

# O J I B W E I N A A J I M O W I N

BINAAKWE-GIIZIS OCTOBER 2023 | VOLUME 25 | NUMBER 10

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



## PRESERVATION OF FUTURE, OF PAST, AND OF PLENTY SHARING ANISHINAABE CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

Ga be Giizhig Todd Moilanen, Mille Lacs Band Director of Cultural Resources, passing on the traditional winnowing method portion of processing manoomin during the annual Manoomin Preparation presentation at the Mille Lacs Band Cultural Grounds in September. **Photo by Mary Sam.**

**By Mashkode-bizikigahbaw, Benji Sam**

One of the most important tools at the disposal of the Indigenous people in this region was the use of food preservation. Historically speaking, the Anishinaabe followed the food resources around the local area and had separate camps in each of the four seasons. Each camp represented the abundance in resources around each time of year. As late summer begins to pass into crisp cool mornings, the Anishinaabe resided near manoomin — one of the most important staple foods to Indigenous survival in the Upper Midwest and Canada.

As with those who came before us, harvesting manoomin, or wild rice, was just the first step in a long process to preserve food for the frigid days of winter ahead. Manoomin provided a significant part of stabilizing a healthy diet when modern food processing did not allow for green vegetables and fruits year-round. And like many Anishinaabe traditions, our relatives

were well ahead of their time in preserving manoomin for long term consumption. Despite having no metal pots, steel thrashers, fans to winnow away husks, and tarps to dry and collect food, the Anishinaabe found a way.

That is the message shared by the Mille Lacs Band Department of Natural Resources at the annual Manoomin Preparation presentations held at the MLB Cultural Grounds. "Not so long ago, our people were well-versed in preserving food, eating healthier, and unprocessed foods," said Todd Moilanen, DNR Director of Cultural Resources. "We owe it to the people who came before us to share our teachings and educate the next generation."

The MLB DNR has embarked on a journey of preservation of culture and tradition as strong as any tribe out there,

MANOOMIN page 11



## POPULATION STUDY WILL PREDICT THE FUTURE FOR THE MILLE LACS BAND

*Surveys coming this month*

Important surveys will be coming to Band member mailboxes in early October, asking Band members to fill out information about their blood quantum and their children's blood quantum. The Wilder Foundation Research Team, which the Band has hired, will use data from these surveys to conduct a population study. At the end of the study, Band members will receive a report that predicts whether our Band membership population will increase, decrease, or stay the same if changes are made to current enrollment criteria or if no changes are made. It is crucial that as many Band members as possible fill out these surveys and return them. A \$50 gift card will be mailed to every voting-age Band member who completes and returns the surveys to the Wilder Foundation Research team.

**What's going on at the MCT with enrollment changes?**

For several decades, there has been talk in the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) about allowing MCT members to vote on changing the criteria a person must meet to be eligible for MCT membership. Right now, a person must have at least one-quarter (25%) MCT blood and have at least one parent enrolled with the Mille Lacs Band to be considered eligible for getting enrolled with the MCT as a Mille Lacs Band member. Blood from other MCT Bands counts for meeting the one-quarter cutoff, but blood from other tribes does not. Tribes across the country have been struggling with the blood quantum issue as their enrollment sharply declines, to the point where some tribes might not exist in the future unless they make changes. This topic was reignited at the MCT in 2015, when the smaller bands which are concerned about their fast-declining population pushed the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) to adopt two resolutions: 3115 and 3215. Resolution 3115 called for an election on whether other U.S. and Canada First Nations Anishinaabe blood should be counted toward meeting the one-quarter cutoff, and Resolution 3215 called for an election on allowing most other U.S. Anishinaabe blood to count toward the cutoff.

**What would Resolution 3215 do?**

Resolution 3215 is the only resolution being considered for

ENROLLMENTS page 4

### NAS BAND PERFORMS AS WARMUP BAND FOR TWIN CITIES-BASED TRIBUTE BAND 'A HARD DAYS NIGHT'

Four Nay Ah Shing students, Amelya Pacheco-Leecy, Damien Churchill, Bryce Cash, and Christa Boswell, dazzled the crowd with stellar showmanship and musicianship at Legendary Waters Casino on September 16. NAS Band leader and social studies teacher Joe Covert is proud of the students. "We look forward to more public performances. Legendary Waters Casino has invited us back," Covert said. "We are working hard every day to create an exceptional rock 'n' roll band. We are hopeful for an opportunity to play at Grand Casino Mille Lacs in the future. And we are thankful for the support we have received in this community."



SAMPLE OF WILDER FOUNDATION MILLE LACS BAND MEMBER SURVEY — SEE PAGE 11



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Aaniin, Boozhoo Band members! I want to start by immediately drawing your attention to an article on page 1 of this month's Inaajimowin about an upcoming survey you will receive in your mailboxes. You'll be asked about your blood quantum, the blood quantum of your kids, and related questions. It is extremely important that you complete these surveys and return them in the postage-paid envelopes provided. We are also setting up an online option for any Band members who prefer to answer the survey questions digitally. A \$50 gift card will be mailed to every voting-age Band member who completes and returns the surveys to the Wilder Foundation Research team.

So, what's so important about these surveys? At the request of Band members, my office has contracted with the Wilder Foundation Research team to redo a population study completed for the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) in 2013. I'll spare the details here as I've written about this topic in my columns, have talked about it in my weekly videos, and have also held many community and Elder meetings in each district and the Urban Area on the issue of possible changes to how the MCT determines whether someone is eligible to be enrolled.

The most recent meeting was held in District III on September 22. Future meetings are scheduled for the Urban Area from 3:30–5:30 p.m. on October 4; District IIa from 8:30–10:30 a.m. on October 5; District I from 3:30–5:30 p.m. on October 5, and District II on October 11 from 9–11 a.m. Locations will be announced separately. I have asked Administration to release Band member employees to join one of the in-person meetings that best works with their department's schedule. Band member employees should also look for emails about employee meetings, and Commissioner Moose, Commissioner Applegate, and some of our senior executive staff will be hosting weekly Zoom meetings that any Band member can join throughout October.

These conversations are necessary because Band members may be asked to vote on changes to enrollment in an MCT special election. Please read the article on page 1, which will provide more in-depth information about this process, and also, please reference the "Sample Survey" on page 11. The Sample Survey is nearly identical to the survey Band members will receive in the mail in October. Wilder will then use the information you provide in your surveys to scientifically project whether our Band population might increase or decrease over the next 100 years under certain circumstances should enrollment criteria change. Wilder's final report will be mailed to all Band members' homes so you have the information you need to make an informed decision if you are asked to vote on enrollment changes.

This is a data-survey, not an opinion survey. However, just one opinion question was included in the survey; it asks Band members if you believe that all 41,000 MCT voting members should be able to change enrollment criteria by majority vote or if just Mille Lacs Band members should vote on enrollment changes that impact Mille Lacs. Some might recall this question from the non-binding referendum vote held last year. It asked all MCT voters, "Should the six reservations (Bands) of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe be authorized to determine their own membership requirements by Band Ordinance?"

The Results were: YES: 4,236 and NO: 2,989. Unfortunately, there was a meager turnout across the MCT in that election, so we have added that question to this survey in hopes of gathering more accurate information. I would like to know what Mille Lacs Band members think about this so that we can continue to be proactive as a sovereign nation.

Our goal is to provide Band members with information that shows them what is most likely to happen to our population if changes are or are not put into place. I want Mille Lacs Band members to be better informed than any other Band when it

comes to deciding what you want to support. And the decision is yours. As I have said at community meetings, I don't mind which way or how you vote. I only care that you do vote and exercise your right as a Mille Lacs Band member

Getting a new and more accurate study done is a high priority for me because it was the request of the Band members. Other than the Chief Executive's Office paying the bill, nobody from the Band — not me or any other elected official, not my staff, not any commissioner or even our Enrollments Department — will ever see your completed surveys, which you will return directly to the Wilder Foundation research team. Wilder will treat your information as confidential and must destroy all completed surveys at the end of the study.

Our Water Over Nickel campaign is progressing smoothly. Water Over Nickel (W.O.N.) is the name of our effort to protect our water and resources from potential harm due to the proposed nickel mine in Tamarack, Minnesota. Billboards supporting our cause should be up soon in the McGregor area, and yard signs will also be available to Band members. Visit [waterovernickel.com](http://waterovernickel.com) for updates about how the Band is addressing this possible threat to our resources and about how you can uplift and support this cause. We will also be mailing an update about our efforts to all heads of households, so please watch for that along with the Wilder Survey.

On September 20, I attended a Tribal Nations Summit held by Governor Tim Walz and Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan. The day was spent with each federally-recognized tribe in Minnesota talking about the issues that are most important to their community, and the Governor also spoke about his and Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan's (who was unfortunately home sick) priorities for keeping a strong relationship with the tribes. Governor Walz focused on government-to-government consultation, and we discussed ways that could be improved. If there is one theme that was ever-present at this Summit, it is that the problems we experience as the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe are also felt throughout Indian Country. It is so important that we remain good partners to our brothers, sisters, and relatives from other nations.

I had a long list of issues that I spoke about on behalf of the Mille Lacs Band. These concerns included asking the Governor to support our request for tribally exclusive sports betting and expressing our opposition to expanding the gaming operation at Running Aces. I also spoke about needing more support for homelessness, housing stability resources, and the sharp increase we are seeing in fentanyl and xylazine, which are extremely powerful and certainly dangerous drugs. Four Winds and other detox and treatment centers are overwhelmed and unable to accommodate everyone who needs help, which is also true for

other parts of rural Minnesota and in other parts of Minnesota's Indian Country. I asked the Governor for more help from the State and to recognize the dire urgency of this matter.

During the last state legislative session, the State's K-12 education standards were positively changed to require that our history also be taught throughout the State and that tribal and urban Indian representatives be part of creating the new curriculum. This is a historic win, but it will also cost money. With tribal educators being under-represented in the state education system as is, Minnesota's Tribal nations will require extensive planning assistance, funding, and tribal involvement to provide accurate and authentic content. I also expressed to the Governor that state support is absolutely necessary so that our educators have time and resources to be part of this process.

Another topic that I endorsed included state and federal support for low-income tribal members from programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and SNAP Employment and Training for tribal members. The Band believes that these programs should not count as taxable income, as many Band members are denied critical resource support when these programs are counted as income. I expressed to the Governor that more discussion is needed regarding the General Welfare Exclusion Act.

I also brought up Minnesota's mining laws, which are too outdated to protect Minnesotans from toxic pollution caused by mining activity. This concern was echoed by many in the room. Minnesota's laws were designed for the taconite industry in the 1960s; they did not foresee other mineral extraction, such as nickel deposits, which are among the most harmful things to mine for in the environment. The State's laws do not consider the possibility of sulfuric acid pollution from mining or impacts on tribal nations and federal trust resources when a proposed mine occurs within a tribe's area of use, whether a ceded territory guaranteed by a treaty, reservation lands, watershed, or an airshed. This issue will only become more prevalent as underground mineral exploration continues.

During September, nearly every day was packed with internal or external meetings, including a two-day Cabinet Meeting. We spent this time discussing critical issues the Band faces and planning next steps. Continue to reach out to commissioners with questions and concerns and know that these do get discussed. Although my schedule is packed, I am never too busy for Band members. If you have any questions about any issue, please call my office at 320-532-7486. If I'm not there, my staff will get your message to me, or I will find someone who can answer your question or concern. Miigwech, and thank you for filling out and returning your surveys!

**October Breast Cancer Awareness Month**

**Indigenous Pink Breast Health**

**1 in 8** women will get breast cancer in their lifetime

**Increased Risks**

- GENETICS:** Inherited DNA changes in genes
- GENDER:** Being female
- FAMILY HISTORY:** Mother, sister, daughter has had breast cancer
- BREAST DENSITY:** High density breasts
- AGE:** 40+ Getting older

CONTACT YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER IF YOU HAVE ONE OR MORE OF THESE RISKS

Breast cancer usually has no symptoms when the tumor is small and most treatable.

**Screening Guidelines/Recommendations**

- Age 40-44: Option to begin annual screening
- Age 45-54: Annual screening
- Age 55+: Screening every 2yrs. Option to screen yearly

**What can I do?**

- BREASTFEED:** Breastfeeding reduces estrogen exposure that helps prevent breast cancer
- WEIGHT CONTROL:** Overweight or obese women are at a higher risk
- EXERCISE:** Exercising 3 days/week may lower your risk
- REGULAR MAMMOGRAMS:** Women 40+ should have the option to have a mammogram once a year
- LIMIT ALCOHOL USE:** Alcohol can increase estrogen which can increase risk
- REGULAR BREAST EXAMS:** Speak to your health care provider for options

American Indian Cancer Foundation

Talk to your health care provider about when screening is best for you. [AICAF.ORG](http://AICAF.ORG) @AMERICANINDIANCANCER



## LEGISLATIVE NEWS

# LCO CONSTITUTION REVISION COMMITTEE OBSERVES BAND ASSEMBLY THREE-BRANCH GOVERNMENT

By Vivian LaMoore, Inaajimowin Editor

Members of a delegation from Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) tribe in Wisconsin spent two days, September 19 and 20, on the Mille Lacs Reservation observing the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe division of powers form of government. LCO government currently operates under the single council form of government called the Reservation Business Committee (RBC) that was assigned to them by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) as a result of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. Members of the LCO Constitution Reform Committee are currently researching the possibility of revising their constitution to closely resemble the three-branch form of government followed by the Mille Lacs Band.

The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe had operated under the RBC style of government as well up until the 1980s, when Band Elders and leaders determined that a three-branch division of powers form of government would be a more effective and responsible way to run the Reservation. The three-branch governing system of the Mille Lacs Band includes the Executive Branch, the Legislative Branch, and the Judicial Branch.

Rick St. Germaine, former Commissioner for the Band, is a member of the LCO Tribal Committee on Constitution Revision that has been organized by their Band the past year to explore the feasibility of changing their tribal constitution from an RBC model to a three-branch form of government, separation of powers model, to create a "balance of responsibilities," he said. "Everyone knows the Mille Lacs Band has been a leader in so many ways, like government initiatives, self-determination, Ceremonial Drum, leadership, Ojibwemowin, and more," St. Germaine said.

