solutions to address this challenge.

To the Commissioner of Administration, Catherine Colstrud and Assistant Commissioner of Administration, Michele Palomaki: Your challenge may be the biggest of all. Historically, for the Anishinaabe, certain people served as civil chiefs war chiefs and spiritual leaders. But when decisions needed to be made, our chiefs always consulted with our spiritual leaders.

This is why I created a Cultural Board last year, and asked the Drumkeepers to serve as this Board. Our Elders said that we needed to return to operating our government in a way that is respectful of our culture, traditions and language.

The First Amendment of the Constitution guarantees separation of Church and State. But this is a non-Indian idea. When the Congress wrote the Indian Civil Rights Act in 1968, they left this out on purpose. There is no requirement of separation of Church and State for tribal governments.

As elected officials, many of us consult with spiritual leaders when we are looking for solutions. But to exercise cultural sovereignty, we need to bring spirituality back into our government, at all levels.

We do not need to look back in time 100 years to find examples. We only need to look back 15 years ago, to our 1837 Treaty Rights case. Joyce Shingobe reminded me of this recently, when she retold this story.

We had brilliant attorneys, and a strong case. But we did not rely on the non-Indian system, alone. We asked for help from Gitchi Manidoo. And with the other tribes, we organized the Waabanong Run which included a group of Anishinaabe runners who would carry the Eagle Staff to Washington D.C.

The day before the run began, a ceremony took place. The pipe was passed around. Cedar was put in the runner's shoes, and prayers were said for the runners', as they made their way to D.C.

Spirit dishes were put out at each ceremonial dance in the spring and fall throughout this time. A speaker for each ceremonial drum asked for help from the manidoo that surround our homes, for the runners, and for guidance for the Supreme Court judges.

A Pipe was gifted to us from the Lakota nation in South Dakota to help us in our struggle. A delegation of Lakota came and presented the pipe to us, and we continue to use it today to help us make decisions that will affect the generations ahead of us.

During the Waabanong Run, there were sweat lodges, fasting, and the Ceremonial Drums remained open during the entire time for runners, for the judges and for our people. Each day for nine days, the prayers went out to the Supreme Court Justices for their well-being and their families. The eagle staff was delivered in a fashion as old as Anishinaabe history: by runners.

At the end of the run, a pipe ceremony was held giving thanks for the delivery of the Eagle Staff.

The day of the Supreme Court hearing, spiritual leaders, advisors, and lawyers entered the building with the eagle staff. Our lawyers, as told by the spiritual advisor, wore cedar in their shoes. A Midewewin song ended the ceremony.

On March 24, 1999, the Supreme Court handed down their decision: We won. We retained our rights to hunt, fish and gather as outlined in the 1837 Treaty. That was Cultural Sovereignty.

In the past, when we practiced culture sovereignty alongside legal sovereignty, we have achieved great things, like the Treaty rights victory. And Miigwech to Joyce for sharing that story. We need to make sure our traditions and culture are part of everything we do as a government, and that is what I'm directing all of the Executive Branch to do today.



Teaching non-Indian employees how to be respectful of our culture is important, but spiritual leaders are telling me that we have Band Member employees who need this help more. There are many Band Members who didn't grow up in the culture. They don't attend ceremonies and may not have an Indian name, but often, this is not by choice.

I'm told that many have an emptiness inside of them, and can feel their Anishinaabe spirit longing for nourishment. Maybe they just don't know how to begin or how to ask.

These Band Members are from all walks of life; some are young, some are old. Some are financially successful, some are unemployed or may suffer from addiction. Some of these Band Members are highly educated, and may be in leadership positions.

If we are going to save our culture, those who are leading our way to the future must practice cultural sovereignty as well. Think about the story of our Treaty Rights case. We need that back.

Commissioners Colsrud and Palomaki, your top priority this year is to work with our spiritual leaders, our Elders, and our Cultural Board, and follow their advice on how to bring our culture back into our daily government operations in a way that respects our values.

Maybe that means that every Band Member employee will be offered a meeting with one of our spiritual leaders, if they want, to talk one-on-one about how they can begin to live Anishinaabe Strong if they choose to and are not already. Our spiritual leaders have said they would be so happy to do this. They will help any Band Member who wants help connecting with our culture.

Maybe that means making sure all meetings begin in a good way, with an offering of asema. That's how meetings used to begin.

Maybe that means creating a program for employees to learn Ojibwe. Wonderful teachers like John Benjamin are available to teach our employees. I require my staff to attend language class with John once a week. Our spiritual and traditional leaders will know how to help, but your role is to follow their lead.

To all the commissioners: Rely on the Band's strategic plan, which is actually all about cultural sovereignty. By the end of this first quarter, I want a strategic plan from the Cabinet detailing how cultural sovereignty will be implemented in the Executive Branch. Commissioner Colsrud, it is your task to ensure this is completed.

As a Band, we have our challenges, but we also have opportunities. I saw many amazing things in 2014.

I saw 5000 American Indians coming together, with powerful Native pride, to protest the racist name of a professional football team.

I saw a new Band Assembly get elected and come together as a governing body, and I have seen them working hard, every day for the betterment of the community.

I saw Anishinaabe and non-Indian people from many places and Bands coming together to fight pipelines and mining that threatens Mother Earth.

It is amazing what happens when we come together, in big groups or small ones.

There was one small moment from last year that I recall. Nora Benjamin was driving home and saw a young Migizi, an eagle that was wounded on the side of the road. She called our DNR staff, who brought him to an animal hospital. A few weeks later, the eagle was well again. A few of us were there at Kathio as Henry Sam said a prayer. The Migizi was released, and he flew away.

As Chief Executive, my duties are defined by the Band Statutes and the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Constitution. My duties as an Anishinaabe woman are not really written any place.

When it comes to matters of culture and spirituality, I am the same as everyone else. I go to a spiritual leader, and I ask if they will take my asema. I ask for their advice, and I understand they expect me to follow their advice. So I try.

What I can do as the head of the Executive branch, is to ensure that Band Member employees have a chance to consult with spiritual leaders if they want to do so. I can make sure that our employees can take classes in language and culture. I can also give our spiritual leaders the space and time they need to reach out to the Band members.

I gave Obisan some asema today for a special purpose: I am seeking guidance for all of us, as individuals, as families, and as an Anishinaabe Band. I cannot stand up here and pretend that I have all the answers because I do not. The answers come from a much higher power.

But I do know this: We cannot survive as a people until we renew the cultural sovereignty that lives within each of us.

As Band members, we have many things in common.

We were born Anishinaabe.

We were each given gifts from the Creator, and given a special purpose.

It is our responsibility to find out what that purpose is.

Part of that purpose includes learning our language.

Part of that purpose is to learn our culture.

Part of that purpose is to keep our traditions.

Part of that purpose is to preserve a way of life; and

Part of that purpose is to pass these things along to our children and grandchildren.

Today, let us begin this New Year by seeking the peace and justice that is inside all of us.

Let us begin the process of restoring our cultural sovereignty to our clans, our families, and ourselves as individuals.

Let us work together to protect the gift of our youngest Band members. Our babies are the keepers of cultural sovereignty for the next generation.

Let us work together to protect the gift.

Like that Migizi who needed help and prayers, our community needs to rely on our culture in order to get well and be set free.

We have a long journey ahead, and many miles to go.

We will need to come together.

Let us begin this long journey together.

Miigwech!

Rayna Churchill, Chief Justice



Honorable Chief Executive, principled members of the Band Assembly, my fellow Mille Lacs Band Members, employees and guests, welcome to the 2015 — State of the Band Address. It is my honor to provide you with the State of the Judiciary Address as prescribed by the Band Statutes.

I currently serve as the Chief Justice but I also serve as the Appellate Justice for District III. The Honorable Clarence Boyd, serves as the Appellate Justice for District I and the Honorable Brenda Moose serves as the Appellate Justice for District II. Please stand and be recognized. Thank you!

We are currently looking to fill the position of the District Court Judge. I'd like to give a tremendous thank you to Honorable Richard Osburn for his contribution to the role of the District Court Judge for the past six years. Thank you!

Our court system routinely hears cases involving civil and criminal matters which includes, but are not limited to, custody, adoption, guardianship, children in need of protective services, probate, child support, orders for protection, traffic, natural resources and conciliation. The Court does not hear juvenile matters because the statutes must be revised.

As indicated in 2014, the Courts are moving forward with our strategic planning and needs assessment. This is a four-tiered project in conjunction with Band Member Legal Aid, Family Services and the Peacemaking program. The Center for Court Innovation is conducting the needs assessment and

will assist in the strategic planning as well as provide training and technical assistance. We are excited to re-engineer court operations so that we can continue to provide a forum where litigants can resolve disputes in a fair, independent, timely and accessible manner. Since it is a four-tiered project it is expected to take 18 months to two years to complete. In July 2014, the four Band departments had a site visit with CCI to determine the action plan for the assessment, focus groups, interviewing the community members and departments with more to come.

The Mille Lacs Band Tribal Court is nearing completion of the 2011 grant which is expected to end in June 2015. Certain Band Statutes were rewritten as well as cataloging and scanning of court files. Additionally, the Guardian ad Litem training conducted under this grant resulted in the contracting of three Guardians ad Litem.

The objectives outlined in the 2012 grant are also moving forward by improving the security throughout the courtroom and court administration area, providing parents of Band Member children an attorney for legal fairness, and obtaining a Peacemaker. Our new Peacemaker, Laurie Vilas (please rise) is helping to establish an improved model of the peacemaking program. The Peacemaker will help settle disputes as a neutral third party in such cases as contested family matters, harassment, and civil cases.

As a reminder, the court calendar was added as a courtesy and to further enhance the judicial webpage on the Band's website. The calendar is updated weekly and subject to change based upon motions, continuances, or rescheduling.

In 2014, the number of cases filed totaled 1664 of which 80 cases have not been adjudicated yet.

- New child support cases were filed totaled 219;
- The general civil cases totaled 1300;
- 24 petitions for orders of protection were filed; and
- Lastly, Family type cases totaled 114, which consisted of Guardianships, Custody, Adoptions, Divorces, Paternity, Name Changes and Children in need of protective services.

This year the court system saw a spike in an area that we all hold dear to our hearts — that impacts our Mille Lacs Band children and our future generations. 33 is the number of cases involving Children in Need of Protective Services. The 33 cases affected 93 of our Band Member children in 2014. Twenty of the 93 represent the number of infants who were prenatally exposed and born with drugs in their system. Thirteen different types of drugs have been determined and some of these infants were exposed to multiple types of drugs. Some withdrawals are so severe that some infants need morphine to ease their pain of the withdrawal symptoms.

Unfortunately, when the Court tries to implement lifestyle changes for the parents of these children by ordering drug and alcohol testing, these parents object to the testing based on cultural grounds. In the past, the Court has pointed out to the parents that usage of drugs and alcohol is also not part of the Anishinaabe culture.

These numbers are significant indicators that we as a Tribe need to rethink our current models and how we handle drug and alcohol problems within our community. I urge the Band and the community to reevaluate our programs to address the growing number of cases of drug and alcohol abuse for the sake of our young and generations to come.

In closing, my goal for the Tribal Court is to continue to move forward with the strategic planning and needs assessment so that we can ensure fair and impartial justice is being administered. Once again, as the Chief Justice of The Mille Lacs Band Court of Central Jurisdiction, I urge the Elected Officials, Appointed Officials, Band Members, Band employees, and all community members, including County officials, to work towards a common goal of making changes to end this increasing and alarming problem of addiction.

Thank you for attending the 2015 State of the Band Address.

From the Cover: Gii Dodaiminaanig, Our Clan System

Dave Matrious Mille Lacs Band Elder **Bob Pearl** Photographer



Jerry Windorski and Dave Matrious pose in front of the art piece.

Since time immemorial, Indigenous nations of North America have had a spiritual connection to the natural laws and the environment of this beautiful continent. The Great Spirit bestowed upon the Anishinabeg a beautiful language and a system of governance — Gii dodaiminaanig, our clan system.

Oral traditions tell of six mystical figures emerging from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. Each of the first five beings explained their purpose to the spiritual leaders of the Ojibwe. The sixth being, whose powers were too great for the people

to comprehend, was sent back into the depths of the Great salt waters. From these original five clans came the basis or core of most Ojibwe communities (or nations), many of which still exist today.

This system of clans has been used to govern our tribal nations, keep harmony in our community, and build intellect in our people. Awaysiag (animals) were chosen by the Great Spirit to teach the Anishinabeg many disciplines or life skills, such as oratorical, leadership, military, medicines, teaching, economics, and agriculture. The traits that these clan animals exhibit can also manifest itself in those members. Everything that the people needed to know can be found in the Gii dodaiminaanig, or clan system.

The five original clans have evolved into many sub groups over time. During early formation of cultural anthropology, ear-

ly American anthropologists William Warren, Frances Densmore, John Tanner, and Henry R. Schoolcraft documented the 32 subgroups that are represented in this art piece.

The art piece was the result of collaboration between Jerry Windorski, a retired welder and craftsman, and myself, a Mille Lacs Band Elder from the Aazhoomog community. Jerry's interest in Ojibwe culture began while visiting the the Northwest fur trade outpost near his home in Pine City and the Fort Folle Avione Post in Burnett County, Wisconsin. He has recreated many items used by the French traders using semi-precious trade silver metal. Jerry is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps (1966-69) and lives with his wife, Joy, near Pine City, Minnesota.

TERO Director Named to National Post

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

Craig Hansen, Mille Lacs Band TERO Director, was appointed interim Chairman of the Board of Directors for the National Council for Tribal Employment Rights (CTER) in December 2014.

Craig is a Mille Lacs Band member and area native who graduated from Onamia High School in 1990. After stints at St. Cloud State University and in the Twin Cities, he came home in 2004 to take a job with the Housing Department.

From there he moved on to TERO, which stands for the Tribal Employment Rights Office. His first day on the job, his supervisor dropped the quarter-inch thick Tribal Employment Rights Statute on his desk and said, "Read this."

It was baptism by fire, but Craig proved up to the task, and aside from a two-year hiatus to pursue more education, he's been in the office ever since. His local experience has turned into national expertise on tribal employment issues.

Craig has served on the CTER-Great Lakes Regional board since 2010 and the CTER National Board of Directors since 2012. When the former Chairman of the Board of CTER announced his retirement in December, Craig was unanimously chosen by his fellow Board Members from throughout the country as interim chair. His predecessor, Larry Ketcher from the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, worked in tribal employment rights for 40 years. Craig says stepping into his shoes is like replacing Michael Jordan on the basketball court.

As chair, he is responsible for coordinating the planning of the CTER National Convention, organizing and planning Board of Directors meetings, and networking with other TEROs and representatives from the government and the private sector. Craig works on training opportunities with TEROs across the nation. With the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs and the Federal Highway Administration he helps to make sure Band members and all TERO-eligible Native Americans are being hired for construction and other jobs.

Although he won't rule out continuing in the role when elections are held next summer, Craig is clear about his priorities: "My work here comes first."

What is TERO?

The Tribal Employment Rights Office ensures that contractors and businesses working on Band lands are complying with the Band's Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance, which requires that 50 percent of positions be filled by Native Americans.

"We ensure that contracts are being complied with, and Band members and other natives are getting the opportunities to work," Craig says. "We can't tell companies whom to hire,

but they need to hold positions open for tribal members and other natives."

The Tribal Employment Rights statute gives the Director and TERO the right to enforce TERO, but there are certain things they can't do. He and Lisa Ballinger, TERO's compliance officer, can make sure contractors are hiring Band members and other TERO-eligible tribal members, but ultimately, individuals' success on the job is up to them. TERO doesn't protect employees who fail to show up or do not perform according to the employer's expectations. If an employee feels discriminated against on the job, they may file a report in writing to the TERO Office so an investigation can begin.

Craig can recommend qualified applicants who are on the TERO list, but he can't make the decision about who gets hired for a given job. He advises anyone on the TERO list — currently at 322 workers — to make sure their contact information is up-to-date. Too often TERO tries to recommend a person for a position only to find that their phone number or address has changed.

The system works like this: At pre-construction or even pre-bid meetings, potential contractors are given a copy of the TERO law and told about its requirements. "We let contractors know what they're getting into," Craig says.

From there, they come up with a compliance plan, which needs to be approved by Craig. Occasionally contractors balk at the idea of following tribal law, but 99 percent are willing to work with the tribe. He explains clearly to would-be contractors who try to buck the system by not complying, "You have to understand that when you're coming to the reservation, it's like you're coming to another country. You need to follow the law."

Once work begins, Compliance Officer Lisa Ballinger makes visits to job sites to take pictures, and she interviews Band Members and other TERO-eligible workers on site to ensure contractors are complying with the law and employees are being treated fairly. If contractors fail to comply, they can be fined.

Training days

There are exceptions to the law if not enough skilled Band members or TERO-eligible tribal members are available to fill open positions. According to Craig, the Band has plenty of laborers and carpenters, but is lacking electricians, HVAC installers, and other skilled professionals.

For that reason, Craig's office is increasingly involved in training Band members to fill the jobs that are available. The TERO Office has sponsored Serv-Safe Training with Education

to ensure that the food handlers at our schools are certified; Customer Service Training to Human Resources and other Departments; and Boiler's License Trainings (partnering with the Department of Labor).

In 2015, Craig will be working more closely than ever with the Department of Labor. Revenue collected from fees and



Craig Hansen, Mille Lacs Band TERO Director

finances will be allocated to provide more training opportunities for Band members and other Native Americans.

For example, the office is currently partnering with four other Bands, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), Civil Rights Office and the Cement Masons Union to provide training to 20 people from April to July of this year. Four spots are reserved for Mille Lacs Band members — one from each district and one from the urban area, with one alternate selected from each district. MnDOT will pay for lodging and training, and TERO will provide a stipend. "If this partnership takes off, they're open to more trainings like it," Craig says.

Craig also works closely with MnDOT on local road construction projects. MnDOT has an Indian employment hiring provision for jobs that are on or near reservations. Craig stays in touch with the Brainerd and St. Cloud MnDOT offices to advocate for Band members and other TERO-eligible tribal members on projects stretching from Elk River to Brainerd and beyond. TERO is only enforceable when projects are located on the reservation, and the Indian Employment Hiring Provision is encouraged throughout the state. Many employees within MnDOT are nearing retirement, Craig said, so the organization is reaching out to the tribes **Continued on page 16**



Makadedeked A'aw Oshkinawe/ Bakaaniged A'aw Oshkiniigikwe

Fasting for Young Boys/ Fasting for Young Girls

Lee Staples Gaa-Anishinaabemod Obizaan Chato Gonzalez Gaa-Anishinaabewibii'ang Ombishkebines

Mii dash owapii a'aw oshki-inini gii'igoshimod, mii iw makadedeked ezhiwiinjigaadeg. Ishke i'iwapii a'aw gwiiwizens ani-oshki-ininiwid, maagizhaa gaye i'iwapii bakaanigondaaged ani-gaagiigidod. Mii owapii bagwaj da-ni-izhaapan.