LCO has researched the three-branch system of government at Navajo Nation, Cherokee, Choctaw, Ho-Chunk, and Osage, St. Germaine said. "Then we thought to contact Melanie Benjamin and Sheldon Boyd about the possibility of visiting MLB and having a conversation about their experiences with [the three-branch government]." Chief Executive Benjamin and Speaker Boyd invited the LCO committee for a visit and "pledged to educate us about their years of experiences."

The LCO delegation was very grateful for the "generous hospitality" and opportunity to learn, St. Germaine said. On Tuesday, September 19, members from the Executive Branch provided a PowerPoint presentation with handouts and responded to questions from the LCO delegation. On Wednesday, September 20, LCO delegates observed a Band Assembly meeting. Members of Band Assembly provided introductions and described what was happening during the meeting. Fol-

lowing the meeting, members of Band Assembly and staff from the Legislative Branch provided explanations of codes, bills, acts, legislation, procedures, functions of appropriations, commissioners' roles, and a general overview of how things work to achieve the best for Band members "despite possible vetoes and differences," St. Germaine said.

"Listening to people talk about what has been accomplished here has shown me that our governments continue to be a work in progress," Speaker Sheldon Boyd said. "Our LCO friends are seeking the same thing we are."

LCO delegates also had the opportunity to meet with Judge Richard Osburn, who "explained so much for us," St. Germaine said. Having visited with all three branches of government at Mille Lacs — Executive, Legislative, and Judicial — the LCO delegates will be sharing their observations with their tribe.

"The Band cannot understand how much this is going to help us," St. Germaine continued. "We are deeply indebted to the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, our sister Band."

St. Germaine explained LCO has a great connection to Mille Lacs. "We have the date when Mille Lacs showed up in 1878 and brought the sacred Ceremonial Drum over to us. We have honored that ever since. Our connection is a real close one. We hold that in high esteem.

"We come back and forth and some of your folks come and visit us. We honor your bundles whenever you send them over to us and we share those. And now here you are sharing your system of government with us. We operate under a constitution that was created by the BIA for us in the 1930s. Basically, we are still under that system of government that centralizes government to a small group of people. We really don't have much of an understanding of how to create the branches of government and honor the traditions and culture the way it is done here.

"To be able to come over here to our sister Band and be welcomed by you and have this depth of sharing with us is really an honor. We are bringing this back. Our plan is to work with our governing board — our council — to offer a constitution revision and put it before the membership and let the membership decide. We are taking all of the nuggets that you have shared with us. We are all going to go back with big smiles and will share the information with our Band," St. Germaine said.

Members of the LCO delegates include: Rick St. Germaine, Vera Homesky, Leslie Ramszck, Matt Belille, Sheryl Fink, Clara Jalowitz, Dorothy Sharon, Faith Smith, Caryl Pfaff, Mona Inger-son, Marie Kuykendall, Bill Morrow, and Pat Alexander.

## LEGISLATIVE BRANCH WELCOMES NEW LEGAL COUNSEL

### Introducing Jared Miller

**Name:** Jared Miller

**Position:** Legislative Counsel

**Education:** I have a journalism degree from the University of Montana and a law degree from the University of Wyoming.

**Background:** I grew up in Central Wyoming, where the Rocky Mountains meet the Great Plains. As a kid, my favorite things were hunting mule deer, catching cutthroat trout, and eating my mom's chocolate, chocolate-chip cake. From there, I attended a couple of community colleges before I got serious about storytelling and newspaper reporting and moved to Missoula, Montana for journalism school. Afterward, I spent ten years writing for newspapers in Montana, Wyoming, and Hawaii, and then I went to law school. In law school, I took two classes in Federal Indian law. When I wouldn't shut up about them, my wife suggested I find a job practicing Indian law and tribal law. I took her advice, and that's what I've been doing ever since. We moved to Minnesota about six years ago for my wife's job.

**Hometown:** Riverton, Wyoming.

**Family:** I've been married to Ellen Thompson for 14 years. We have two daughters, Eliza, 12, and Daphne, 6.

**What are you looking forward to with the new job?** I enjoy working for governments, and I look forward to working with a team of professionals supporting the interests of the elected leaders and the Band.

**Hobbies/interests outside of work:** Learning, canoeing, and trying to be a better dad.



## LEGISLATIVE BRIEFS

### September 6 Band Assembly

#### From the "Messages from the Representatives" section:

District I Representative Virgil Wind shared in legislative news the Personnel Policy Manual has been updated and compromise done. Thank you, Commissioner of Administration, Office of the Solicitor General, Human Resources, the other Representatives, and Legislative Counsel. Representative Wind shared they are still working on the Cannabis legislation which has gone through an initial review by Ziontz Chestnut. Representative Wind closed his comments with thank you to housing on the painting contract.

District II Representative Wendy Merrill said the Cannabis legislation is nearly 98% complete. The Legislative Branch has gone through the process and decided it will go out to public comment again, not the whole 30 days, but a shorter period to show Band members "we are listening to you. Going out to the community was very important to me as the sponsor and making sure we get all the input from everybody, showing Band members that, yes, we did listen to you and we are including it on the bill. Look out for that. We are excited and looking forward to working on that Migwech."

District III Representative Harry Davis opened with explaining how we separate our activities annually. For youth we take them to Valley Fair; adults we take to the State Fair; and the elders we take them overnight to a bingo session at another casino.



Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Legislative Branch staff and elected officials welcomed members of the Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) Band Tribal Committee on Constitution Revision to observe a Band Assembly session on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, to learn more about the three-branch form of government which the Mille Lacs Band operates under. The LCO delegation met with the Executive Branch the prior evening and met with the Judicial Branch on Wednesday as well.



# STATE AND LOCAL NEWS BRIEFS

## **Judge dismisses remaining Line 3 charges against indigenous activists, citing longstanding government mistreatment:**

A Minnesota judge has dismissed misdemeanor criminal charges against Anishinaabeg activist Winona LaDuke and two others accused of disrupting construction of the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline project in 2021 while offering a powerful indictment of the prosecution. The decision was accompanied by an impassioned memo from Judge Leslie Metzen citing longstanding concerns over government mistreatment of Indigenous people. "In the last 20 years I have come to a broader understanding of what we, the now dominant culture, did to try to eradicate our Indigenous neighbors," Metzen writes. "We moved them by force and power and violence off the land where they lived for thousands of years. To make peace, we signed treaties with them that promised many things they never received. Source: *Minnesota Reformer*.

## **Large-scale search for evidence in Nevaeh Kingbird disappearance underway in Bemidji:**

Just weeks away from the two-year anniversary of Nevaeh Kingbird's disappearance, law enforcement agencies and volunteers gathered in Bemidji on Monday to conduct a two-day large-scale search for clues that could lead to answers in the case. In a partnership between the Bemidji Police Department and the Minnesota Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives Office, the search brought together about 100 people who will comb through more than 150 acres during the two days of the search. Agencies participating in the search include the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, MMIW 218, Missing Children Minnesota, Bemidji Fire Department, Leech Lake and Red Lake Tribal Police Departments, Central Lakes Search and Rescue, several private groups, K-9 teams and more. Many of the searchers consist of volunteers, including Kingbird's family and friends. Volunteers from Mille Lacs Band also participated in the search. Source: *Duluth News Tribune*.

## **DNR Provides Comments on Talon's First Proposal:**

The first round of comments by the Minnesota DNR on the Tamarack Mining Project (Project) have been sent to Talon Nickel (USA) LLC (Proposer). Preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) for any complex project is a multi-year process. DNR is currently in the early steps of the scoping phase of the EIS process for the proposed Project. The scoping process helps the DNR ensure the future EIS assesses the proposed Project's potentially significant environmental impacts, and helps define project alternatives, potential mitigations, timelines, and additional data needs. The Proposer submitted its Project proposal to the DNR on June 21, 2023. Since then, the DNR completed its initial review of the Project proposal, determined that it was incomplete, and requested additional information (via comments) from the Proposer. The scoping process is iterative. As is typical for a project of this complexity, many comments are sent to the Proposer after the first submittal, and the DNR anticipates multiple rounds of review and comment followed by revisions from the Proposer. The Proposer is reviewing DNR's comments, and it is anticipated that the company will respond in the coming weeks. Source: *Minnesota DNR Office*.

## ENROLLMENTS from page 1

a special election at this time by the MCT, because allowing "First Nations blood" is legally problematic for the federal government. A special election would allow all eligible MCT voters to vote on whether or not they want "other Anishinaabe blood" from Anishinaabe tribes outside the MCT to be counted toward their membership in the MCT, instead of just MCT blood. The issue was pushed to the back-burner after new members were elected to the TEC in 2016. The current TEC has revived this issue and has requested approval from the Secretary of Interior to hold a special election to see if MCT members want this change, but this has been a slow process.

### **Wasn't there already a study by Wilder Research?**

Yes. Back in 2012, the MCT hired Wilder Research to conduct a population study of the entire MCT. About 100 Band members from each of the six MCT Bands filled out blood quantum surveys, very similar to the sample survey on page 11. After Wilder received the completed surveys, researchers uploaded all of this data. They used scientific models to predict the future birth rates and future blood quantum of the next several generations of the six Bands.

### **If Wilder did a study in 2013, why is Mille Lacs doing this study again?**

Because at Chief Executive Benjamin's community meetings on this topic, Band members asked for an updated study that uses current enrollment data, just for the Mille Lacs Band, and a much larger sampling of Band members than the 100 Band members who participated in the first 2013 study. This new study will arm Band members with more accurate population projections that will help them decide how to vote if asked to do so in future elections.

### **What will the final report look like?**

It will look very similar to the format of the 2013 report with the same categories of information, but with new data that is only about the Mille Lacs Band. Anyone wanting to see MCT's 2013 report can view it on the MCT's website. You can read the 2013 report by visiting the MCT's website and clicking "MCT Population Projections" under the "Quick Links" on the MCT's home page, or go directly to <https://www.mnchippewatribe.org/pdf/MCT%20Population%20Projections.pdf>.

### **What kind of information can Band members expect to see in the report?**

Just like the 2013 report, Band members will be able to see predictions about what is most likely to happen to our Band population every 10 years if the MCT continued with the current one-quarter (25%) blood quantum requirement with only MCT blood counted toward the one-quarter requirement. The report will also predict what might happen if other possible changes were made to enrollment: (1) Reducing the blood quantum requirement from 1/4 to 1/8; (2) Allowing other Anishinaabe blood from any other Anishinaabe tribe to count toward the 25% (1/4) blood requirement; (3) Allowing any other blood from a federally recognized tribe to count toward the 25% blood quantum requirement; or (4) Getting rid of blood quantum altogether and using a lineal descendency system, which Red Lake just did, which would allow many current and future descendants to enroll.

### **What did the 2013 Wilder study show about Mille Lacs?**

It concluded that if no changes were made to enrollment in 2013, there would be a brief period of continued growth, followed by a sharp decline over the next 100 years because fewer children of Band members would be eligible for enrollment. The study will only be successful if Band members complete and return their surveys to the Wilder Research team.

### **What about the confidentiality of the surveys, and who will see them?**

Nobody from the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe will ever see your completed surveys; your responses are 100% confidential. The surveys will be mailed to you from the Wilder Foundation, and they should be mailed back to the Wilder Foundation in a postage-paid envelope. Only the researchers who are inputting the blood quantum data will ever see or touch the surveys. After the final report is generated, all surveys will be destroyed by Wilder.

### **If the surveys are confidential, why are my enrollment number and address being requested?**

Your enrollment number is your unique identifying number and is being requested so Wilder knows that only one survey was returned for each adult Band member. Filling in your name and address is completely optional, but necessary if a Band member wants to collect a \$50 gift card for completing the survey. Wilder will keep a record of everyone who completed the survey and tell the Band the names and addresses of people who should be mailed gift cards.

### **Doesn't the Mille Lacs Band Enrollment Department and the MCT already have our blood quantum information?**

Yes, but the MLB Enrollments office and the MCT only have a record of each Band member's MCT blood. Many Band members and their children have blood from other Bands like St. Croix, LCO, Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, and others, but that blood is not counted toward the 25% cutoff to be enrolled in the MCT. To predict how big the Impact might be on the Band allowing "other Anishinaabe blood" to count toward the one-quarter cutoff, Wilder needs to know how many Band members and their children have other Anishinaabe blood. This will help predict future birth-rates and the future blood quantum of the next several generations. Band members will also be asked about their blood quantum from other federally recognized tribes like Oneida, Standing Rock, Choctaw, or any of the other 580 Indian tribes in the United States.

### **If the MCT membership votes to allow "other Anishinaabe blood" to count toward enrollment, what would that mean for MLB members?**

Let's say there is a Mille Lacs Band child with one parent who is one-half (50%) Mille Lacs Band and a Mille Lacs Band member, and one parent who is one-half (50%) Turtle Mountain. Even though the child of those two parents is 50% Native American, the MCT records will only show that child to be 25% because the Turtle Mountain blood is not counted. This means that when this child grows up to have children of their own, their children may not be eligible for enrollment with the Mille Lacs Band because MCT records would show that child to be just one-eighth (12.5%), which is less than the one-quarter cutoff.

### **Will any questions ask my opinion about changes?**

There is one open-ended question, where Band members can share any thoughts they want to share, and one opinion question is being asked. That question asks Band members whether think the approximate 4,900 Mille Lacs Band members should have to follow whatever enrollment criteria the 41,000 MCT members vote on so that all Bands follow the same criteria, or whether Band members believe that only the Mille Lacs Band voters should decide what enrollment criteria should be for Mille Lacs.

### **What is the timeline for this project and who is in charge?**

The TEC previously agreed that there would not be an election until a massive educational campaign was done by the MCT. That has yet to happen, so Chief Executive Benjamin took it upon herself to hold community and Elder in-person and Zoom meetings to discuss enrollments with Band members for the past three years and share the 2013 Wilder report. During those meetings, Band members requested that the 2013 study be updated for Mille Lacs. The date for a special election has yet to be determined. MCT staff have indicated there are barriers at the federal level that are proving difficult to resolve. Chief Executive Benjamin's office budget is paying for this population study out of CEO office funds, but Wilder Research is in charge of the study and the surveys. The Band's only role is to tell Band members about the surveys, and mail gift cards to the people Wilder says completed and turned in surveys. Wilder has an outstanding reputation and has become the trusted go-to for tribes across the United States who want these kinds of studies.