When a young man fasts it is called, Makadedeked. It is at the time that a boy is becoming a man; maybe it is at the time when a change in his voice is heard as he talks. It is then that he could go out in the woods to fast.

Ishke dash mii owapii ogitiziiman maagizhaa gaye iniw odedeyan ininamaagod imaa oninjiin gii-atood i'iw wiisiniwin naa iwedi bezhig akakanzhe gii-atood. Mii dash imaa ininamaagod iniw odedeyan a'aw oshki-inini. Giishpin mamood i'iw wiisiniwin gaawiin mashi inendanziin bagwaj da-izhaapan. Ishke dash a'aw mamood i'iw akakanzhe, mii dash imaa wiindamaaged wii-kii'igoshimod.

It is at that time one of his parents, maybe his father extends out his hands, in one hand he has food and in the other hand he has ash from the fire. It is then that his father extends his hands to the young man. If the young man takes the food, it means that it is not his time to go out in the woods to fast. If the young man takes the ash, he is letting it be known that he is ready to fast.

Ishke dash dabwaa-maajitaad da-kii'igoshimod, mii imaa zinigobidood i'iw akakanzhe imaa odengwayaang, da-makadewiingwed dash megwaa bagwaj imaa wii-ayaad. Mii iw wenji-izhiwiinjigaadeg makadedeked a'aw gwiiwizens. Miinawaa booch iniw asemaan da-ayaawaad a'aw oshki-inini da-baa-aabaj'aad megwaa imaa gii'igoshimod. Miinawaa giishpin opwaaganan ayaawaad, mii gaye inow ge-aabaj'aaajin megwaa bagwaj imaa wii-ayaad.

Before the young man goes out to fast, he takes the ash and rubs it all over his face so that his face is all black while he is out fasting. That is why fasting for a young boy is known as Makadedeked. The young man must also have tobacco on him to use while he is out fasting. And if he has a pipe, he can also use it while he is out there fasting.

Ishke dash wii-ni-wawiingezid a'aw Anishinaabe miinawaa debinaak wii-ni-doodawaasig iniw Manidoon, akawe imaa da-zagaswe'idim asemaan miinawaa wiisiniwin da-ininamawindwaa ingiw Manidoog giizhaa da-nanaandomindwaa weweni da-zhawenimaawaad miinawaa weweni da-ganawenimaawaad inow weshki-bimaadiziniin megwaa imaa gii'igoshimonid. Miinawaa mii owapii gaye ge-ni-aabajichigaazod a'aw Anishinaabe menidoowaadizid da-izhiwinigod imaa bagwaj waa-kii'igoshimod. Mii inow ge-ni-ganawenimigojin gaye megwaa imaa ayaad bagwaj ayaapii da-ni-dapaabamigod gaye.

If the Anishinaabe wants to be efficient and not do things half-heartedly to the Manidoog, a feast is held first where tobacco and food is offered to the Manidoog ahead of time asking that they show compassion and watch over the young man that is about to go out and fast. It is also at that time that an Anishinaabe that is gifted maybe as a medicine man takes the young man out into the woods to do his fasting. It is also that same Anishinaabe that will watch over as he is fasting and check on him periodically.

Bebakaan igo gii-izhi-waawiindamawaawag ge-izhichigeng i'iwapii bagwaj izhiwinaawaad inow weshki-bimaadiziniin. Aanind ingiw ishpiming imaa mitigong odoozhitamawaawaan da-ayaaminid da-ni-nanaamadabinid inow waa-kii'igoshimonijin, naa aanind gaye mii-go imaa jiiigay'ii imaa mitigoong gii-wawenabi'indwaa. Wigiwaam aanind ogii-ozhitamawaawaan igaye imaa biindig gii-nanaamadabinid waa-kii'igoshimonijin. Ishke dash gaye aanind azhigwa gaa-ni-giizhiitaawaad gii-kii'igoshimowaad mii imaa madoodaswaning gii-piindaganindwaa gaye.

There are little differences in the way people are taught on what is to be done when they take a young man out into the woods to fast. Some were taught to make a platform up in a tree where the young man can sit as he fasts. Some were also told to sit by a tree as they fasted. There was also some who made a wigwam for the young man to sit in as he fasts. As some finished their fasting they were taken into a sweat lodge.

Ishke dash a'aw ikwezens owapii ani-moonenimind ani-ikwewid, mii owapii bagwaj ezhiwinind imaa wigiwaaming da-ayaad. Mii dash i'iw bakaaniged a'aw ikwezens ezhiwiinjigaadeg. Ishke dash megwaa iwidi gii-ayaad iwidi wigiwaaming, maagizhaa gaye azhigwa gaa-ni-giizhiitaad gii-kii'igoshimod, mii iniw mindimooyenan gii-kikinoo'amaagod iw akeyaa ge-ni-izhi-bimiwidood bimaadizid i'iw ani-ikwewid da-ni-maajikamagaanig. Ishke mii iwapii wenda-mashkawaadizid ani-ikwewid a'aw ikwezens. Ishke i'iw bezhig gikinoonowin megwaa ani-bimisemagadinig, mii i'iw

wenjida da-ni-ganawaabandag ani-izhichiged.

When it is realized that a young girl is becoming a woman, it is then that she is taken out into the woods to stay in a wigwam. This is why it is known as Bakaaniged, because the young girl is removed from their home to a separate dwelling when she fasts. While the young girl is in the wigwam, or maybe after she has finished fasting, the old ladies would come in and cover the teachings that are important for her to remember as she goes on to be a woman. The time when a young girl is becoming a woman is the most powerful stage of her life. Throughout the year after the young woman has to be especially careful in what she does.

Ishke i'iw gii-miinigonaanig ingiw Manidoog anishinaabewiyang ge-inanjigeyang, mii i'iw manoomin, biinish gaye ingiw giigoonyag, biinish gaye ingiw anooj awensiinyag, waawaashkeshiwig, waaboozoog, biinish gaye bagwaj mayaajiging. Gaawiin a'aw oshkiniigikwe da-michi-maamoosiin i'iw gaa-miinigoowiziyang ge-inanjigeyang. Akawe bezhig i'iw gikinoonowin da-baabii'o. Ishke megwaa ani-bimi-ayaamagadinig i'iw gikinoonowin owapii gaa-pakaaniged, wii-tazhiikang maagizhaa gaye wii-miijid gaa-miinigoowiziyang ge-inanjigeyang, akawe a'aw asemaa da-achigaazo miinawaa da-zhakamoonind i'iw mesawendang gaa-miinigoowiziyang da-miijiyang. Ishke dash mii eta-go apii i'iw niwing ininamawind a'aw emikwaanens imaa wiisiniwin gii-achigaadeg. Mii dash azhigwa niwing gaa-ininamawind i'iw emikwaanens, mii dash iwapii zhakamoonind a'aw oshkiniigikwe. Mii dash i'iw bijiinag da-ni-dazhiikangiban da-ni-maamiiipan imaa gaa-shakamoonind.

The Manidoog gave us food to eat as Anishinaabe, such as the wild rice, the fish, and the wild animals like the deer, rabbits, and the plants and berries that grow in the wild. The young woman cannot just go out and pick or harvest those foods that we were given to eat. She will have to wait a year before she can do that. During that year following her fast, if she is going to handle or eat those food that we have been given, tobacco has to be put down first and then she has to be spoon-fed that particular food that we were given by the Manidoog to eat. This is the only time the spoon of food is offered to her four times. When the food is offered to her on the fourth time, that is when the young girl is spoon-fed. It is then that she is able to handle and eat that particular food that she had been spoon-fed.

Mii iw akeyaa gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amaagoowiziyaang omaa Aazhoomoog naa-go gaye Minisinaakwaang. Mii eta-go apii niwing ininamawind awiya owapii megwaa gii-pimisemagadinig i'iw gikinoonowin owapii gaa-kii'igoshimod a'aw oshkiniigikwe gii-pakaaniged. Ishke dash ingiw gaa-wanitaasojig gaa-wani'aaajig iniw besho enawemaawaajin, mii eta-go aabiding ininamawindwaa i'iw emikwaanens anizhakamoonindwaa gaa-izhi-miinigoowiziyang da-inanjigeyang anishinaabewiyang.

This is the way that we were taught in Lake Lena and East Lake districts of Mille Lacs reservation. This is the only time that the spoon is offered four times to the young woman who has fasted within the last year. For those who are grieving and have lost a relative close to them, the spoon is only offered up to them one time as they are being spoon-fed the various foods that we were given to eat as Anishinaabe.

Gii-kina'amawaawag ingiw oshkiniigikweg megwaa bimisemagadinig i'iw gikinoonowin apii gaa-pakaanigewaad, gaawiin oada-dazhiikawaasiwaawaan iniw abinoojiinyan bebiwizhiinyiwiniin. Miinawaa gii-kina'amawaawag, gaawiin daa-bagizosiwig imaa ziibiing miinawaa iniw zaaga'iganiing. Gaawiin gaye oada-daanginanziinaawaa imaa bagwaj mayaajiging wawaaj igo inow aniibiishan, miinawaagaawiinmitigoonoodaa-akwaandawaasiwaawaan. Oada-banaajitoonaawaa imaa mayaajiging imaa bagwaj, mii iw wenjida mashkawaadiziwaad ingiw oshkiniigikweg. Miinawaa ogii-kikinoo'amaagowaan iniw mindimooyenan ingiw oshkiniigikweg, gaawiin daa-baazhidaakokiisiiwig imaa atemagadinig iniwig miinawaa abinoojiinyag obiizikaaganiwaan.

During that year after the young woman had fasted she was forbidden to touch small children or infants. She was also forbidden from swimming in the rivers and the lakes. They were also told not to touch those things that grow out in the wild, even the leaves of plants and they were also told not to climb the trees. That could affect the growth of those plants that grow in the wild since this is the most powerful time in the young woman's life. The old ladies also taught these young women not to step over clothing that belong to men or small children.

Gaawiin imaa besho daa-ni-izhaasiwig atemagadinig iniw Manidoo-aabajichiganan wenjida opwaaganan. Ishke izhi-mashkawaadiziwaad ingiw ikwewag, mii-go imaa ani-banaajitoowaapan iniw Manidoo-aabajichiganan, gaawiin Continued on page 9

geyaabi da-ni-mashkawaadasininiwan iniw. Nimikwendaan gii-waabamagwaa ingiw mindimooyenyag, mii imaa dabazhish gii-minjiminamowaad iniw ogoodaasowaan gegoo dash imaa ishpiming da-ni-inagoodesininig ogoodaasiwaan wenjida besho ani-ayaawaad iniw Manidoo-aabijichiganan etemagadinig.

They were also not to go near sacred items, especially pipes. These young women were so powerful at this time they were told that they could nullify the power that exist in our sacred items, they will no longer have the power they had. I remember seeing those old ladies, they would reach down and pull their dresses in so that their dresses would not hang over anything, especially when they would go near any sacred items that were placed on the floor.

Ingii-pi-waabandaan iko gaye a'aw na'aanganikwe gaa-pi-wii'ayaawiyangid, mii dash imaa ayaapii bekaanadinig onaagan, emikwaanens, naa onaagaans gii-aabajitood owapii gii-izhiwebizid ingiw ikwewag ezhiwebiziwaad. Mii-go gaye eni-izhichigewaad bezhigwan iniw onaagan, emikwaanens, naa onaagaans ani-aabajitoowaad megwaa ani-bimisemagadinig iniw gikinooowin owapii gaa-pakaanigewaad.

When one of our in-laws used to stay with us, I saw that she used a different plate, spoon, and cup during that time of the month women have their menstrual cycles. The young women also did the same thing during that year following their fasting, by only using a different plate, spoon, and cup.

Nigii-pi-noondawaag ingiw ikwewag ani-dazhindamowaad, gaawiin odaa-naazikanziinaawaa endazhi-manidoo-niimi'idiikeng miinawaa zagaswe'idid a'aw Anishinaabe, miinawaa midewi'iweng megwaa ani-izhiwebizid a'aw ikwe iko izhiwebiziwaad endaso-giizis. Gaawiin wiika nibi-noondanziin iw akeyaa da-ni-izhi-gikinoo'amaaged a'aw Anishinaabe. Mii ganabaj i'iw wenjikaamagag iwidi Bwaan-akiing, mii iw akeyaa izhi-gikinoo'amawindwaa ingiw Bwaanikweg. Gaawiin wiikaa nibi-noondawaasiig ingiw gechi-aya'aawijig da-gii-izhi-gikinoo'amawaawaad inow ikwewan.

I would hear women saying that they should not go to our ceremonial dances, feasts, and the Midewiwin lodge during their monthly menstrual cycle. I have never heard this as part of Anishinaabe teachings. I believe these teachings come from Lakota/Dakota country. That is the teaching that Lakota/Dakota women are taught. I have never heard our elders from the past teach that to our women.

Mii a'aw nizigosiban Amikogaabawiikweban gaa-gikinoo'amawid a'aw isa Anishinaabekwe ezichiged ani-bakaaniged miinawaa gaa-izhi-gikinoo'amawind. Ishke a'aw mindimooyenyiban nigii-wiindamaag azhigwa gaa-ni-giizhiitaad gii-pakaaniged iwidi wigiiwaaming gii-ayaad, mii dash i'iwapii gii-pi-naazikang gaa-taawaad, mii imaa giizhikaandagoon gii-achigazonid da-ni-dakokaanaad megwaa gii-naazikang imaa endaawaad.

My aunt Julie Shingobe was the one who taught me what a young woman was to do when she fasted and what she was also taught during that time. That old lady told me when she finished fasting and was approaching their home; cedar was placed on the ground for her to step on as she walked up to the house.

Mii-ko iwapii gii-paa-gikinoo'amaageyaan a'aw Anishinaabe gaa-izhi-miinigoowizid niizh dash ingiw mindimooyenyag gii-ayaawag imaa a'aw Amikogaabawiikweban naa-go gaye Gaagebiikwe. Mii ongow gaa-naadamawijig gii-tazhindamaan ani-bakaaniged a'aw ikwe. Mii dash imaa wendinamaan ingiw mindimooyenyag wezhibii'amaan imaa ezichiged a'aw ikwe bakaaniged.

When we went out and about giving presentations on Anishinaabe teachings there were two of the old ladies that were present at that time, Julie Shingobe and Miskobineshiinh (Eileen Skinaway). They were the ones that helped me as I covered the fasting that young women went through. It is from them that I got the information that I am writing down about fasting.



Circle of Health Update

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

Social Security Benefit/Award letters

Circle of Health requires elders and disabled individuals on Medicare to submit a copy of their annual Social Security Benefit/Award letter. This letter comes from Social Security Administration.

We have seen three types of letters that list your annual benefit amounts. Please look for any letter that has these words in the beginning of your letter. If you are not sure, submit them to Circle of Health and we can review them for you.

The letters may have headings that start with:

- Your New Benefit Amount
- Social Security Administration - Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance — Notice of Change in Benefit
- Social Security Administration - Information of Social Security Benefit

My Social Security

You can create your own account to access you benefit verification letter, to change your address and phone number; or to start or change direct deposit. There is no fee to create your My Social Security account but you must have an email address. If you would like to set up or create an account, you can do so on your own computer or you can stop in at Circle of Health and we can help you. The link to My Social Security is: ssa.gov/myaccount

Changes in your Medicare benefits

If you cannot afford to have your Medicare health benefit taken out of your Social Security check, DO NOT disenroll from your Medicare Plans. Please contact Circle of Health, we will help you request your Medicare Plan to bill Circle of Health directly. If you do disenroll, you lose your health care coverage and will have to wait until October of the following year to re-enroll in a plan.

Hospital and clinic bills

If you have any hospital, clinic or pharmacy bills that have not been paid or are going into collections, please bring these documents into Circle of Health. We can help you clear up these bills before it is too late and they go into collections. Most times, the provider doesn't know you have health insurance or a certain Medicare benefit. You should give your provider a copy of all your health insurance cards and Medicare Plan cards.

Health insurance enrollment assistance

Circle of Health is an official partner with MNSure, Minnesota's Health Insurance Exchange. We are proud to announce that we have certified assisters through the tribal government.

Circle of Health is here to help you and your family enroll in the Health Insurance Marketplace. If you don't have health insurance coverage, we can help you get covered on a plan. We help people enroll in MNSure or on the Healthcare.gov website.

You may be eligible for Medicaid or a low cost health insurance plan. Health Insurance is a benefit on top of the healthcare provided by Ne-la-Shing Clinic. Health insurance means more choices for our families and more resources for our tribal health facilities.

Call Circle of Health today to make an appointment or stop in to sign up for health insurance.

New tribal Delta Dental Plan

Do you need dental coverage? The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has started a new dental plan for tribal members. We have been enrolling band members that do not have a dental plan into Delta Dental. Premiums for the Delta Dental Plan is paid by Circle of Health each month. You can enroll, add/remove dependents, or opt out of the plan by filling out a Delta Dental membership enrollment form provided on the band website under Circle of Health or at our office.

Enrollment forms

All Mille Lacs Band members are required to update their Circle of Health enrollment forms yearly. By updating your information, you are giving Circle of Health consent to receive and pay your insurance claims and to speak with providers regarding any insurance billing on your behalf. We also use the forms to confirm your eligibility with Contract Health Services.

Circle of Health requires verification, we need a copy of:

- All current insurance card(s) (upon receipt) — front and back.
- Certificate of Enrollment or Tribal ID for all MLB Tribal Members.
- Birth Certificates for any new dependents to your policy/account.
- Proof of Full-Time student status for all first-line descendants 18 to 23 years of age.