Please look for your surveys, complete them as best you can, and return them. There may also be an online option to complete surveys, so watch for updates about that as well.

A recent meeting on this subject was held in District III on September 22. Future meetings are scheduled for the Urban Area from 3:30–5:30 p.m. on October 4; District IIa from 8:30–10:30 a.m. on October 5; District I from 3:30–5:30 p.m. on October 5, and District II on October 11 from 9–11 a.m. Locations will be announced separately.



# HOW THE FARM BILL CAN HELP NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

By U.S. Senator Tina Smith

One of the best parts of my job is traveling around the state to talk to Minnesotans about what they care about and the issues impacting them. A top priority this year has been discussing the upcoming Farm Bill. My staff and I have had conversations with dozens of stakeholders, including farmers, researchers, co-ops, Native and Tribal communities, and other farmers and producers of color to ensure the next Farm Bill works for everyone.

Native and Tribal communities face persistent inequities in nutrition and the agriculture sector, and the Farm Bill is the best opportunity this year to address them. As a member of both the Senate Indian Affairs and Agriculture committees, I have a unique opportunity to help lead the next Farm Bill so it works for your communities. It is critical that we include the priorities and voices of Native American producers and Tribal governments in the decision-making process. Native communities across the nation face unique challenges in the agriculture sector and it is our responsibility in Congress to address these disparities by providing meaningful support for Tribal agricultural programs.

Every time I visit the Mille Lacs Band Reservation, I'm impressed by the central role that fish and wild rice (manoomin) play in the culture and lives of Mille Lacs Band members. Food sovereignty for the Band means their fish and wild rice are protected, the ability of individual Band members to take and harvest is ensured, and traditional Mille Lacs Band cultural practices are preserved. I've been working hard with the Band's Chief Executive, Melanie Benjamin, and the Native Farm Bill Coalition that the Band helped to form, to make sure the Farm Bill advances these goals, and makes more federal resources available for rural development and conservation on the Mille Lacs Band Reservation's lands and waters. Together, we are working to shape a Farm Bill that expands Band members' access to nutritious food and nutrition education consistent with Band culture and Indigenous ecological knowledge.

Congress passes a Farm Bill every five years, and the current one is set to expire at the end of September. This is a massive piece of legislation that funds and sets the policy on a wide variety of programs ranging from nutrition and agriculture to conservation and forestry. It also supports Tribal colleges by providing funding for agricultural education, research, scholarships, and rural development initiatives. This bill touches the lives of every American and is vital to our state and Tribal economies. But it hasn't always been equitable or fair. We're working to change that with the creation of a 'Native Farm Bill.'

I am working in Congress to create the 'Native Farm Bill,' a collection of policy proposals that collectively would mean real progress throughout the Farm Bill for Native and Tribal communities. This package will include everything from self-governance expansion to making it easier to access federal agricul-



Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin and Senator Tina Smith at the 2023 State of the Band Address.

tural programs on trust land.

Tribal sovereignty and self-governance are at the center of this work. New opportunities for self-governance are the biggest priority for Indian Country; they would allow Tribal Nations to administer federal programs within their own communities. This model has proven itself to be very successful in health care and Tribal programs through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In 2018, the Farm Bill included the first ever self-governance expansion at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for food distribution and wildfire management. These policies proved that it's time for broader self-governance expansion at USDA.

Self-governance policies are important because they make federal dollars work better to address the unique needs of Tribal communities. The Farm Bill gives us the chance to expand self-governance at USDA to include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), food distribution program, forestry, conservation, and meat processing. Expanding self-governance at USDA will mean that Tribal Nations can build food systems to address food insecurity, increase access to Indigenous foods, use Indigenous knowledge for forest management and conservation, and support strong Tribal economies.

The Farm Bill presents us with an opportunity to rectify historical injustices, address disparities, and support the self-determination of Native American producers and the sovereignty of Tribal governments. By working with Native and Tribal leaders, we can ensure the next Farm Bill empowers Tribal governments to develop and implement sustainable agricultural strategies that align with their unique needs and priorities. Together, we are forging a path towards a more just, equitable, and inclusive agricultural landscape that benefits us all. Now is the time to seize the moment and work collaboratively to ensure that the upcoming Farm Bill is the best one yet and reflects the needs of our Native and Tribal communities.

## NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

### Bill for preserving site of Wounded Knee massacre in South Dakota passes U.S. House:

A bill to preserve the site of the Wounded Knee massacre — one of the deadliest massacres in U.S. history — cleared the U.S. House of Representatives on September 20. The Wounded Knee Massacre Memorial and Sacred Site Act, introduced by Republican U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson of South Dakota in May, passed the House by voice vote. The Senate is considering companion legislation. More than 200 Native Americans — including children and elderly people — were killed at Wounded Knee in 1890. The bloodshed marked a seminal moment in the frontier battles the U.S. Army waged against tribes. The Oglala Sioux and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribes joined together last year to purchase about 40 acres around the Wounded Knee National Historic Landmark in South Dakota to ensure the area was preserved as a sacred site. Leaders of both tribes testified in support of the House bill, which would put federal protections on the land on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

### The Biden-Harris Administration Awards \$131.7 Million to Support At-risk Youth and Families:

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), has announced \$131.7 million awarded this month in grant programs that connect youth and families to behavioral health services. Tackling the nation's ongoing mental health crisis, particularly among our youth, is a top priority of the Biden-Harris Administration and a key pillar in President Biden's Unity Agenda for the nation. "These grants enhance the overall health and wellness of children, youth and families. They address the full behavioral continuum by meeting people where they are to ensure they get the support and care that they need," said Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D., the HHS Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, and the leader of SAMHSA. "SAMHSA is committed to using its resources to support children, youth and their families to get the help they need to thrive." Source: *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*.

### Over 60 Tribes Support Michigan Attorney General's Lawsuit to Close Enbridge's Line 5:

Led by the Bay Mills Indian Community, more than 60 tribal nations from Indian Country have weighed in on Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel's lawsuit to move the Line 5 oil pipeline from the heart of the Great Lakes. The Tribes submitted an amicus brief supporting Nessel's claims and asking the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit to remand Nessel v. Enbridge to state court, a move opposed by the Canadian giant Enbridge, which owns Line 5. Line 5 is a dangerous outdated oil-and-gas pipeline that poses unacceptable risks of an oil spill, especially as it travels along the lakebed through the Straits of Mackinac in a four-mile section known as the dual pipelines. "Near and far, Anishinaabe people have united to protect the Great Lakes," Bay Mills Indian Community President Whitney Gravelle said. "We stand behind Attorney General Nessel because we know that shutting down Line 5 is the only way to protect everyone who depends on the land, water, and natural resources within the Great Lakes, including Anishinaabe people exercising our treaty rights." Source: *Native News Online*.



## CONGRATULATIONS ISKIGAMIZIGAN ROYALTY 2023-2024

Sr. Brave Derek Karlstad Jr., (Lindsay Mitchell) DI; Jr. Brave Thomas Staples-Skinaway, (Sharalene Staples-Skinaway and Thomas Skinaway) DIII; Sr. Princess Jenise Smith, (Arelene Weos) DI; and Jr. Princess Josephine Skinaway, (Trisha Moose) DIII.



# THINKING OF QUITTING SMOKING?

The Smoking Cessation Program may be just the right ticket

Have you been thinking about quitting smoking? The Commercial Tobacco Cessation Program at Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Health and Human Services offers support if you are interested in quitting. The program respects everyone's individual journey and does not try to convince people to quit; everybody must make that decision for themselves. Smoking cessation counseling can help you to identify the role that smoking plays in your life. Quitting smoking is most effective when individuals use both a nicotine replacement therapy/medication therapy combined with cessation counseling. NRT is available for free through the clinic pharmacy and counseling services are free through the Population Health Department's tobacco grant.

## WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM COUNSELING?

Cessation counseling is not forceful; it's up to the individual if they would like to quit. Sarah can help by being somebody to talk to as you work towards being smoke-free. There is no rush, and maybe you'd just like to talk about your thoughts on how smoking affects your life. Maybe you aren't really interested in quitting any time soon. If you would like to work towards quitting, she'll discuss with you the reasons you smoke, what you like and don't like about smoking, and why you want to quit. She will then help you build a plan that will aid your success.

## WHAT IF I'VE TRIED TO QUIT BEFORE AND IT DIDN'T WORK?

Sometimes quitting can take multiple attempts. With each quit attempt, you learn more about yourself and can make a plan to be more successful the next time! The only way to fail at quitting for sure is to never even try.

## IT MIGHT BE TOO LATE, I'VE ALREADY BEEN SMOKING MOST OF MY LIFE.

It's never too late to quit! Even if you've smoked for many years, quitting can reduce your risk of many diseases like heart disease, stroke, and cancer. Additionally, secondhand smoke impacts family and friends we spend time with. Quitting now can help to protect young ones from getting sick.

## I KNOW PEOPLE WHO SMOKED THEIR WHOLE LIFE AND NEVER GOT SICK!

Some people may be able to smoke their whole lives and not recognize how it impacts their body. Even if they don't develop cancer, smoking can impact your wellbeing by making daily activities and breathing more difficult and can contribute to poorer mental health. Smoking also has long-term effects other than cancer such as increasing your risk of stroke, heart disease, and diabetes.

## HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Call the Ne-la-Shing clinic (320-532-4163) and ask to make an appointment with Sarah Larson, the tobacco cessation counselor. Or, contact Sarah directly with any questions you

THE AMERICAN INDIAN QUITLINE  
CALL 1-833-9AI-QUIT  
AIQUIT.COM

may have: 320-532-4163, ext. 2540, or sarah.larson@hhs.millelacsband-nsn.gov.

## IS THERE ANYWHERE ELSE I CAN GO FOR HELP QUITTING?

The American Indian Quitline also provides counseling services and NRT. They have services online, over the phone, through text messages, and other resources. Call 1-833-9AI-QUIT (1-833-924-7848) or go online to AIQUIT.com.

### MOCCASIN TELEGRAPH

## RELATIONSHIP TO THE ENVIRONMENT

By Obizaan, Lee Staples

**This article by Obizaan Lee Staples was first published in the Mille Lacs Messenger. It is reprinted here to preserve his teachings and bring them to the next generation.**

Aaniin. I am Lee Staples, an Elder of the Mille Lacs Band. I think the value of this column is to share some of our Anishinaabe teachings, because I believe we all need to have an appreciation for each other's cultures. Today, I'd like to share some of our teachings about the environment.

Indian people have a close relationship with the environment. For example, there is our relationship with Mille Lacs Lake. We recognize the lake as having a spirit, a power much greater than any human being, that we acknowledge. In our ceremonies, offerings are given to that spirit within the lake. When I was a child, the old people who raised me told me to make my offering of tobacco before I went out on Mille Lacs Lake or any of the other lakes. They told me, "Remember that there is a spirit or a power out in that lake that we need to respect as a people."

When we go out to fish, we do the very same thing — we make an offering before we go out on the lake. And before we go out to harvest wild rice on the lake, we do the same thing. So we have a strong relationship with those powers within the lake, and therefore we don't want to hurt the lake or the fish that are there. We are taught as a people to take only what we need, and maybe sometimes take some to share with others from the community who don't have any. We are taught to stay away from greed.

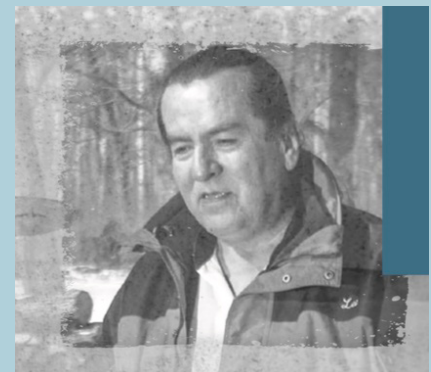
We have a similar relationship with everything in the environment. The trees, for example. There is a spirit within those trees that we call Mitigwaabi wi inini. That would probably

translate into English as "bow man." Years ago, when the trees were used to build wigwams, the people would do an offering before they cut the trees, to respect that spirit in the trees. This is a practice that is continued to this day.

The same is true of the earth. We believe there's a power within the earth, in the center of the earth, that we do our offerings to — even to this day. For example, we have done offerings for new projects on the Reservation, like the Conoco gas station in Aazhoomog, near Hinckley. Before that project started, the Band had me come out there, and we did an offering of tobacco and food, especially for the earth where they were going to be digging and the trees that were going to be cut.

Our relationship with everything in the environment is an important part of our teachings. Our ancestors lived off the land, and so we had a lot of respect for things in the wild. There are foods we were given as a people to eat — the berries, the wild rice, the fish, the venison, the rabbits. We were taught to respect all of this.

If you take a look at environmental issues like pollution, I believe it would be good for people to learn from us. By sharing our appreciation and respect for the environment, I think it can help this world in the long run.





# OCTOBER IS NATIONAL DEPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING MONTH

*Coordinating efforts of HHS, Education, and Aanjibimaadizing to take on mental health for all community members*

By Maajiitaaziibiikwe, Mary Sam

The Mille Lacs Band Health and Human Services Behavioral Health Department understands that there are many adults and children struggling with mental health issues across all districts. Multi-generational trauma and loss often results in mental illness, substance abuse, violence, and, tragically, suicide, and layers of unresolved grief. If we struggle with many of these things, so do our children. As noted on our website, the goal of the Behavioral Health Team is to use a whole-health, patient-centered care approach to work with patients, treating both the mind and the body. Commissioner of Health and Human Services Nicole Anderson points out, "Patient-centered care affirms the importance of the relationship between the physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual self." Implementing a whole-health model requires collaboration from departments within Health and Human Services and across the Band. Anderson is hopeful the prevention and intervention models being developed will have a positive impact in our community's well-being.

October is National Depression and Mental Health Screening Month. HHS is committed to bringing awareness of what depression and mental health can look like, where to get screened, and how to find support to treat mental health. "We are trying to help Band members understand that mental health conditions are real, common, and treatable, and recovery is possible. Understand that it is okay to not be okay, but please reach out, ask for help, let us help," Commissioner Anderson said.