New location

Circle of Health
43500 Migizi Drive
Onamia, MN 56359
320-532-7741 or 1-800-491-6106
Fax: 320-532-4354

Going into Business

Central Lakes College

Starting and/or expanding a business and identifying problems within a business is BIG VENTURE. The class will cover:

- How to start your business
- Assessing market potential
- Determining financial needs
- Others services provided by the SBDC
- How to evaluate your business idea
- Business filings, business planning
- Financing/loan providers

Class Dates/Times:

District I: 4th Wednesday of the month*

District III: 6:30 p.m.–8 p.m., 4th Monday of the month*

**(Subject to change depending on Mille Lacs Band ceremonial conflicts)*

Registration deadline is one week prior to class. This is a free service offered by the SBDC and active Mille Lacs Band member participation is necessary for its continuance.

Please contact John Gunstad for questions or registration:

- Phone: 218-828-2002
- Email: jgunstad@charter.net

Commissioner Appointed to National Board

Brett Larson Staff Writer



Sam Moose, Mille Lacs Band Commissioner of Health and Human Services, has been named to the

Board of Directors of the National Indian Health Board. He had been serving as the alternate board member from the Bemidji Area: Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes, which includes Mille Lacs. When the permanent member stepped down, the board asked Moose to become the permanent replacement.

The NIHB represents tribal governments in Washington and advocates on behalf of tribes in development of national Indian Health Policy. Additional services provided to tribes include policy formation, legislative tracking, research on Indian health issues, program development, technical assistance, and project management.

Sam said that in his capacity as a board member he tries to be a good listener and to choose his words carefully.

"I'm excited and honored about the opportunity the Midwest board has given me to represent our issues on the National Indian health Board," Sam said. "It's also humbling to be able to help Indian nations across the country."

Nay Ah Shing Staff Invited to Schoolyard Garden Conference

Toya Stewart Downey Staff Writer **Tiffany Bolk** Photographer



Deborah Foye teaching a student how to garden

Since the day the first seed was planted Deborah Foye, the Nutrition Services Coordinator at Nay Ah Shing, has watched the little garden that she started at the school grow in ways she couldn't begin to imagine.

She has watched as the students have learned about starting a garden, caring for it and their awe as they have experienced new foods like purple potatoes, purple carrots and purple beans.

"The students were amazed when they turned green when cooked," Deborah said.

Each year as the garden has flourished, so too has the minds and taste buds of the students, much to the delight of Deborah, who has worked for the Band for 23 years.

Deborah will get to share the story of the garden, which was started in 2009, when she presents at the annual Schoolyard Garden Conference at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum on Feb. 28.

Though she has never presented anything publicly Deborah said she is thrilled to talk about the Nay Ah Shing garden, the students and their experiences. She is also excited to share how the garden has garnered community support from other Band departments especially the Department of Natural Resources, which was instrumental building raised beds for the project.

Today's garden grows a variety of fruits from blackberries to raspberries and strawberries and vegetables including asparagus plants, peppers, beans and more. There are several different herbs growing, a sunflower house, cucumber tunnel and three small apple trees.

All of the produce is used at the school for the salad bar or integrated into the school menu. It is also shared with others when possible.

"Sometimes we do taste tests with groups of students and that is always in-

sightful and fun," Deborah said.

Deborah remains deeply committed to the garden project and will stay involved as much as possible.

"It has been so much fun and so rewarding for me," she said. "Every year students ask me, 'when are we going to start the garden,' and that makes me happy."

"It's been amazing to get so much support and it's exciting to see the kids try something new, especially when they discover a food they've never tried and they actually like it."

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Summary of Expenditures and Financing Uses:	Approved Budget for FY 2015	Expenditures through 12/31/2014	% of Budget Expended
Administration (1)	14,810,834	3,172,878	21.4%
Workforce	20,372,057	1,337,152	6.6%
Judicial	1,247,293	198,730	15.9%
Department of Justice	5,139,850	1,119,145	21.8%
Education	16,062,672	3,518,995	21.9%
Health and Human Services	22,366,633	4,107,848	18.4%
Circle of Health Insurance	10,555,180	2,075,624	19.7%
Natural Resources	6,214,043	1,255,533	20.2%
Community Development	25,092,633	5,495,777	21.9%
Gaming Authority	5,324,748	1,078,059	20.2%
Non-Gaming Distribution	–	–	0.0%
Bonus Distribution	16,427,364	13,847,565	84.3%
Economic Stimulus Distribution	3,130,000	3,126,000	99.9%
Total	146,743,307	40,333,306	27.5%

(1) Administration includes chief executive, administration, finance, legislative, government affairs, and district operations.

(2) The amounts above do not include casino operations. However, they do include government operations funded by casino distributions.

(3) The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has its financial statements audited every year by an independent public accounting firm. Audit reports from previous years are available for review at the government center upon written request.

(4) Economic Development appropriations have been excluded as of October 31, 1997. As of October 1, 1997, The Band has separated accounting functions for the Corporate Commission from the tribal government.

Band Members Continue to Protest Pipelines

Jana Peterson Writer for the Pine Journal Pine Journal Photographer

Mille Lacs Band members continue to protest Enbridge oil pipelines that would cross rural Aitkin County near East Lake and McGregor. Enbridge is proposing a new pipeline, called Sandpiper, as well as a new route for its Pipeline 3, following the same corridor as the Sandpiper. The pipelines would bring oil from the Bakken oil fields in North Dakota.

Algin GoodSky, a member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, was a bright spot of color and sound dressed in powwow regalia in a room filled with people wearing mono-colored golf shirts and name badges around their necks.

Holding an eagle feather and a stick of braided sweetgrass, GoodSky said he was there to oppose the pipeline.

"As a Native American, I feel an obligation to protect the land," the Mille Lacs Band member said, adding that he was certain a pipeline would destroy the natural resources there. "I live off the land, harvest from it, and take care of it as much as I can. Seeing a pipeline come through is heartbreaking."

Algin's mother, Tania Aubid, was also in attendance at the meetings.

The 1,031-mile Pipeline No. 3 would ultimately replace the company's 1968-vintage Line No. 3, and would bring more Canadian tar sands crude oil into the U.S. Approximately 335 miles of Line 3 runs through Minnesota.

The reconstruction could also come with a route change: Enbridge announced last month that the preferred route would follow the existing route from North Dakota to Clearbrook, Minn., and then — instead of following the old Line 3 along the historic Enbridge corridor paralleling U.S. Highway 2 — the new line would dip south along Hubbard County and then across Cass, Aitkin and Carlton counties, before meeting up with the old line near Wrenshall on its way into the Canadian company's giant Superior terminal.

Representatives of MN350 — a grassroots group focused on transitioning the country to green energy — set up a table outside the Carlton County Transportation Building, where they handed out a citizen's guide to public participation in the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission's Review of the Line 3 Pipeline project and a map of crude oil pipelines in Minnesota. As they handed out papers, they talked with citizens about some of the reasons MN350 and other groups oppose the pipeline.

Duluth's Alyssa Hoppe, who works with Honor the Earth and MN350, said she was there to help the landowners, farmers and native communities.

"It seems like there's a lack of information at these meetings, so we are just trying to bring some awareness and information that folks might not get inside," Hoppe said.

Hoppe talked to a couple local residents about the proposed pipeline route through what she called "wilderness and lake country that the whole state enjoys visiting," adding that the McGregor Chamber of Commerce and Big Sandy Lake Association have come out publicly against the proposed pipeline route through their area. She also talked about the importance

of wild rice as a crop and in terms of cultural heritage and the effects a spill could have on the thriving industry.

"It's a question of risk versus benefit and I think it's a bad deal for Minnesota," Hoppe said. "Enbridge, a company from Calgary, will profit and we're left with all the risk."

Inside the county building, Enbridge representatives and land agents outnumbered residents at times. There was no formal presentation, rather the information was presented in the style of an open house, with multiple trifold information displays and staff members to explain them, food and even a drawing people could register for.

Enbridge spokesman Kevin O'Connor explained that the reason for the proposed reroute of Line 3 was because the current route through Bemidji and Grand Rapids has become too congested. Line 3 needs to be replaced, he said, because it is [46 years old] and at increased risk of leaking.

"We've had quite a few integrity digs on the project the last few years (to check structural integrity) and we anticipate several hundred more over the next few years," he said, pointing out that such digs were disruptive to landowners. "We just reached the point where we thought we should replace the whole thing."

The new route for Line 3 is similar to the company's proposed all-new Sandpiper line, which has raised concerns for its many water crossings. The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission has slowed approval of the Sandpiper line because of the new route.

O'Connor explained that the replacement Line 3 would be a 36-inch-diameter line versus the current 34-inch line. It also wouldn't technically replace the current line; rather, it would be laid in the vicinity of the existing line (except for where the route changes from the existing route). He said the existing Line 3 pipeline would be permanently deactivated and a corrosion control system put in so it wouldn't collapse.

For now, the Line 3 meetings hosted by Enbridge along the proposed pipeline route are simply informational.

The Line No. 3 replacement is the company's third major project in the region, in addition to the proposed Sandpiper line and the nearly doubling of capacity of the company's Alberta Clipper Line that runs from Alberta to Superior.

O'Connor said Enbridge will submit its preferred reconstruction route for Line 3 to the MPUC in February, then it will be up to the governmental agency to schedule public hearings on the proposal up and down the route.

Public hearings on the need for the Sandpiper line will begin in January. However, hearings on the Sandpiper route have been delayed until next spring because of environmental concerns.

Forum News Service John Myers contributed to this story.



"I live off the land, harvest from it, and take care of it as much as I can. Seeing a pipeline come through is heartbreaking."

—Algin GoodSky

Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy Now Offering ITV College Courses

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer



Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy Principal Todd Lee

Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy Principal Todd Lee said the school started offering ITV college courses to students and community members in January. Students can receive college credit for two classes: Anishinaabeg of Lake Superior, offered Monday and Wednesday from 2 p.m. to 3:15 p.m., and Federal Laws and the American Indian, offered Tuesday and Thursday from 2 p.m. to 3:25 p.m. Community members can also take Anishinaabe Language II on Monday and Wednesday evenings and Introduction to Business on Thursday evenings. The ITV equipment was provided by the Mille Lacs Band. For more information, see minisinaakwaang.org.

The Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy charter school serves K-12 students in the East Lake area. For information on the school, including announcements, the school calendar, staff emails, parent resources, and school closing information, visit minisinaakwaang.org or call 218-768-3477.



Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy: "Preparing today's youth with leadership skills and academic excellence to meet tomorrow's challenges in a culturally based environment and community."



Save the Date: WEWIN

Save the Date for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Chapter of Women Empowering Women for Indian Nations (WEWIN) Conference on March 13-14, Grand Casino Mille Lacs Convention Center. Registration and Conference Details coming soon!

Nurses with Heart: Q & A

Public Health Department

Q: Since Gardasil vaccine is a cervical cancer preventive, is the shot given “down there”?

A: Both the Gardasil and Cervarix vaccination are injected into muscle tissue. Gardasil can be injected into the muscle of the upper arm or upper thigh while Cervarix is given as a shot only into a muscle of the upper arm.

— Kathy Beaulieu-Sanders, RN; MCH Coordinator

Q: If your child misses a scheduled dose, do you have to start the entire series over?

A: Don't panic if your child has been given Gardasil, contact your provider and they will then determine when to give your child the next dose. Typically, the provider will continue the started series and opt not to have the patient restart the series. Gardasil can be given to either females or males for HPV Vaccination.

If your child was given Cervarix for HPV Vaccination, it is important to complete all three doses within 12 months of the initial vaccination shot to help your body get the best possible response from Cervarix.

With Cervarix, if you need more flexibility with the administration schedule, please talk to your doctor about the timing. The manufacturer contends that you can get the second vaccination from 1 to 2.5 months after the first dose, and the third from 5 to 12 months after the first dose but remember it is important to get all three. Cervarix is administered to only females.

— Lisa Gorecki, LPN; Immunization Coordinator

Send your questions for our nurses to:

megan.cummings@hhs.millelacsband.nsn.gov

Attn: Megan Cummings

17230 Noopiming Drive

Onamia

MN 56359

Phone: 320-532-7776, ext. 2413

Upcoming Blood Drives

Grand Casino Hinckley Blood Drive

Thursday, February 12

10 a.m.—4 p.m.

Contact Kris Rote at 800-472-6321

Grand Casino Mille Lacs Blood Drive

Friday, February 13

10 a.m.—4 p.m.

Contact Nicole Mitchell at 320-532-8844

Interested in submitting to the *Inaajimowin*?

Send your submissions and birthday announcements to Andy McPartland at

andy@redcircleagency.com

or call 612-248-2051.

The March issue deadline is February 15.



DISTRICT 3

Fighting for His Culture

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

Harry Davis, Jr., was born in Los Angeles but raised — with his sister Gloria and brothers Brad, Gary, Dennis and Ron — in the projects of North Minneapolis by his mother Martha. It was a rough neighborhood, and Harry got in his share of trouble, but two things kept him grounded: boxing, and a connection to his Anishinaabe roots.

Those two themes run through Harry's life and crop up in conversation as he reflects on where he's been and where he's going.

Although Minneapolis is a long way from Aazhoomog, Anishinaabe culture maintained a presence in Harry's home — but not without effort.

“It was difficult,” he recalls. “There was very little of our culture in the urban area. If my mom needed a ceremony done she would contact her brothers up here and they would come down and do the ceremony in our home.”

Harry's extended family was intimately involved with the culture and spirituality of the Anishinaabe. Harry would spend summers at the home of his uncle and aunt, Albert and Bernice Churchill, in Pine City, playing with his cousins, Skip and Dan and Buzz. They went to Big Drum ceremonies and other powwows and participated in singing with their drum group.

Harry remembers the stories his mother told about growing up in the Lake Lena area — how they walked miles to get to the store because they didn't have transportation, how they lived in small homes with wood heat and no plumbing. He learned about the South School his parents and uncles and aunts attended, and about the ceremonial grounds near Lake Lena.

During his youth Harry also learned the sport of boxing.

“We had a community center, Phyllis Wheatley, and I used to go down there and play sports,” Harry said. “They had football teams, basketball teams, boxing... That's where I learned to box. I did a little bit of competition when I was 12, but mostly I trained at home on the heavy bag and sparring with whoever would. Dad was a former Golden Glove boxer and gave me a lot of technical advice.”

Harry met and married Laureen Benjamin, who was from Lake Lena. He worked for the railroad for eight years. When that job ended around 1980, Harry and Laureen decided they had had enough city life.

They moved to Sandstone and later to Lake Lena and Hinckley. They raised five children in the District III area: Beverly, Roxanne, Dione, Weylin, and Kate.

During the '80s Harry became involved with restoration of the ceremonial grounds at Lake Lena. “They used to have our Midewin out there, at a big ceremonial ground,” he said. “They used to say our Midewin ceremonies were lost, and I didn't like to hear that, so I kept talking to Buzz (Churchill) about trying to restore it. He was elected as district rep in the mid-80s, and he talked to people about getting funding to help pay some of us to clear that land and try to bring it back. So we did all the land clearing, and he obtained the funding to get the things we needed. We built a bunch of ceremonial wigwags, and Buzz's



District III Representative Harry Davis, Jr.

dad, Albert Churchill, performed the ceremonies. From there it progressed and some of the other medicine men came, and they watched and learned. After my Uncle Albert passed away, my cousin Skip took it over, and he still does it.”

Priorities

Harry worked construction during the 1980s, and in the early 1990s he helped build Grand Casino Hinckley. Once the casino opened, he was hired as a slot tech and was quickly promoted to lead slot tech. After six years at the casino, he decided to run for office and was elected District III representative in 1998. He served three terms before he was defeated in 2010, but he won the seat back in 2014.

During his first terms on the job, he started a boxing program in District III, and one of his first acts upon returning to politics was to revive the program. He hopes to have boxing clubs operating in Hinckley and Lake Lena.

Harry credits his involvement in sports for keeping him out of serious trouble, and he wants to give the same opportunity to today's youth in District III.

“Usually the kids around me, they got into trouble, and I used to stay busy with sports,” Harry said. “I did get in trouble, but not so I'd end up in the system.”

Harry has seen a lot of changes to his community during his lifetime, mostly for the better. “I feel proud for our tribe because we were really poor in our district,” he said. “We had very few jobs around here. The tribe had very little construction going on when I first moved up here.

When we started getting our own resources we were able to start building our infrastructure and to hire our own Band members to do the work and train them, and they were able to live a comfortable lifestyle.”

As District III Representative, Harry's priorities are what they've always been: “I want to help our Band members lead a good life, a comfortable life, and to have affordable housing and employment, and I always want to be there to help with emergencies. I want to help our Band stay successful, to stay within our culture, and to follow our culture and not lose it. The most valuable resource I believe we have is our culture.”

“I want to help our Band stay successful, to stay within our culture, and to follow our culture and not lose it.”

— Harry Davis, Jr., District III Representative

New Forester on Staff at DNR

Brett Larson Staff Writer/Photographer

For the first time in 20 years, the Mille Lacs Band Department of Natural Resources has a full-time forester on staff.

Jacob Horbacz of Hinckley started work in early January and will be in charge of taking inventory of Band forest lands, writing management plans, implementing sustainable forestry practices, and working with Dean Staples' fire crew on prescribed burns and fire suppression.

Jacob grew up in Hinckley just a mile from Grand Casino and graduated from Hinckley High School in 2009. He started college at Anoka-Ramsey Community College and finished at the University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point with a Bachelor of Science degree in forest management. He has worked as an intern at St. Croix State Park.

"I'm looking forward to putting the skills and knowledge I learned in school to use," Jacob said, "and to working with the people here and seeing the results of all the work we do."



Jacob Horbacz, center, will be working closely with Dean Staples, lead forestry fire technician, and Eli Staples, forestry fire technician.

Cancer Awareness Month

Linda Moses Public Health Department **Tiffany Bolk** Photographer

Every year, February sweeps the states with love. Chocolate, flowers, diamonds — who can ask for a more fabulous month? But February is also National Cancer Prevention Month and there's no better way to show yourself love than by taking care of your own body.

We want women and men to know early warning "whispers" that are so subtle they are often ignored until it's too late or are misdiagnosed for benign illnesses. Most American women are the caregivers for their children, their spouses, and their elders. Put your health first so you can be around longer for your loved ones!

Nearly one-third of all cancers are preventable, so you can reduce your risk for cancer by changing your lifestyle. Play an active role in National Cancer Prevention Month and your own health by following these tips.