Executive Director of Health Services Jan Manary and her team are working towards culturally balanced care. "This involves embracing culture as we provide treatment." Her team is working with Bobby Eagle, Chandelle Boyd, Rich Hill, and Lindsay Misquadace-Berg to help define cultural needs in treating addiction and mental health issues. They are also partnering with DNR Cultural Resources Director Todd Moilanen to learn more about the four medicines utilized in healing. Jan noted, "Infusing culture into assessment and treatment helps establish the foundation to build stability in positive growth. Moving to better health outcomes is a shared goal across the Band."

Commissioner Anderson and her team are contracting psychiatry and therapy services with Portages Psychiatrist Dr. Read Sulik, MD. "Portages has provided much-needed psychiatry and therapy services for adults and children to our team." Dr. Sulik is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Adult Psychiatrist and Pediatrician who recently joined the team to treat individuals through a compassionate and collaborative approach. Jan noted that Dr. Sulik's approach is to partner with the client for the right treatment plan and values being a student of our Ojibwe culture. The model now uses screening and diagnostic tools to triage and guide treatment for all age groups. An addition to the team is Nurse Practitioner Amanda Johnson-Fleming, who works with pediatric mental health, including with ADHD.

The HHS whole-health, person-centered approach has created an opportunity for multiple Commissioners and staff to come together to focus on the urgent needs of our youth in the educational setting. Commissioner Niiyo Gonzalez is grateful for the collaboration between Health and Human Services, Education, Administration, and the Department of Natural Resources for coming together to meet the needs of our community. Gonzalez noted the significant grief our children are carrying, as a result of addiction, COVID-19, and loss of care givers. "The impact of loss on our children is real. The impact on school success is real."

Gonzalez noted it's important for families to remember that "staff in our schools are not trained mental health practitioners, they are educators." Training staff in trauma-informed care helps educators to understand, build relationships, and to

be compassionate. Educators across the Reservation are concerned about our children, who often just need a safe space, someone to listen to them, to be heard and to be seen. In partnership with other departments, teams began researching and creating a holistic care model for middle and high school "to make space for mental health and mental wellness; including our grief work." Gonzalez said, "We are fortunate to have access to top adolescent and youth mental health practitioners. Our collaborative team created a plan, and with Dr. Sulik, we are now able to screen middle and high school students who opt into the process, and we can now pinpoint what a child is experiencing." As a result of the screenings last year, referrals for mental health support and interventions were put in place. Parents/care givers must provide permission for both the screening and interventions to move forward. Creating a school climate that models mental wellness, and that is open to talking about what mental health is, provides safety and a sense of "normalcy," as stated by both Anderson and Gonzalez. The team is exploring how to next bring these services and tools to elementary children. Making these and many other tools available and accessible is another project goal. Gonzalez noted we need to normalize that we have our cultural toolbox of ceremonies, and sometimes we need Western tools to improve our mental health. Finding any and all approaches to help heal our children and our community is a shared goal.

Moving forward, Commissioners Gonzalez and Andersons staff and Portag's Program will coordinate open houses at our tribal schools. Longer-term, Gonzalez hopes to build relationships with public school local Indian Education programs at Brainerd, Hinckley-Finlayson, Isle, Onamia, Aitkin, McGregor and Minisinaakwaang to explore partnerships and approaches that can work to increase mental health wellness and student success. Establishing a shared education model that knows how to recognize concerns and support kids in healing and wellness will benefit all of our children. To help support a Band-wide education and awareness campaign, the Portages Program and HHS Mental Health staff will continue to host programs in all three districts.

In addition to connecting mental health services to our schools, the Ge-niigaanizijig Program, serving youth from kindergarten through age 24, under Aanjibimaadizing has created a peer leadership program. Program Director Carlos Merrill noted that two volunteer youth mentors from each district, will be trained in Trauma-Informed Care to be available to their peers. The youth mentors are not trained as counselors, but to understand some of the signs and symptoms of mental health or addiction issues, and to recognize when someone is struggling. "They can help spread the message that asking for help is okay, be available for support, and help peers and youth get connected to resources. Carlos said, "Sometimes just being that 'listening ear' can help alleviate a worse crisis."

Finding the courage to reach out and ask for help is the first step in healing. Anytime we are seeking help, it's important to feel heard and respected and treated with dignity. Having providers who understand our culture and the clients past and present experiences helps create safety and trust, ultimately helping in the treatment and healing process. Commissioner Anderson is committed to these values and creating this vision for treating mental health and addiction.



## MENTAL HEALTH AWARE

If you or a loved one are in an immediate mental health crisis, call:

- Lifeline: Dial 988
- Brainerd Mental Health Urgent Care Clinic/ Mobil Crisis Outreach: 218-454-8001, 823 Maple Street, Brainerd
- Mille Lacs Band Mental Health Services:
  1. MLBO Health Services Director: 320-630-0855
  2. Ne-la-Shing Clinic appointment line: (Medical/Mental Health): 320-532-4163 Opt. #2
  3. MLBO Case Management line:- 320-532-1985
  4. MLBO Substance Use Disorder line: 1-320-532-7773

**Health Services Division provides a full range of services, including:**

- Diagnostic assessments and mental health counseling and services
- Comprehensive assessments
- Recovery groups, Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous, and Wellbriety groups
- Relapse prevention and aftercare
- Halfway house
- Chemical dependency outpatient treatment
- Adolescent chemical health group
- Sobriety feasts

### PASSENGER SAFETY IS A SNAP

SNAP — safe Native American passenger training — is held on the first Tuesday of each month from 1 to 5 p.m. Contact Kristina Abear at 320-532-7814 or kristina.abear@hhs.millelacsband-nsn.gov to sign up.

### MEN'S AND WOMEN'S GROUPS

The Women's Healing Group meets on Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m., and the Men's Empowerment Group meets Mondays at 5:30 p.m. Both groups meet at the old District I Community Center across from Grand Casino Mille Lacs. All are welcome!

### FIRST AID AND CPR CLASSES AT HHS BUILDING

As part of the Band's Community Risk Reduction or CRR efforts, First Aid and CPR classes are held from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on the last Wednesday of the month in the Family Services training room at the Health and Human Services building in District I. Family Services staff and foster parents have priority, after which it is open to other departments and community members. There is a \$10 fee for certification cards if participants would like them. Cards are free for Family Services staff and foster parents. Contact Kristina Abear at 320-532-7814 or kristina.abear@hhs.millelacsband-nsn.gov to sign up.

### PET CLINIC SCHEDULE

**Urban** at the All Nations Church

Friday, October 20 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Call 612-872-1424 to schedule for surgeries. Limited space.

**District I** at the Aquatics and Fitness Center

Saturday, November 11 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and

Sunday, November 12 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Call 320-532-7733 with questions. All surgery spots have been filled. No appointment necessary for wellness exams/vaccinations.

**District III Aazhoomog**

First Weekend in April (More information as date becomes closer.)

**District III Meshakwad**

Third Weekend in April (More information as date becomes closer.)

**District II Minisinaakwaang**

First weekend in May (More information as date becomes closer.)

**District IIa Chiminising**

Third weekend in May (More information as date becomes closer.)



# GE-NIIGAANIZIJIG "THE ONES WHO WILL LEAD"

# BACK TO SCHOOL BRINGS EXCITEMENT & OPPORTUNITIES

Story and photos by Vivian LaMoore, Inaajimowin Editor

The 2023/24 academic year is off to a great start. Students are settling into their routines of school reading, writing, and arithmetic. But there is so much more to learning than classroom learning alone. Ga be Giizhig, Todd Moilanen, Director of Cultural Resources for the DNR and his team provide opportunities for youth to engage in the process of cultural traditions. September focused on all pieces of the manoomin harvesting process. Moilanen and his team provided lessons in safe harvesting to groups of youth from Nay Ah Shing and Ge-Niigaanazijig, as well as Isle and Onamia public schools. The Inaajimowin caught up with a group from Ge-Niigaanazijig on a warm but windy September afternoon to capture the excitement on Lake Onamia.

Not only is passing on the cultural traditions his job, but it is also Moilanen's passion. He firmly believes that learning and understanding by participating in cultural ways is empowering and instills values that will ensure success in the future of the youth. "Our traditions are a part of our being — of who we are as a people. Our existence depends on passing on our cultural practices to our youth," Moilanen said.

The youth has a lot of fun while learning the tradition of harvesting manoomin and no canoes tipped over in the process.

Read more about Cultural Resources beginning on page 1. See more photos at [Inaajimowin.com/galleries](http://Inaajimowin.com/galleries).





# NEW TEACHERS & STAFF AT NAY AH SHING

Welcome new staff members



**Name:** Ashley Heise  
**Position:** Administrative Assistant  
**School you'll be working at:** Nay Ah Shing lower school/Abinoojiiyag  
**Background:** I have worked as an administrative assistant for about 10 years but this is the first school setting.

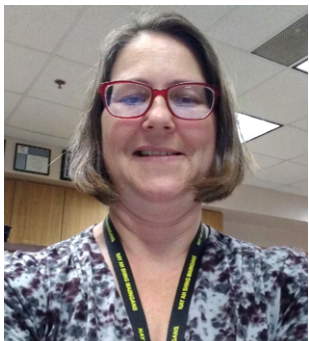
**Education:** Business management

**Hometown:** I grew up in Blaine but live just outside of Milaca now

**Family:** My husband and I have three big dogs

**What are you looking forward to with the new job?** I am really excited to work with the kids and learn more about the Ojibwe culture.

**Hobbies/interests outside of school:** I enjoy anything outside; during the spring and summer I am working in my garden and in the fall and winter I enjoy hunting, fishing and snowshoeing.



**Name:** P'Jay Bixby  
**Position:** Administrative Assistant  
**School you'll be working at:** Nay Ah Shing Upper School  
**Background:** I have several years experience working as a math tutor for AmeriCorps and as a paraprofessional within the school systems. I

have also been a Medical Assistant with several clinic systems over the years.

**Education:** I have a diploma in Medical Assisting and am finishing my two-year degree to go on in school to a four-year degree in mathematics.

**Hometown:** Brook Park, Minnesota

**Family:** I have two children (my son is 26 and my daughter is 20).

**What are you looking forward to with the new job?** Getting to know the community and help students realize their potential for learning.

**Hobbies/interests outside of teaching:** Crafting, gardening, volunteering



**Name:** Jessica Scalze  
**Position:** Reading Corps-Tutor  
**School you'll be working at:** Abinoojiiyag Elementary  
**Background:** I have had a couple different jobs; dog trainer, mechanic, HVAC, and PCA.

**Education:** High School and some college

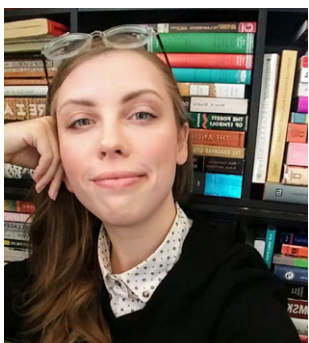
**Hometown:** Mahtomedi, Minnesota.

**Family:** Mom, dad, younger brother and sister

**What are you looking forward to with the new job?** I am excited to help these kids find a passion and love for reading. Reading opens so many doors and can lead to so many adventures.

**Hobbies/interests outside of school:**

I enjoy spending a lot of time outside, camping, fishing, hunting and working in the yard. I love spending time with my family and of course, I read a lot!



**Name:** Tiamat Gustafson  
**Position:** Elementary Literacy Librarian  
**School you'll be working at:** Nay Ah Shing Schools  
**Background:** I was a reading tutor and an Assistant Librarian before coming to NAS full time. I love my job and I couldn't be happier!  
**Education:** MLIS, BA

**Hometown:** Ely, Minnesota.

**Family:** Just me, my mom, and our cat.

**What are you looking forward to with the new job?** I am looking forward to spending time with the students, learning from them, and supporting their growth.

**Hobbies/interests outside of teaching:** I love watching movies and being outside!

## FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL!

Photos by Vivian LaMoore. See more photos at [Inaajimowin.com/galleries](http://Inaajimowin.com/galleries)



## AANJIBIMAADIZING OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION

Aanjibimaadizing celebrated the opening of their remodeled facility in District I with an open house. There were over 175 people in attendance. A youth art show was held, with art being displayed in the middle hallway. A youth fashion show was also held with youth from all districts modeling clothes they made, or that others in the youth groups had created.

Frybread and walking tacos were served out of the new commercial kitchen at the building. Aanjibimaadizing had multiple household items that were given away, along with clothing. Joe Nayquonabe provided the invocation at the event.

Aanjibimaadizing is a service department providing Tribal TANF, SNAP, SNAP E&T, Training, Employment services, Adult Basic Education (ABE) and GED, Support Services, Zakab Supportive Housing, Ojibwe culture, Ge-Niigaanizijig Youth programming, Ojibwe Rosetta Stone, and community service to Elders.



Photos by Michael LeGarde. See more photos at [Inaajimowin.com/galleries](http://Inaajimowin.com/galleries).



## MANOOMIN From page 1

engaging in many demonstrations annually to help those in the community who may want to reconnect with the path their relatives traveled. "With so many foods being chemically modified, we just want to share the abundance of healthy food we have right here in Mille Lacs," said Moilanen. The department has taken deer processing, maple sugar camp, wild ricing, and many other activities into local schools and communities to share with all who wish to learn, providing a wave of excitement across our local Native community.

This September's Manoomin Presentation was no different in sharing traditional and modern examples of processing wild rice. Participants were instructed in how to spot green rice from mature rice, as harvesting green rice is against state law, and instructed to allow the sun to air dry their harvest before processing. The next phase demonstrated was parching rice in a kettle over coals, gently mixing the rice to dehydrate and preserve the outer grain for weeks and months to come. "You have to keep that rice moving, never allowing it to cook too quickly or too hot, but an even and steady fire is the best way to do it," said John Benjamin while tending a batch of manoomin.

Up next, and the crowd favorite, is jigging the rice. Unlike modern thrashers that process hundreds of pounds an hour, traditional jigging was set up by digging a small hole in the ground, just larger than the size of a pair of feet nearly a foot deep, and covering the earth around the hole with a hide. The jigging begins with tying knee-high moccasins on and beginning a gentle, steady dance, carefully removing the husks from the grains of rice in a slow but effective process, until all the husks are removed from the finished grains of manoomin. Children often performed jigging due to their size, being heavy enough to remove the husks but not too heavy to break the grains.

Finally, the finished batch of rice is ready to winnow with a birch bark basket into the wind, tossing gently to not lose rice to the wind but high enough to allow the husks to float away with the breeze. This is the final step in separating finished rice. It is at this step that rice may be cooked, packaged, ground into rice flour, and enjoyed for many meals to come. "Watching the process come together every year is worth the work," Moilanen said. "We owe it to our children to share this knowledge and we hope to get more and more people on the water harvesting for years to come."

Preservation of future, of past, and of plenty. Anishinaabe history deserves preservation; our children deserve to know how we got here and where we can go. Wild rice brought us here — and our connection to it is as strong as any teaching engraved into the fabric of this culture. With this event, and so many others like it, the Mille Lacs Band DNR continues to share Indigenous wealth through passing of knowledge and the proverbial torch to new learners so they may carry this knowledge with them, wherever they choose to go.



Generation to generation, we help one another learn through life. From tying on moccasins to guiding each other across the finish line. A helping hand is always better when jigging rice.



Photos by Benji Sam.

### ABOVE:

"Mimigoshkamoog" — They jig on the rice.

Two young warriors enjoyed jigging with one another during the manoomin presentation. It is important that our tasks are divided between all hands to help get the job done well

### RIGHT:

"Gidasigewag" — They are parching wild rice.

John Benjamin and Todd Moilanen guide a young man to parch wild rice consistently, slowly, and steadily.

### BELOW:

"Nooshkaachigewag" — They are winnowing.





# SAMPLE SURVEY — DO NOT FILL OUT

# MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE TRIBAL MEMBER SURVEY

## SAMPLE SURVEY – DO NOT FILL OUT

### Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Tribal Member Survey

Please answer every question that you are able to. It is OK if you don't know, you can leave it blank.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please complete this survey form and return it to the Wilder Foundation Research Department in St. Paul, in the postage paid envelope. If you would prefer to complete the survey online, please go to XXXXX and use your tribal enrollment number as your PIN. **Completed surveys will be treated confidentially by Wilder and will not be handled by or shared with any Band employee, elected official or appointed official.**

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE:** Please DO NOT send any separate documentation at this time. We are only asking these questions for informational purposes; no enrollment status will be changed as the result of this survey.

The first questions are about you.

1a. Your tribal enrollment number: \_\_\_\_\_

Sharing your name and address is optional, but if you wish to receive an incentive for completing the survey, please enter your name and mailing address. Completed surveys will be mailed directly to Wilder

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

1b. Your gender:  1 Male  2 Female  3 Transgender/Two-Spirit

1c. Mille Lacs Band has record of you as an enrolled member. Do you know what blood quantum (fraction of MN Chippewa Tribe blood) the Tribe has on record for you?

1 Yes →  
 2 No (go to 2a)

1d. What is your exact blood quantum on record with MN Chippewa Tribe? Enter your response as a fraction (for example: 1/1 (full-blood), 1/2, 1/4, 23/64, 53/128). \_\_\_\_\_

2a. Outside of MN Chippewa Tribe, do you have any other Chippewa/Ojibwe blood (such as Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, Red Cliff, Bad River, etc.)?

1 Yes →

2b. What other Chippewa/Ojibwe tribe(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

C. What is this child's MN Chippewa Tribe blood quantum? \_\_\_\_\_

D. Does this child have any blood from any non-MCT Chippewa/Ojibwe tribes?  1 Yes (GO TO E)  2 No (GO TO F)

E. What is this child's blood quantum for this other Chippewa/Ojibwe tribe? \_\_\_\_\_

F. Does this child have any blood from any non-Chippewa/Ojibwe federally recognized tribes or Canadian First Nations?  1 Yes (GO TO G)  2 No (GO TO next child)

G. What is this child's blood quantum for this other non-Chippewa/Ojibwe tribe? \_\_\_\_\_

#### CHILD #2

Date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

Gender:  1 Male  2 Female  3 Transgender/Two-Spirit

A. Is this child an enrolled member of MN Chippewa Tribe?  1 Yes (GO TO B)  2 No (GO TO C)

B. (If enrolled in MCT) What is this child's tribal enrollment number? \_\_\_\_\_

C. What is this child's MN Chippewa Tribe blood quantum? \_\_\_\_\_

D. Does this child have any blood from any non-MCT Chippewa/Ojibwe tribes?  1 Yes (GO TO E)  2 No (GO TO F)

E. What is this child's blood quantum for this other Chippewa/Ojibwe tribe? \_\_\_\_\_

F. Does this child have any blood from any non-Chippewa/Ojibwe federally recognized tribes or Canadian First Nations?  1 Yes (GO TO G)  2 No (GO TO next child)

G. What is this child's blood quantum for this other non-Chippewa/Ojibwe tribe? \_\_\_\_\_

#### CHILD #3

Date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

Gender:  1 Male  2 Female  3 Transgender/Two-Spirit

A. Is this child an enrolled member of MN Chippewa Tribe?  1 Yes (GO TO B)  2 No (GO TO C)

B. (If enrolled in MCT) What is this child's tribal enrollment number? \_\_\_\_\_

C. What is this child's MN Chippewa Tribe blood quantum? \_\_\_\_\_

2 No (go to 3a)

2c. What is your blood quantum for this tribe/these tribe(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

3a. Outside of Chippewa/Ojibwe blood, do you have any blood from other federally recognized tribes (such as Dakota, Cherokee, Cheyenne, etc.) or Canadian First Nations?

1 Yes →  
 2 No (go to 4)

3b. What other federally recognized tribes or Canadian First Nations? \_\_\_\_\_

3c. What is your blood quantum for this tribe/these tribe(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

4a. Please check the box next to ONE of the following statements that you most agree with:

- If changes to enrollment are going to be proposed and voted on, I believe that the voting-aged members of all 40,000 enrolled Members of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe should decide by referendum vote what (if any) changes should be made to enrollment requirements. The Mille Lacs Band should have to follow whatever the majority of the 40,000 MCT members vote for.
- If changes to enrollment are going to be proposed and voted on, I believe that the voting-aged members of the 4900 enrolled Mille Lacs Band Members are the **only** people who should be able to vote on enrollment changes for the Mille Lacs Band. The membership of each of the six Bands should be authorized to determine their own Band membership requirements.

4b. Please provide your feedback about MN Chippewa Tribe's and the Mille Lacs Band's current enrollment eligibility criteria, which is 1/4 (one-quarter) blood quantum, and any other comments about tribal enrollment and enrollment criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Next, we have some questions about your biological children. This information will help the Mille Lacs Band understand what effect changing tribal enrollment criteria could have on the Tribe's total population size.

**Please provide information for each of your biological children. If you do not have any biological children, you are done with the survey.**

#### CHILD #1

Date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

Gender:  1 Male  2 Female  3 Transgender/Two-Spirit

A. Is this child an enrolled member of MN Chippewa Tribe?  1 Yes (GO TO B)  2 No (GO TO C)

B. (If enrolled in MCT) What is this child's tribal enrollment number? \_\_\_\_\_

D. Does this child have any blood from any non-MCT Chippewa/Ojibwe tribes?  1 Yes (GO TO E)  2 No (GO TO F)

E. What is this child's blood quantum for this other Chippewa/Ojibwe tribe? \_\_\_\_\_

F. Does this child have any blood from any non-Chippewa/Ojibwe federally recognized tribes or Canadian First Nations?  1 Yes (GO TO G)  2 No (GO TO next child)

G. What is this child's blood quantum for this other non-Chippewa/Ojibwe tribe? \_\_\_\_\_

#### CHILD #4

Date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

Gender:  1 Male  2 Female  3 Transgender/Two-Spirit

A. Is this child an enrolled member of MN Chippewa Tribe?  1 Yes (GO TO B)  2 No (GO TO C)

B. (If enrolled in MCT) What is this child's tribal enrollment number? \_\_\_\_\_

C. What is this child's MN Chippewa Tribe blood quantum? \_\_\_\_\_

D. Does this child have any blood from any non-MCT Chippewa/Ojibwe tribes?  1 Yes (GO TO E)  2 No (GO TO F)

E. What is this child's blood quantum for this other Chippewa/Ojibwe tribe? \_\_\_\_\_

F. Does this child have any blood from any non-Chippewa/Ojibwe federally recognized tribes or Canadian First Nations?  1 Yes (GO TO G)  2 No (GO TO next child)

G. What is this child's blood quantum for this other non-Chippewa/Ojibwe tribe? \_\_\_\_\_



# AROUND THE RESERVATION OUR ANIMALS, OUR RELATIVES, OURSELVES



## Taking care of our Rez Dogs (and cats)

By Li Boyd, Director of Anishinaabe and Awesiinyag

Now, we all know what a Rez Dog is. As a person working in rescue, the most common question I encounter is, "What kind of dog is that?" My answer is always the same. "It's a Rez Dog! Best breed in the world!" Purebred and designer dogs may have captured the hearts of most of the world, but Rez Dogs are still the best. They're genetically diverse, inherently tough, infinitely lovable, and some of the most resilient animals in the world. In that way, they're survivors, much like us.

As Native people, we pride ourselves on our strength and resilience. And we should. Survivance, a term used by Anishinaabe author and scholar Gerald Vizenor, focuses on our survival not as a reaction to our victimhood but as a proactive way to redefine our living existence. Things like historical and intergenerational trauma, while real and impactful, can become a hindrance when we let those traumas become our identity, or worse yet, our excuse. And the only way to combat that is to embrace the idea of living forward, which is to say, by doing something about it.

You might think it's a stretch to apply this to Rez Dogs, but I don't think it is. The other thing we Natives pride ourselves on, aside from our survivance, is that we see and know the world as being bigger than ourselves. These things are built right into our language around the concept of animacy; whether a thing is a living thing or not. Human beings, Anishinaabe, the Original People, are among the obvious choices for something that's alive, as are animals. But other things are living too, like stones and the water that falls from the sky. The most important thing to remember about all these living things is that they all have a spirit, manidoo, which must be recognized and respected. In fact, in our language, others come first, before ourselves, and this applies to all living things. Our culture is a giving one.

Colonization, our struggles for survival, and even the loss of our language have made that harder to see than ever. We struggle to provide for ourselves, our children, our Elders, and our extended families. We have learned not to trust one another, we have learned to keep our resources close and protected, and we've been swept up in the dominant paradigm that says we should always look out for Number One. Ourselves.

But are we really doing that, are we really looking out for ourselves, if we're not taking care of each other?

My aunt told me a story once. She said, a long time ago, the United States Government rounded up a bunch of Indians and told them they had to move. Their home wasn't theirs anymore. The Indians packed up whatever they were allowed to and, under guard by the government soldiers, they began their long walk away from home. When they walked, their dogs walked with them. The people and the animooosh had been partners for as long as could be remembered. The dogs were hunters, protectors, companions, and ultimately part of the community. On the long walk, the people came to a great river, which the soldiers said they had to cross. It was a hard crossing, but the soldiers rushed the people across with only what they could carry. Ever loyal, the dogs tried to follow the people, but the deep water and fast currents swept the dogs downstream. The people were not allowed to go back and help, and all they could do was cry and cry. Just like that, another piece of who we were was cut away.

In a brilliant line of poetry, 23rd United States Poet Laureate Joy Harjo (Muscogee Creek) said, "We had nothing to lose and lost it anyway."

The thing is, our dogs, our beautiful, brave Rez Dogs, are not nothing. They are a part of us, and we must look out for them, the way it was before and the way it should be. We can't continue to lose parts of ourselves. And honestly, once you know the unconditional, joyous love of a dog, you will know the abundance of the gift Creator gave us in them.

So. Survivance, taking care of each other, poetry, dogs. This is where it all comes together. Sometimes it's simple things that are the real radical acts of revolution. For my part, I founded an organization called Anishinaabe and Awesiinyag. The People and the Animals. For now, it's just me. It's a small operation with limited resources. I'm still in the process of getting federal recognition as a non-profit organization. But I am here, and I will always do all I can to help others and their pets. And I'm not the only one.

Dean Reynolds, one of the busiest men on the Reservation, is a coordinator at Emergency Services, supervising the food distribution warehouse and food shelf by the powwow grounds in District I. Dean is on-call 24/7 with many demands on his time, but he doesn't let that stop him from doing a little bit more to help community members and their pets. Dean has been working with outside donors and myself to keep the food

shelf stocked with pet food and supplies for those in need. Check in with Emergency Services for more information.

Similarly, Monte Fronk, who works in Emergency Management for the Band, has been coordinating free Pet Wellness Clinics in each Reservation district for years. Monte is a busy guy. Emergency Management is no cushy job, and deals with everything from natural disasters to the very real viral outbreak we've all been navigating for the past few years. Still, Monte makes sure the wellness clinics are accessible to all Band M]members, including the ones who live in the Urban Area. Please see below for information on upcoming clinic dates and locations.

So you see, we are here, helping each other and our animal relatives. We are redefining what a Rez Dog is and therefore who we are. We don't need to let them be grungy, skinny, sickly, mean survivors. We can lift them, and ourselves, by reaching out and providing care. If you have concerns about stray, injured, abandoned, or dangerous animals, please call Mille Lacs Band Tribal Police at 320-532-3430. They too are part of our community and learning better ways to take care of us and our animals. It's amazing what we can do together when we care, when we try, and when we give.

### UPCOMING FREE PET CLINICS

**Urban** at the All Nations Church

Friday, October 20 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Call 612-872-1424 to schedule for surgeries. Surgery space is limited. No appointment necessary for wellness exams/vaccinations.

**District I** at the Aquatics and Fitness Center

Saturday, November 11 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, November 12 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Call 320-532-7733 to schedule for surgeries. Surgery space is limited. No appointment necessary for wellness exams/vaccinations.

Pet clinics are offered through SIRVS (University of Minnesota Student Initiative for Reservation Veterinary Services), Surgery/Wellness; Secondhand Hounds, Vaccinations/Wellness. Surgeries include all vaccinations. Wellness Exams include vaccinations, flea and tick preventative, treatments for common ailments, deworming, and exam for any potential health issues.