- **Live Healthy:** Exercise and eating right is important in not only preventing cancer, but keeping your body in shape for a long, healthy life. Control your weight, and fill your plate with fruits and veggies.
- **Quit Smoking:** Smoking damages almost every organ in the body and accounts for nearly 30 percent of all cancer deaths.
- **Limit Sun Exposure:** Constant exposure to the sun for that "gorgeous" tan is not worth increasing your risk for cancer. Tans will fade but the damage to your skin won't!
- **Get Screened:** Regular screening and self-exams play a huge role in early detection of cancer. This includes getting the HPV vaccine and yearly PAP tests, fecal occult blood tests, prostate exams and mammograms.
- **Listen to your body:** Nobody knows your body better than you. If you feel something is

imbalanced, see your physician immediately and do not sweep any symptoms under the rug. Always bring a list of questions with you to your appointments and never feel bad about getting a second opinion. It isn't personal — It's your life!



Exercise and eating right is important in not only preventing cancer, but keeping your body in shape for a long, healthy life.

Gidinwewininaan

Baabitaw Boyd Gaa-ozhibii'ang



This month's article is about behaviors in the classroom and how my personal experience as a student gives me perspective and drive to help students be happy learners.

Mii go noongom waa-ini-dazhindamaan i'w abinoojiinyi-izhiwebiziwin naa go gaye gaa-inikamagak ishkweyang gii-kikinoo'amaagoziyaan. Nigii-sanagendaan geget da-bimiwidooyaan iniw inaakoniganan imaa gikinoo'amaadiwigamigong gii-ikwezensiwiyaan miinawaa gii-ni-oshkiniigikweyiyaan. Eta-go chimookomaanag gii-ayaawag widi gaa-tazhi-gikinoo'amaagoziyaan. Bebezhiig gii-maajaawag ingiw niwiiiji-anishinaabegikinoo'amaaganag. Ogii-sanagendaanaawaa gaye wiinawaa. Apane-igo nigii-pabaa-ayaa aanawi-go booch-da-anokiiyaan. Anooj gegoo nigii-izhichige da-baabinikamigiziyaan megwaa maa anokiiwaad niwiiiji-gikinoo'amaaganag. Gaawiin nigii-apiitendanzin l'iw gikinoo'amaadiwin. Gaawiin nigii-nisidotanzin ge-wiidookaagooyaan ani-apiitiziyaan. Gaawiin gaye nigii-kikinoo'amaagoosiin ge-izhi-anishinaabewiyaan imaa Chi-mookomaanigikinoo'amaadiwigamigong.

Ishke dash noongom ani-nanda-gikendamaan abinoojiinyi-inaadiziwin naa biinish-go gaye ge-gikinoo'amaagoowaad. Indani-nisidotaan gaa-onjikaamagak gaa-izhiwebiziyaan. Mii imaa wenjikaamagak misawendamaan da-naadamaageyaan gikinoo'amaadiwigamigong. Niwii-wiidookawaag anishinaabe-abinoojiinyag da-gikenindizowaad ezhi-anishinaabewiwaad naa biinish-go gaye ge-izhi-apiitendamowaad ogikinoo'amaadiwiniwaan. Mii dash go gaye da-gashki'ewiziwaad miinawaa da-minowaanagwendamowaad gikinoo'amaagoziwaad.

Mille Lacs Band Treaty Rights Celebration

Friday, March 20
Grand Casino Mille Lacs
Events & Convention Center

Invocation at noon
Honor song by drum group Timber Trails
Lunch served at 12:30 p.m.

There will be vendor booths, arts & crafts booths, door prizes, and games for adults and kids.

Plus, enter for a chance to win a ricing package that includes rice knockers and a canoe or a spring harvest package that includes a net, buoys, and a canoe. *Must be present to win.*

If you are interested in having an arts & crafts booth, please contact Rachel Shaugobay at the DNR office: 320-532-7439 or email rachel.shaugobay@millelacsband.com. The DNR appreciates your involvement at the event. Deadline to register an arts & crafts booth is March 4th.

TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

Happy February Birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Laura Ann Ashcroft
 Melanie Ann Benjamin
 Debra Jean Blake
 Sandra Lee Blake
 Judy Ann Carlson
 Ellen Marie Dakota
 Harry Richard Davis
 Bonita Louise Eagle
 Douglas Willard Eagle
 Eileen Frances Farah
 Beverly Ann Graves
 Mary Louise Hoffer
 Donald Ray Houle
 Conrad Kegg
 Kurt Drew Keller
 Carolyn Dawn Lewis
 Wesley Dean Merrill
 Victoria Gina Mitchell
 Gilbert Wayne Moose
 Debra Lee Northrup
 Patricia Ann O'Brien
 Robin Lou Oswaldson
 Rhonda Lynn Peet
 Alan Pindegayosh
 Ellen Marie Roth
 Bette Sam
 Darlene Frances Sam
 Gladys Diane Sam
 Pauline Marie Sam
 Kenneth Wayne Shingobe
 [Mitchell]
 Alvera Marie Smith
 Bennie David St. John
 Edward Louis St. John
 Elizabeth Ann St. John
 Stanley Conrad St. John
 Richard Jay Staples
 Robert Lee Staples
 Berniece Sutton
 Emma Edna Thomas
 Ramona Joyce Washington

Patrick Weyaus
 Marilyn Jean Whitney
 Clyde Manuel Wind
 Rose Marie Wind
 Dorothy May Wistrom

Happy February Birthdays:

Happy Birthday **Danica Benjamin** on 2/1 with love from Auntie Tammy, Brandon, Chantel, Jazmin, Ahrianna, Brandi, Elias, TANK, Alizaya, and Rico. • Happy Birthday **Gladys Sam** on 2/3 with love from Tammy, Brandon, Chantel, Jazmin, Ahrianna, Brandi, Elias, TANK, Alizaya, and Rico. • Happy Birthday **Clayton Benjamin Jr.** on 2/7 with love from Auntie Tammy, Brandon, Chantel, Jazmin, Ahrianna, Brandi, Elias, TANK, Alizaya, and Rico. • Happy Birthday **Chris Jr.** on 2/7 love Mom, Dad, Cordell, Jimmy, Auntie Val, Pie, Kevin, Rachel, Randi, Tracy, Shelby, Max, Aidan, Aiva, Mark, Emery, DeBreanna, Jarvis, Brad, Braelyn, Payton, Eric, Wes, Bryn, Bianca, Jay, Taylor, Adam, Bruce, Jayla, Lileah, Sharon, Ravin, and Melodie. • Happy Birthday **Papa G** on 2/7 with Love from your Grandkids Hayden, Cayleigh, Cedez, Rico, and baby Avery. • Happy Birthday **Papa** on 2/7, love Maria Kaylyn. • Happy Birthday **Pops (Gerald Sr.)** on 2/7 with love from Beverly, Levin, Jodi, Wade, Levi, Penny, Erica, Sheldon, and Kacie. • Happy 2nd Birthday **Kiley Maria Solis** on 2/8 from her Aunty/we'eh Cilla.

• Happy Birthday **Monkey** on 2/8 with love from Ashley, Big Brother Rod, William, Asia, and Aaralyn. • Happy Birthday **Kiley "Bebeyaans"** on 2/8, love MariaKaylyn and Erica. • Happy Birthday **Dede** on 2/10, love Dad. • Happy Birthday **Cayleigh Marie** on 2/12, love Gramma B, Papa, Cedez, Uncle Ron' N Uncle Two Braidz, Uncle Grant & Rico Harvey, Aunty Chew & AuntyTola', and We'ehS Nan' & Sean. • Happy 4th Birthday **Cayleigh Marie** on 2/12 Cayleigh Marie. • Happy Birthday **Caylz** on 2/12, love We'eh Ca' and MariaKaylyn. • Happy Birthday **Cayl** on 2/12, love Uncle Bert. • Happy 6th Birthday **TANK Wagner** on 2/13, all our love mommy, gramma, Elias, Sissy, Rico, Uncle Brandon, Auntie Chantel, Jazmin, and Ahrianna. • 2/16 Happy Birthday **Josh** with love from Ashley, William, Rodney & Girls, Grams, Landon, Aaron, and Damian. • Happy Birthday **Jake** on 2/16, love Aiva, Mark, Emery, Debreanna, Mom, Gram Karen, Shelby, Max, Aidan, Auntie Val, Pie, Kevin, Auntie Rachel, Jarvis, Sharon, Ravin, and Melodie. • Happy Birthday **Billie Jo & Maranda** on 2/17 with love from Ashley, William, and Rodney & Girls. • Happy Birthday **Gramma Mags** on 2/17, love Levin, Jodi, Wade, Levi, Penny, Erica, Sheldon, Sean, Grant, Kacie, Beverly, and Gerald. • Happy Birthday **Nanan** on 2/17, love Hayden, Cayleigh, Cedez, Maria, Rico,

and Baby Avery. • Happy Birthday **Aunty Rose** on 2/19, love Hayden, Cayleigh, Cedez, Maria, Rico & Baby Avery, Kacie, Grant, Sean, Sheldon, Erica, Penny, Levi, Wade, and Jodi & Levin. • Happy Birthday **Braelyn** on 2/22, love Dad, Papa, Payton, Eric, Wes, Bryn, Bianca, Auntie Val, Pie, Kev, Auntie Rachel, Auntie Randi, Bruce, Jayla, Lileah, Jay, Taylor, and Adam. • Happy Birthday **Cordell** on 2/23 love Mom, Dad, Chris, Jimmy, Auntie Val, Pie, Kevin, Rachel, Randi, Tracy, Shelby, Max, Aidan, Aiva, Mark, Emery, DeBreanna, Jarvis, Brad, Braelyn, Payton, Eric, Wes, Bryn, Bianca, Jay, Taylor, Adam, Bruce, Jayla, Lileah, Sharon, Ravin, and Melodie. • Happy Birthday **Cedez** on 2/25, love Dad, Gramma B, Papa, Uncles Levi, Wade, Levin, Aunty Penny & Baby Avery, Aunty Jodi, Uncle Grant, and RicoHarvey. • Happy Birthday **CedeBear** on 2/25, love AuntyCa' and Maria. • Happy Birthday **Antavia Pendegayosh** on 2/25 with love from Mom, Dad, Antavia, Auntie Renee, Uncle Steve, Grandma Jane, and Grandpa Bruce. • Happy Birthday **Meghanne** on 2/27, love your We'eh Maria Kaylyn.

Happy Belated Birthdays:

Happy Belated Birthday **Aaron Regguinti** on 1/2 from Grandma and Grandpa. • Happy Belated Birthday **Curtis**

Regguinti on 1/8 from Mom and Dad. • Happy Belated 8th Birthday **Arielle Pendegayosh** on 1/8 with love from Mom, Dad, Antavia, Auntie Renee, Uncle Steve, Grandma Jane, and Grandpa Bruce.

Other Announcements:

I would like to say a BIG miigwetch to the following Mille Lacs Band departments: The Chief Executive Office, Legislative Office, Community Development Staff, Department Natural Resources and Health and Human Resource Office for your opportunity to allow for the Spirit of the Holiday Season shine through by holding a Christmas House Lighting contest for all the Mille Lacs Band districts. Your hard work and dedication to all Band members is greatly appreciated! Again, miigwetch for all you do to continue to work hard to make our lives as Mille Lacs Band members productive and positive in our daily lives. Happy Holidays and many blessings in for the New Year! Sincerely, a District III Band member.

Submit Birthday Announcements

Send name, birthday and a brief message that is **20 WORDS OR LESS** to Andy McPartland at andy@redcircleagency.com or call 612-248-2051. *The deadline for the March issue is February 15.*

Mille Lacs Indian Museum February Events

Kids' Crafts: Story Book Time and Dream Catchers

Saturday, February 7

Time: Noon–3 p.m.

Fee: \$5 per kit (does not include museum admission)

Enjoy stories and light snacks from noon to 1 p.m., then from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. children can learn how to weave a dream catcher to take home. The dream catcher is a woven web believed to protect the dream world of the person who sleeps beneath it. Please allow an hour to make the craft. This project is recommended for children ages 8 and up. For more information call 320-532-3632 or e-mail millelacs@mnhs.org.

Ojibwe Moccasin Workshop

Saturday, February 21 and Sunday, February 22

Time: Noon–4 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Sunday

Fee: \$60/\$55 for MNHS members; additional supply fee of \$15

Reservations: required three days prior to workshop, call 320-532-3632 or e-mail millelacs@mnhs.org

Learn techniques of working with leather at this two-day workshop. Participants will make a pair of Ojibwe-style moccasins to take home. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided on both days. A minimum of five participants required to host workshop. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Discounted hotel rooms are available for workshop participants on Saturday night at Grand Casino Mille Lacs.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>Want your event here? Email andy@redcircleagency.com or call 612-248-2051</p>			<p>4</p> <p>Chiminising Bingo 6 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>			<p>7</p> <p>Kids' Crafts: Story Book Time and Dream Catchers Noon–3 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum See page 14</p> <p>Urban Area Elder Luncheon 11 a.m.–2 p.m. All Nations Indian Church</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Chiminising Bingo 6 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>9</p> <p>District II-A Legislative Committee Meetings 3 p.m.–6 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>10</p> <p>District II-A Legislative Committee Meetings 3 p.m.–6 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Blood Drive 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley See page 12</p> <p>District II Legislative Committee Meetings 3 p.m.–6 p.m. East Lake Community Center</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Blood Drive 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Grand Casino Mille Lacs See page 12</p> <p>District II Legislative Committee Meetings 3 p.m.–6 p.m. East Lake Community Center</p>	
	<p>16</p> <p>Chief's Day Child Support Office will be closed all day</p>		<p>18</p> <p>District III/ Aazhoomog Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley Event Center</p> <p>Chiminising Bingo 6 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>			<p>21</p> <p>Ojibwe Moccasin Workshop Noon–4 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum See page 14</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Ojibwe Moccasin Workshop 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Mille Lacs Indian Museum See page 14</p>			<p>25</p> <p>District II-A Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Urban Area Community Meeting 5 p.m.–7 p.m. All Nations Indian Church</p> <p>District II Community Meeting 5:30 p.m. East Lake Community Center</p> <p>District II-A Sobriety Feast 5:30 p.m. Chiminising Community Center</p>		<p>28</p> <p>Taylor Grace Awareness Benefit Dinner & Auction 4 p.m.–8 p.m. Onamia Vets Club See page 16</p>

Child Support Enforcement Update

Due to a new system in place the Mille Lacs Band Child Support office will send out annual statements this year upon request from the Custodial Parents (CP's) and Non-Custodial Parents (NCP's). Please make sure your address is up to date with our office.

On some occasions an NCP may over pay on their account which results in a refund. Verifying your address with our office will assure the refund is sent to the proper address and not returned to our office.

The Child Support office will be closed all day February 16, 2015 for Chief's Day.

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

Announcement: Adolescent Outpatient Services

The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Behavioral Health department has programming in place to serve adolescents seeking chemical dependency treatment. The program meets with clients one to three times a week, based on progress and need. The program is culturally based and aims to utilize the community strengths as a path to healing for young people. The program uses working groups and individual meetings to help attendees meet their goals by completing assignments and participating in activities.

The program meets at the brick building on Twilight road. Transportation may be available in some cases. The counselors are also available to the community to help intervene in chemical use before it becomes a problem, and for education. Call for more information 320-532-3080.

Shaylor Alley is getting the program underway and is the adolescent counselor for the program. Shaylor is finishing his Master's degree in clinical psychology and working toward being dually licensed as a mental health provider and a chemical dependency counselor. He recently moved to Minnesota from Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Taylor Grace's Leukemia Awareness Benefit Dinner & Silent Auction

Mille Lacs Tribal Police Officer Craig Nguyen and his family are raising awareness for their 3-year-old daughter, Taylor Grace, who is undergoing chemotherapy for leukemia.

Saturday, February 28th
4 p.m.–8 p.m.



Taylor Grace

Onamia Vets Club (38692 US Hwy 169)

Dinner tickets: Adults \$10, Children \$5
(Contact Tribal Police to purchase: 320-532-7490)

Taylor's journey can be followed at **CaringBridge.org** — search for "SweetTaylorGrace".

Please keep the Nguyen family in your prayers as they go through this difficult journey.

National Children's Dental Health Month

Kari Carlson Public Health Department

We at Public Health, believe that developing good dental habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children to get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

Some of the best good dental habits to develop are:

- Brush your teeth two times a day for two minutes.
- Eat healthy snacks. Like fruits and vegetables.
- Avoid drinking sodas, juices and sports drinks with a lot of sugar.
- Protect your teeth by wearing a mouth guard whenever you play any sports.
- Visit your dentist.

The Ne la Shing Dental Department, Mille Lacs Band Early Education/Headstart program, and Mille Lacs Band Public Health Department are partnering together this year to promote dental health at the Headstart Health Fairs on February 10, 11, & 12. Children's mouths will be examined by our dentist, Dr. Salgado. Fun dental themed activities are planned and educational information will be provided to students and families in attendance.

For further information or if you have any questions, please contact Kari Carlson, 320-532-7457 or Kathy Beaulieu-Sanders, 320-532-7511.

Continued from page 7

TERO Director Named

statewide for help in recruiting qualified workers.

Craig has also taken the initiative to go beyond his TERO duties to help Band members find employment off the reservation. For example, he was named to the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA) Equity Oversight Committee, which ensures that minorities and women are being hired. TERO doesn't apply in the Twin Cities, but tribal representation on the committee was lacking. Since the Mille Lacs Band is a Minnesota Vikings sponsor, and Craig had worked with the contractor, Mortenson, on the Grand Casino Hinckley Hotel Project, he stepped in to fill the void.

Compliance Officer Lisa Ballinger is also getting into the training game. She received "Train the Trainer certification" in Flagging directly through MnDOT and has since trained 202 tribal members statewide by networking with Fond Du Lac and Bois Forte TERO Offices.

Tough but fair

Craig doesn't believe in being unnecessarily confrontational with contractors. His method is to keep the lines of communication open. If a contractor loses an Indian employee and fails to meet the compliance plan, he would prefer they call and work with him to find a replacement than face a fine for non-compliance. "We recognize it's a two-way street," he says. "There has to be some give and take."

On the other hand, he is serious about the law and about providing opportunities for Band members and other Native Americans — as his commitment to training and service shows.

In 2010, the Band sent him to a Blandin Leadership Foundation conference, which he credits for sharpening his career focus by helping him see things from multiple perspectives.

The best compliment he ever received was when he overheard a contractor describe him as "tough but fair."

In pursuing all options to increase opportunities for Band members, Craig follows the same advice he gives to anyone seeking work: "My motto for the office is 'Every opportunity is a golden opportunity. It is what you make of it.'"

Heating, Water, and Maintenance Problems?

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

Free Hearing Evaluations

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

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

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