# FALL TRIBAL HARVEST GUIDELINES REMINDER & UPDATE

By Mashkode-bizikigahbaw, Benji Sam

The Mille Lacs Band Department of Natural Resources held the fall hunting harvest meeting in early September to review new changes and give an update on current best practices to help keep hunters safe this fall. Like most hunting seasons, it is first and foremost important to review and have a strong basis of knowledge around hunting regulations, safety guidelines, and best practices while searching for that next meal. The DNR wants to remind all hunters to wear proper clothing to stay warm, stay dry, and to stay safe when chasing whitetails this fall.

Per Minnesota hunting regulations, when participating in hunting with rifles, hunters are required to wear blaze orange or pink headwear and outerwear that covers at least 50 percent of the body. The only exception to this rule is bowhunting within a bow-only zone, but the MLB DNR still recommends wearing blaze coloration for your safety and others around you. Hunters participating from ground blinds are also now required to place at least one 12-inch-by-12-inch square of blaze orange visible to approaching hunters — this includes all camouflage hunting blinds.

As a general reminder, shooting hours are 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset. Each of these times can be found with a simple Google search or in the back of the Minnesota State Hunting Regulations book for each day through the hunting season. The MLB DNR also wants to re-

mind all shooters to be aware of what you are aiming at and what is beyond your target. Safety is always a priority when traveling through the woods, and even more caution should be had while handling loaded weapons.

The MLB DNR also wants to remind hunters to please abide by posted signage on multiple Band properties to travel and avoid driving ATV/UTVs near buildings on local properties, and to please not drive around or push through locked gates. Many properties have seen difficulty with significant erosion and trail damages due to repetitive ATV usage on landscapes, and the DNR wants to remind harvesters to be stewards of the land. The better shape trails stay in makes it easier and more efficient for the DNR workers to maintain properties so that everyone can use them to practice their treaty rights safely.

In continuation of recent studies looking into chronic wasting disease (CWD) and transmittance of this condition across the deer herd, the MLB DNR will once again be accepting deer heads to study. If you are bringing in deer skulls for necropsy, the DNR office is requesting that harvesters leave at least four inches of the neck musculature intact to study the lymph nodes within the neck tissue. A gentle reminder to any Minnesota-based harvesters while hunting in Wisconsin territories: state regulations allow absolutely no transport of the entire spinal column — this includes deer heads and the entire spine. When bringing harvests home from Wisconsin, Minnesota hunters are required



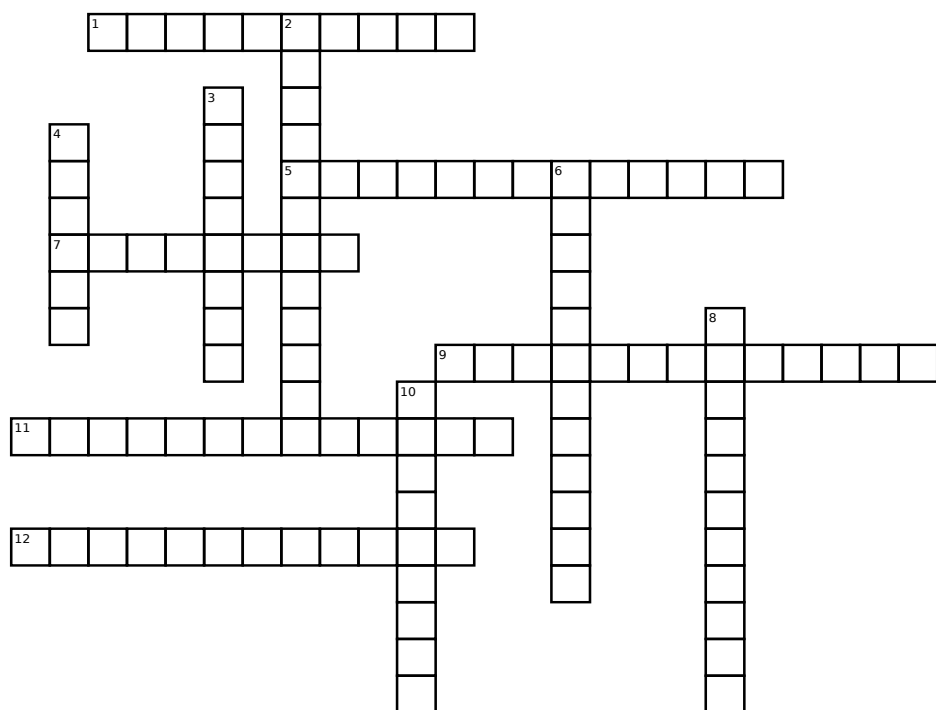
by law to quarter and remove all spinal column matter from the carcass to legally transport across state lines. Failure to abide by this regulation may result in fines and potential confiscation of equipment per Minnesota/Wisconsin regulations.

Small game, waterfowl, and turkey hunters are asked to review regulations and harvest daily bag limits and tag requirements on GLIFWC's website as well as licensing requirements from NAGFA. Tribal hunters also require harvest permits issued by your respective district licensing agent: District I: Leroy Day, 320-532-7896; District II: Steven Aubid, 218-786-5316/320-362-4123; District III: Vanessa Gibbs, 320-384-6240 ext 3230.



# AAZHAWAAKWASING BINAAKWE-GIIZIS 2023

By Nazhike, Mille Lacs Band Member



**Down:**

- 2. He/she is listened to.
- 3. Listen to him/her.
- 4. See him/her!
- 6. I see it.
- 8. You are listening to it.
- 10. See it!

**Across:**

- 1. You see him/her..
- 5. I am listening to him/her..
- 7. Listen to it.
- 9. It is seen.
- 11. S/he is seen.
- 12. It is listened to.

## ATTENTION = EXPERIENCE

By Nazhike, Mille Lacs Band Member

As Anishinaabe, we go through life with a conscious mind to decide that of which you pay attention to. There is also that of the subconscious that gives initial direction on perception of experiences. Is this the spiritual part? Where we place our attention is the experience that our Jichaag (spirit) is experiencing. We all carry a Shinaabe spirit within. It is that of our name. If you're named after the sky, it is the spirit of the sky. If you're named after an animal, it is the spirit of that animal. Regardless, our spirit is having the physical experience that we consciously decide to give it. If we decide to avoid our customs and traditions, we are choosing to not feed our spirits. Imagine if you're thirsty but unable to drink water. Our spirits are longing to be taken care of. Being bound by the physical boundaries of this world and reliant on us to be the guide of this world, our Jichaag is only able to have the experience that we provide.

As we go around this world, we are given many choices on where to spend our time. We are given many opportunities to be a part of many different events and activities. It's all part of finding our purpose and executing that which we are supposed to do here in this world. We all have a spirit, we all have a purpose. That purpose is guided by the spirit of who we are named after and that spirit is seeking something that we have been chosen to accomplish. We may have many responsibilities in this life, and they may all align to a purpose of life. A life's mission to contribute to the larger greater good of the spiritual energy cycle that the Anishinaabe people rely on. We are still living off of the cycle of energy that was started in the time of Wenabozho. Are we going to only consume this energy, or are we going to provide for the future?

What we accomplish is up to us utilizing that guidance that our spirits provide for us. It is our choice to hear, to listen and execute.

Our spirits seek nourishment. In order to remain healthy, our spirits need that nourishment — like the mind needs knowledge and the heart needs love. We have been given many things as Anishinaabe in order to nourish our spirits. A fully nourished spir-



it will open our frequencies to be guided to the life force that will bring us to that of which a handsome man calls "Spiritual Bliss." We need to put our phones down when the Elders are sending out our asemaa. Our spirit is being nourished during a spiritual event such as sending our tobacco to the spirits. We would also be setting a good example to the younger generation watching us. When the Elders are passing on critical knowledge, we need to make the conscious effort to listen. It may all be part of the test or the experience that is going to grant us nourishment for our spirits and guidance to our purpose in life.

Miigwech.

## GIDINWEWINAAN — OUR WAY OF SOUND

By Nazhike, Mille Lacs Band Member

Ojibwe Language has multiple ways to use words. Different components can change the word to be what you want to say. Remember that an ojibwe word is an actual sentence. Phrases like "I see it" and "she sees you" and "it is seen" can use the same root word in ojibwe with different components added in to express what you are trying to convey to whom you speak to. Let's try!

**Waabam** = See him/her!

(Wah bum)

**Waabandan** = See it!

(Wah bun dun)

**Giwaabamaa** = You see him/her.

(Gih wah bum mah)

**Niwaabandaan** = I see it.

(Nih wah bun dahn)

**Waabanjigaade** = It is seen.

(Wah bun jig gah day)

**Waabanjigaazo** = He/she is seen.

(Wah bun jig gah zo)

**Bizindaw** = Listen to him/her.

(Bih zin dow)

**Bizindan** = Listen to it.

(Bih zin dun)

**Nimbizindawaa** = I am listening to him/her.

(Nim biz zin dow wah)

**Gibizindaan** = You are listening to it.

(Gih biz zin dahn)

**Bizindaagwad** = It is listened to.

(Bih zin dah gwud)

**Bizindaagozi** = He/she is listened to.

(Bih zin dah go zih)

*You can hear many words and sentences pronounced by native speakers at ojibwe.lib.umn.edu.*



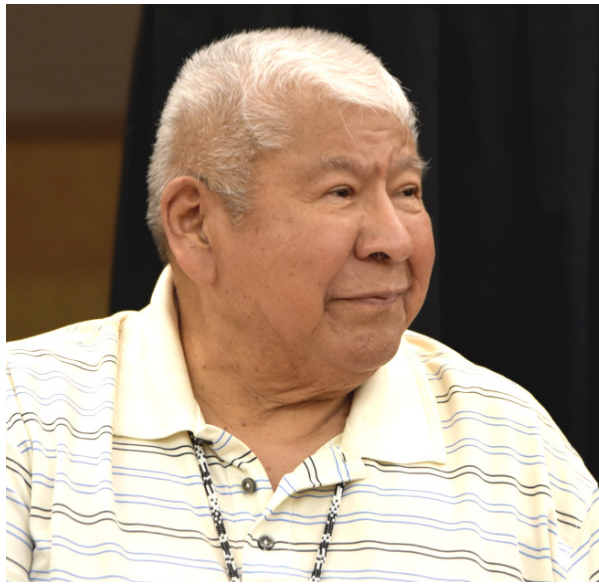


# RITA: PART TWO

GAA-TIBAAJIMOD (told by) JOE NAYQUONABE SR.,  
WAABISHKIBINES  
GAA-TIBAAJIMOTAWAAJIN (transcribed by)  
JAMES CLARK, OZAAWAANAKWAD

One day the tribal chairman called me and told me about a law that passed known as public law 93-638 or The 1975 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, where tribes could develop a health plan. He told me that he would hire me to develop this without any formal education. I was surprised that he had confidence in me to do it. Most of my job during that was gathering the information needed, and I took a leave from the V.A. to participate in this. I was driving back and forth while Rita was still working at the nursing home. The most important goal of the plan we developed was that there was going to be a clinic that would be built on the Reservation, rather than going to Onamia or other places outside the Reservation. Once that happened, I was offered the job of clinic director. Upon being hired, Indian Health Service (IHS) and I were on the phone every day with questions I had in order to run the clinic. Report writing and running the clinic was busy with the both good and bad reports being sent to IHS. I bought a trailer and moved it right on the Rez since there was no housing for me. Since I was here more often, I was going to the dances more often. I belonged on several drums here, so my attendance to them increased.

Rita eventually came to work at the clinic with me and we officially moved here full-time. While we were living in St. Cloud, we had our first born, and then when we moved back to the Rez we had our second born. By then I was getting tired of drinking, and so I began to ask, "How can I stop drinking?" and the Elders had told me, "You're going to the dances, you're doing the right thing." With that in 1980 on April 15, I quit all of



my addictions cold turkey, and for two solid years I was a mess and angry all the time.

Things were not great. I went to those same Elders and said, "I thought after I sobered up that things would get better?" He said, "You know, Joe, I see that you're coming to the dances, but I don't think you know why you're doing them and the way we do."

I had asked another Elder in East Lake who said, "It's a good thing to see you come back to the dances, but now that you're here, you need to learn why we're doing these things."

The exact same thing but two different Elders. After that, I made it my mission to learn, and my life from then started to get better.

During this whole time, Rita was being a fantastic mother, home caretaker, and my biggest supporter. She was always in my corner and always said how good the dances were for me and my life. So, every weekend, she and I started going to all the dances together. She pushed me even to go to college, so I went into St. Cloud and started towards a Chemical Dependency Certificate program in 1988. After a year and a half, I

NOTES FROM JOE:

Aaniin Anishinaabedog! Waabishkibines omaa. (Hello fellow Anishinaabe!) Joe Sr. here. With the times we live in, I must tell you about the article I have submitted. This article is full of my words, observations, and experiences that I have encountered throughout my life, and it is time to have these subjects written down. Understand not everything needs to be written, but various teachings cannot be lost.

That being said, as Anishinaabe, we all experience life differently. This disclaimer is needed for all intents and purposes as the goal of this article is: to better equip our people who'd like to learn, and for topics people may not have the ability to ask an Elder about. If these teachings are not as you learned them, that is okay. It is not our way to blame and criticize but to teach and show compassion.

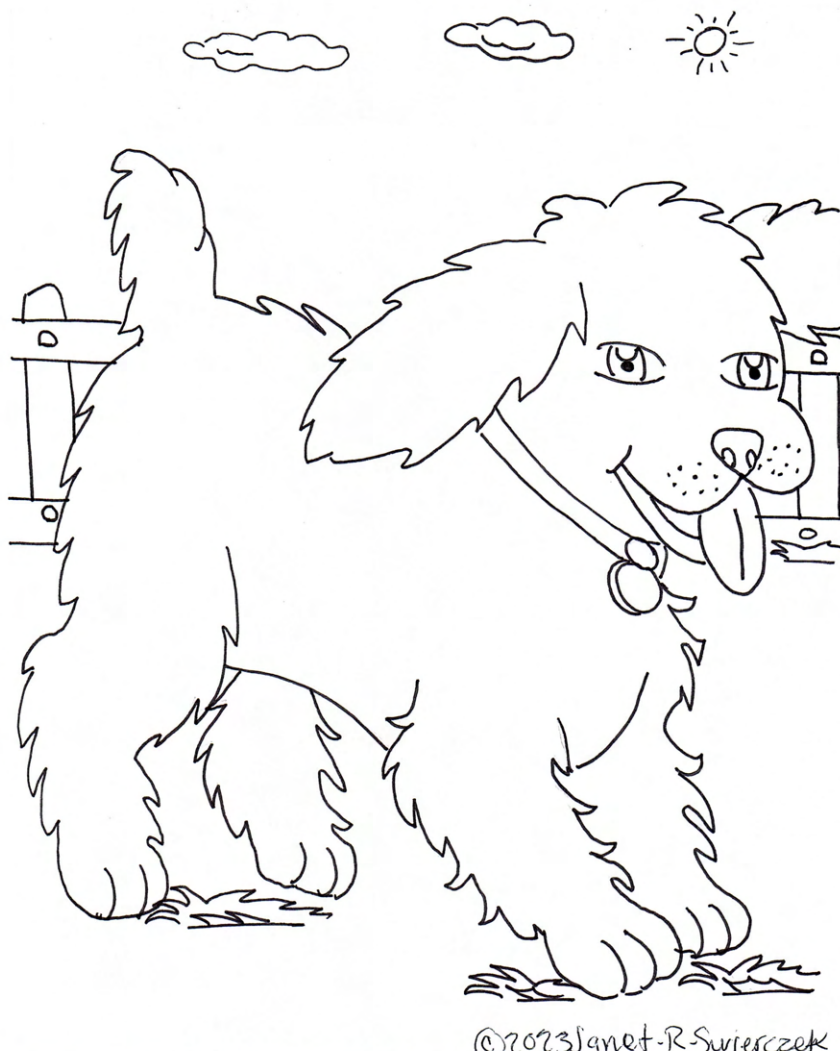
Any comments, questions, or further discussion, please feel free to reach out to me and I'd be happy to have a conversation. Miigwech.

noticed that in order to be licensed by the state, you have to have a degree. In talking with my advisor, he said, "Let's look at your core classes. You're really close to a psychology degree." So I finished up my core classes in C.D., then my electives, and finished with a degree. For the whole time, I am leaving the Rez at 6 a.m. to go to school. After school, I am going to work at the V.A. till 8 p.m., and who was taking care of everything? Rita, she and the family were understanding what and why I was doing that. She was not only financially supporting the house but the housework, too, while I was working and going to school. I was hardly even home during that time until I graduated in 1992 and came back and worked in C.D. All thanks to her encouragement. There is no way I could've gotten a degree without her. They all accepted her at the dance hall and in the community. During the dances, she'd help cook and clean while still understanding her roots, but celebrating and encouraging our culture and ways.

One memory I think of often is if we were all home back years ago, we'd always eat together as a family. Something the kids and I remember because that was important to her so we made sure it was done. Her family finally accepted me as a working, educated, family-loving Native. Without everything that she did for me, I would've been buried in the ground a long time ago. I truly am blessed that she never stopped pushing me and I credit my health condition to that I can still walk, drive, and live life to the fullest. So, with that, August 4 of this year would've been our 50th wedding anniversary. So how she put up with this crazy guy for 45 years, beats me! That's how you know that those vows we spoke to each other decades ago were true. I was very lucky to find my soulmate who changed my life to the better, I thank her every day. Miigwech, mii iw.

## KIDS COLORING CORNER ANIMOSH = DOG

By Janet Swierczek, Mille Lacs Band Elder





# AROUND THE RESERVATION DISTRICT I END OF SUMMER CELEBRATION

District I Representative Virgil Wind's office sponsored an end of summer celebration at the District I Aquatics and Fitness Center on Sunday, September 17. Representative Wind estimated roughly 350 people attended the carnival themed event enjoying inflatables, a karaoke contest, and food prepared by Dawn Day. "It was a wonderful day of community coming together," Representative Wind said. "Thank you to all of the band departments that contributed, to all of the volunteers, and all of the community members for coming out and celebrating."



## RESOURCES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPFUL RESOURCES

### Mille Lacs Band Health and Human Services Victim Services

Kristen Allord, Victim Service Director Office: 320-532-7793  
Cell: 320-630-2677  
Community Advocates: 320-362-4682, 320-362-0642, and 320-630-3811  
24/7 Crisis Line 1-866-867-4006  
Direct Services Coordinator Cell: 320-630-2691 or 320-336-0214  
Mental health diagnostic assessments and counseling are provided to individuals and families. Some of the programming and counseling services include: Batterers' Intervention, Individual Therapy for adults, Individual Therapy for children and adolescents, Trauma Informed Therapy, Play Therapy, and Mental Health Case Management. To make an appointment, please contact 320-532-4163.

### National Domestic Assault Hotline

Free and confidential service 24/7  
Call 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)  
Text "START" to 88788. Message and data rates may apply.  
Text STOP to opt out.

### Pearl Crisis Center, Milaca, Minnesota

If you need immediate assistance, please call 1-800-933-6914 and press 8 to speak to the on-call advocate.  
If you are a victim/survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault and need immediate help for safety issues, please call 1-800-933-6914 to speak to an advocate or email [pearlcrisis-center@gmail.com](mailto:pearlcrisis-center@gmail.com) for help.

Pearl Crisis Center is declared a safe zone. Pearl Crisis Center does NOT discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, and gender identity in the delivery of our services. Ignorance, bigotry, and harassment will not be tolerated.



## ASK AUNTIE

Hi Auntie,

This is a hard question to ask you. I am a junior in high school and my friendships are important. I enjoy being around my family and friends, but lately I noticed my friend treating his girlfriend differently. I noticed him looking at her phone and asking her who she was talking to, later he grabbed her phone and started looking at it and she looked at me sad like holding back tears. I felt sorry for her and I didn't know what to do in that situation. Our other friends laughed at them and teased them. A week later my friend came to me and told me her boyfriend grabbed her arm really hard and left a bruise; she was crying and she said he told her she can't talk to any guy friends anymore. She showed me the messages from him telling her she can't talk to me anymore and he was also calling her names and saying hurtful things to her. He said if she left him he would hurt himself. I wanted to tell someone, but she asked me not to tell anyone. What do I do Auntie? I care about them both. I don't want my friend to hurt himself or someone else, especially my other friend. I want to take care of my friends.

Miigwech (Thank you),

Bami'iwe

**Aaniin Nindoozhim,**

Nephew, you are a very caring friend. You're right. This is a very hard question and hard to answer. I am proud of you for asking this question and I am proud of you for caring about your friends and valuing friendship. It's okay to care and it's okay to ask questions. What you told me is not okay and it's not okay that it was laughed about. That is a toxic situation to be in. I understand that you didn't know what to do in that situation, but I think you know that it wasn't healthy.

This is very serious and it sounds like both of your friends need some guidance and help. I know you want to honor your friend and keep their trust and not tell anyone; however your friend needs help from her parents, or an Elder, or another trusted adult. Also, your other friend saying he would hurt himself is serious and he needs help too. Your friends may be angry with you, but it is the right thing to tell someone. Maybe you can talk to your female friend about going with her to talk to someone she trusts. If that doesn't work, she can call this number and she can be anonymous: 24/7 Crisis Line 1-866-867-4006. There are many resources out there. They are listed on this page.

I also want you to take care of yourself and talk to someone. Witnessing this can affect you, too. Please reach out to someone.

By asking this hard question you have opened a dialogue to help educate the community about domestic violence and the need for strengthening prevention efforts. We need to start talking about this as a community so our children know what signs of abuse are, and we all need to come together to create a safe space for our youth to come to us.

Keep caring,

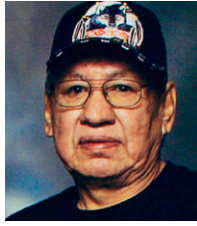
Auntie



# MEKWENIMINJIG

## THE ONES WHO ARE REMEMBERED

### GIWEGWANEB, CHARLES SHINGOBE SR.



Giiwegwaneb, Charles Shingobe Sr., age 70 of Onamia, Minnesota, passed away on September 5, 2023. Visitation was held at 7 p.m. on Saturday, September 9, 2023, at the District I Community Center on the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Reservation. A Funeral Ceremony was held at 10 a.m. on Sunday, September 10, 2023, at the District I Community Center on the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Reservation, with Nazhike officiating. Interment was in the Little Flower Cemetery. Arrangements are with the Shelley Funeral Chapel of Onamia.

Giiwegwaneb, Charles was born on June 12, 1953, to Frank and Susan (Benjamin) Shingobe. He enjoyed playing his guitar, going to the casino, pow wows, and dancing. Charles liked to spend his time with his kids, grandkids, and riding his motorcycle.

Charles is survived by his son, Charles Shingobe Jr.; daughter, Dawn Shingobe; Sister, Kathy Hill; brother, Kenneth Shingobe; and his many loving grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Frank and Susan (Benjamin) Shingobe; brothers, Johnny Shingobe, Fredrick Shingobe, Franklin Shingobe; sisters, Melanie Sam and Geraldine Kegg.

### MIGIZI CLAN, MAKOONS, OLE NICKABOINE JR.



Migizi Clan, Makoons, Ole Nickaboine Jr., age 57, passed away on September 5, 2023. Visitation was held at 7 p.m. on Friday, September 8, 2023, at the District I Community Center on the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Reservation. A Funeral Ceremony was held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, September 6, 2023, at the District I Community Center on the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Reservation with Ombishkebinas officiating. Interment was at the Indian Point Burial Grounds. Arrangements are with the Shelley Funeral Chapel of Onamia.

Makoons, Ole Nickaboine Jr., was born on August 17, 1966, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He enjoyed sending TikTok videos, listening to music, going on car rides, and watching movies. Ole liked to spend his time with his family, especially his grandchildren. He will be remembered for his jokes and sense of humor.

Ole is survived by his children, Jolynn Jones, Audrey Jones, Ashley Nickaboine, Lindsey Mitchell, Tyson Nickaboine, Nathan Nickaboine, Jeremy Nickaboine; sisters, Michelle Saice, Angela Kjornes, Maureen Nickaboine, Jennifer Mitchell, Judy Nickaboine; brothers, Joseph Nickaboine, Gerald Nickaboine; grandchildren, Daniel, Ziizibaakwad, Kingston, Ava, Tyler, Selena, Katelyn, Destiny, Danta, Raeann, Jarvis, Isiah, Addyson, Ceaira, Chasity, Chance, Dwayne Jr., Lillian, George, Gabriel, Justice, DanniLynn, Daniel Jr., Shuria, Annabell; We'ehs, Robert, Gretchen, Jarvis, and Priscilla.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Ole Nickaboine, Sr. and Lita (Benjamin) Nickaboine; brothers, Randy Nickaboine, Robert Nickaboine, Andy Nickaboine; sisters, Pam Nickaboine, Denise Nickaboine; son, Christopher Nickaboine Sr.; grandchildren, Robert Brown, Darryl Mitchell, Abel Nickaboine, and Christopher Nickaboine Jr.

### OJIBIIKWE, ESTHER MARIE PASCHKE



Esther Marie Paschke, Ojibiikwe (Lady of the Head Waters), 87-year-old resident of Onamia, Minnesota, passed away on Thursday, September 7, 2023, at Mille Lacs Health System in Onamia. Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at St. Therese Little Flower Mission Church in Vineland, Minnesota with Father Jerry Schik officiating. Burial will take place in the St. Therese Parish Cemetery immediately following mass. A visitation will be held from 1-2 p.m. at the church. Funeral arrangements are with Shelley Funeral Chapel of Onamia.

Esther was born on March 29, 1936, at Onigum Bay in Walker, Minnesota, to the late Paul Graves and Rose (Shingobe) Barstow. Esther grew up with her six siblings and attended boarding school as a young girl. Esther had to grow up quickly and be a mother figure to her younger siblings. Esther was united in marriage to the love of her life, Arvid James Paschke Sr., on September 14, 1968, in East Grand Forks, where they raised a family of 10 children together. They later moved to the Mille Lacs Reservation in Onamia, where Esther continued to enjoy being a homemaker. Esther enjoyed gardening and canning with her husband Arvid, playing Bingo with her mom, family bonfires, watching Elvis movies, cooking for her friends and family, the love and entertainment provided by her pet cats, and of course, gambling at the casino. Esther was known for always having sweet treats on hand to share with unexpected company. Esther had a great and special love for her grandchildren. She will be remembered for her contagious smile and laughter, her generous heart and her strength, her great sense of humor, and her love for her family.

Esther is survived by her sons, Greg Pawlitchek, Duane Pawlitchek, Kevin (Pa) Pawlitchek, Herbert (Gina) Pawlitchek, LeRoy Pawlitchek, Phillip Pawlitchek, and Arvid (Tracy) Paschke Jr.; daughter, Cynthia (Eric) Davis; brother Michael Wade; sister, Irene (Wade) Benjamin; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren she held close to her heart. Esther was preceded in death by her loving husband of 48 years, Arvid James Paschke Sr.; both of her parents; her brothers, Dennis, Kenny, and Lawrence; her sister, Linda; and her sons, Elvis and Wallace Storbakken.

### BINESIIKWE, RAMONA APPLGATE



Binesiiikwe, Ramona Applegate, age 80, passed away on September 12, 2023. A visitation was held at 8 p.m. on Friday, September 15, 2023, at the District I Community Center on the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Reservation. A funeral ceremony was held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, September 16, 2023, at the District I Community Center on the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Reservation with Baabiitaw officiating. Interment is in the Shingobe Burial Grounds. Arrangements are with the Shelley Funeral Chapel of Onamia.

Binesiiikwe, Ramona was born on March 3, 1943, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Josephine (Shingobe) and Alvin Hawes. As a child, she was very close with her grandmother, Mary Davis, who taught and showed her cultural customs. She enjoyed talking about her childhood growing up in the Onamia area. Ramona met her lifelong partner, Allen Applegate, at Onamia Days, and the couple moved to Princeton, Minnesota, where they raised a family of five children. Ramona worked for Control Data for 18 years, where she assembled complex circuitry under microscopes and received the highest award for technical improvements to their products.

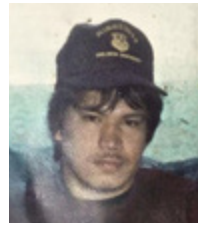
When Grand Casino Mille Lacs opened, she worked there as a video technician. In her later career, she served as an admin to the general manager of Grand Casino Hinckley. After retirement, she served as Chief Justice for the Mille Lacs Band.

Ramona loved art, especially painting, coloring, and drawing. Throughout her life, she explored all types of art mediums, such as stained glass, quilting, beading, and other Native crafts. Ramona had a green thumb and liked tending to her vegetable and flower gardens. She loved animals, especially dogs, and she also had a cockatoo, several fish, and a couple of cats. She was a good friend to many people and treated them like family. Her character is one that is very honest, direct, accountable, and planned out. She always enjoyed recalling and reminiscing over the funny things that happened throughout her life. She loved hunting and fishing and taught her kids the same passion.

Ramona is survived by her children, Jacqueline, Jerry, Linda, and Kelly; grandchildren, Mellisa, Kris, Sara Mae, Alicia, Angela, Kerry, Dillon, Randy, Jeff, and Allen.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Josephine (Shingobe) and Alvin Hawes; husband, Allen; son, Timothy.

### NIGANNI BINES, CORDELL ARLEN BENJAMIN SR.



Niganni Bines, Cordell Arlen Benjamin Sr. of Aazhomog, peacefully journeyed to the spirit world on September 21, 2023.

Cordell, better known as Cory, was born to Bernard and Marian Benjamin, on September 6, 1965, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Cory is best known for regularly showing off as a pool shark, his ability to joke about and get people to laugh at anything, and his very distinct voice and way of talking that nobody could impersonate.

Cory is survived by his two children, Cory Jr. and Kassie; his grandchildren, Haizlie and Aliza; his sister Bernie; and many nieces and nephews.

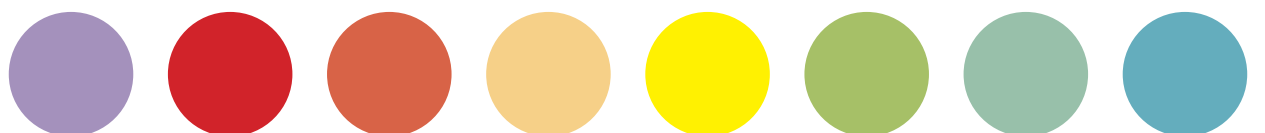
He is preceded in death by his parents, Bernard and Marian, his sister Jennifer, and his brother Harley.

Dad, you will always be the best dad and uncle ever. You gave us so many memories and stories we will carry and cherish, laugh, and cry about forever. While it is one of the most painful things to do, we have to accept that our time with you is paused for now. And that you are returning home with our family that you've missed so much.

We love you and will always hold you close in our hearts. Giizhawaenamigoo, gigawaabamigoo miinawaa, Niigaaanii-bines.

Services were held at 10 a.m. on Monday, September 25, 2023, at Aazhoomog Community Center with Lee "Obizaan" Staples officiating. Visitation began on Sunday, September 24, at dusk also at the center. Burial is at Stevens Lake Cemetery.

MEKWENIMINJIG IS A FREE SERVICE FOR ALL BAND MEMBERS AND OTHER TRIBAL MEMBERS.



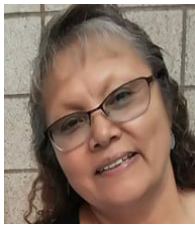


# MEKWENIMINJIG

## THE ONES WHO ARE REMEMBERED

### AGAASAA, DEBRA JEAN BLAKE

Agaasaa, Debra Jean Blake Agaasaa, Debra Blake, age 67, of Onamia, Minnesota, passed away on September 23, 2023. Visitation was held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at the



District I Community Center on the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Reservation. A funeral ceremony was held at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at the District 1 Community Center on the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Reservation, with Nazhike officiating. Interment is in the Woodland Burial Grounds. Arrangements are with the Shelley Funeral Chapel of Onamia.



### COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

For information on CPR/AED, Basic First Aid, Fire Extinguisher Training, Car Seat Training, and free car seats and fire alarms, contact Emergency Management Coordinator Monte Fronk at 320-532-3430.

# GRA UPDATE EXCLUSION REVIEW PROCESS

The Gaming Regulatory Authority (GRA) wants to keep Band Members informed of their rights. If you have been excluded from Mille Lacs Band Gaming Enterprises, you have the right for your exclusion to be reviewed annually. To have your exclusion file reviewed, you must submit a written request to the GRA. You may contact Licensing Investigations Director Nate George at 320-532-8129 for help with the process or use the "Request for GRA Board Review" form on the Mille Lacs Band/GRA website: <https://millelacsband.com/government/indian-gaming-regulation>. Once the form is completed in full and returned to our office, your exclusion file along with your request will be presented to the GRA Board during a regular board meeting. You will receive notice of the date, time, and location to attend this meeting. You can prepare for this meeting by organizing your thoughts around what you want the Board to know and why you think the Board should lift your exclusion.

#### Temporary Suspension of Exclusion Process

Exclusion shall never prohibit eligible voters of the Band from entering non-gaming floor areas of a Gaming Enterprise for the purpose of exercising voting rights or attending tribal political or community meetings held in the convention/meeting areas of the Gaming Enterprise. Nor shall exclusion prevent Band employees from attending mandatory work-related meetings in the convention/meeting areas of the Gaming Enterprise during work hours.

The Executive Director of the Office of Gaming Regulation and Compliance (OGR&C) may issue a temporary suspension of exclusion for reasons other than stated above. This means, if you are excluded and wish to be on property for an event, an emergency placement, or other critical need, you may ask for your exclusion to be temporarily lifted for a matter of hours or sometimes days. Reminder: this process also applies to Government Center departments hoping to emergency house excluded Band members for any length of time. Requests need to be in writing to the Executive Director, [tkozumplik@mlbgra.com](mailto:tkozumplik@mlbgra.com), and include name, date of birth, reason for request, location, date, and time frame you wish to be

### GAMING REGULATORY AUTHORITY



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

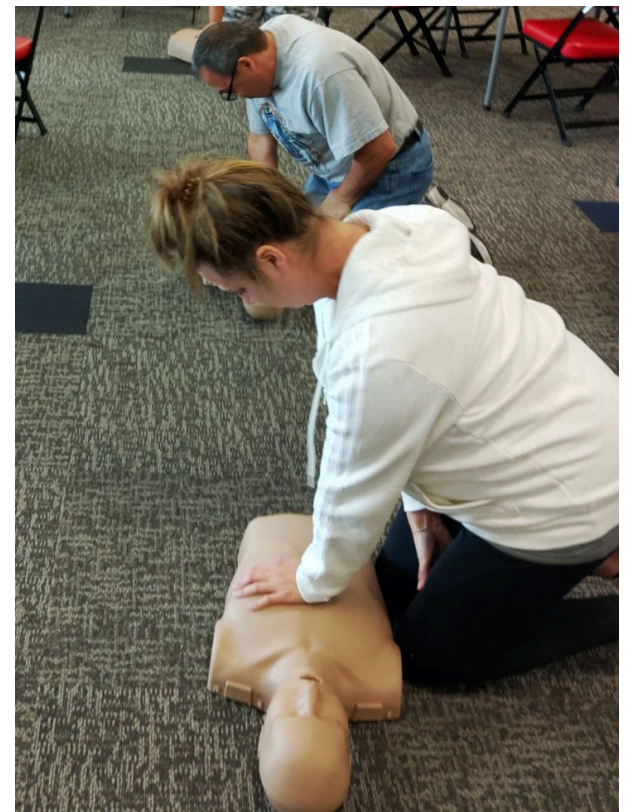
on any property of the Gaming Enterprises.

The Executive Director will forward the request for temporary suspension to the Corporate Commissioner and the General Manager(s) of the Gaming Enterprise(s), at which time Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures and/or the Gaming Enterprise may comment, in writing, on the request for temporary suspension. The Executive Director will make a Recommendation either temporarily lifting the exclusion or denying the request by Compliance Recommendation. If the Executive Director makes a Recommendation in favor of the request for temporary suspension of exclusion, the temporary suspension of exclusion will take effect immediately.

For more information on exclusion processes, you may contact Nate George (320-532-8129) or Krista Tretter (320-532-8135).

More information and contact numbers can be found at [millelacsband.com/government/indian-gaming-regulation](https://millelacsband.com/government/indian-gaming-regulation). You can also LIKE us on Facebook at Mille Lacs Band GRA. GRA Board meetings are open to the public. This month's meetings are at 9 a.m. on Thursday, October 5, and Thursday, October 19 via Microsoft Teams.

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



## NEXT GENERATION



Stephanie Pawaush met with the District I Office of Representative Wind to receive a Celebration of Life baby basket. Isabella Lena Pawaush was born on August 15, 2023. She weighed 8 lbs. 12 oz., and was 20 inches long. Baby Isabella is welcomed home by Aunties Sam and Mariyah, and Grandpa Steve. Welcome to

the DI Community, little one.



Stacy Boyd met with the Representative Virgil Wind to receive a Celebration of Life baby basket. Destiny Shelene Larsen was born on Sept. 11, 2023. She weighed 8 lbs., 5 oz., and was 20 inches long. She is welcomed home by big brother Jesse, and big sister Tehlisse. Welcome to the DI Community, little one.



Keith Reynolds and Winona Crazy Thunder met with District I Representative Virgil Wind for a Celebration of Life baby basket. Liliyanna Ari Crazy Thunder was born on September 9, 2023. She weighed 7 lbs., 14 oz., and was 19 1/2 inches long. She is welcomed home by brothers and sisters; Kiyawna Jo,

Ryan, Sadie, Tracey, and Mila Mae. Welcome to the DI Community, little one.



# TRIBAL NOTEBOARD

## OCTOBER ELDER BIRTHDAYS

Beverly Jean Bearheart  
 Kevin Alan Benjamin  
 Sheldon Ray Boyd  
 Marvin Ray Bruneau  
 Steven Lawrence Churchill  
 Gregory Dean Davis  
 Darlene Marie Day-Beaulieu  
 James F Dowell  
 Joycelyn Marie Drumbeater  
 Ronda Leigh Dunfee  
 Jack Leo Dunkley  
 Gary Richard Garbow  
 Lorna Mae Garbow  
 Helena Graikowski  
 Lucy May Hansen  
 Dolores Mae Hegland  
 William Robert Hemming  
 Brent Allen Hensley  
 Steven Blane Hensley  
 Sherry Lynn Herrick  
 Joanna Marie Hill  
 Rocky Patrick Hill  
 Gaylon James Jones

Kevin Scott Karsjens  
 Robert Lee Keggs  
 Doreen Lorraine Knutson  
 Valerie Marie LaFave  
 Terrance Steven Leyk  
 Bonnie Lou Matrious  
 Marcella Jean Maurice  
 Jacqueline Applegate  
 McRae  
 Krissa Lanae Meyer  
 Amos Eugene Mitchell  
 Betty Mae Mondeng  
 Brenda Joyce Moose  
 Beverly Marie Nayquonabe  
 Joseph Wade Nickaboine  
 Joni Jayne O'Brien  
 Debra Jayne Otten  
 Teresa Lynn Packard  
 Bernice Pawaush  
 Jacqueline Ellen Redearth  
 Marlin Vern Sam  
 Ruth Anne Sam  
 Virginia Louise Sam  
 James Robert Schroeder  
 Starry Lynn Silva  
 Amanda Lynn Skinaway

Christine Mari Smith  
 Nancy Jean Spittell  
 Montgomery Jay Staples  
 Dawne Marie Stewart  
 Sharon Rose Sutton  
 Jack Russel Thomas  
 Russell Ernest Towle  
 Jill Marie Valentino  
 Lucious Wade  
 Darlene Almeda Warren  
 Ginger Yvonne Weyaus  
 Earl Ellsworth Whitney  
 Vernon James Woyak

Lileah, Jay, Taylor, and Adam • Happy Birthday **Melodie** on October 31, love the Harrington Family • Happy birthday to my other half, **Melissa** on October 22, I love you! Love, Jake •

If you would rather not have your name included in the Elder birthday list, please email [news@millelacsband.com](mailto:news@millelacsband.com) before the 15th of the month preceding your birthday.

Send calendar items to [news@millelacsband.com](mailto:news@millelacsband.com) or call 320-630-8195.

Send your shout-outs to [news@millelacsband.com](mailto:news@millelacsband.com)!

## HAPPY OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday **Eric** on October 25, love Dad, Daphne, Braelyn, Payton, Tiny, Bryn, Bianca, Henry, Binesikwe, Granny, Papa Kyle, Papa Brad, Val, Dan Pie, Myla, Kev, Lily, Rachel, Rory, Randi, Bruce, Jayla,

## NOTEBOARD AND CALENDAR GUIDELINES

The Tribal Noteboard welcomes Band member submissions, including birthdays, congratulatory messages, and memorial tributes. For birthday messages, send name, birthday, and a brief message that is **70 WORDS OR LESS** to [news@millelacsband.com](mailto:news@millelacsband.com) or 320-630-8195. The deadline for the November issue is October 15. Photos may be included if space allows.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Thomas Ivan Staples-Skinaway II, Giizhigogaabow), is the incoming Iskigamizigan Jr. Brave. He is 5 years old. Congratulations from your family.



## MIIGWECH!

Thomas Staples-Skinaway II and Shara'lane' Staples-Skinaway would like to thank the following supporters during the 2023 Iskigamizigan Jr. Brave Contest: MLB Iskigamizigan Powwow Committee, Chief Executive Office, Michelle Barber, Valerie Phernetton, Weh's Ron and Rita Garbow, Weh's Rebecca Churchill and Richard Hill, Tricia Thomas, MLB Early Education, DIII Early Education Staff, and Jennifer Stoner for help with regalia fixings. We love all of you and Chi Miigwech!



# IMPORTANT TRIBAL GOVERNMENT PHONE NUMBERS

**Mille Lacs Band Government Center:** 320-532-4181

**Mille Lacs Band Tribal Police:** 320-532-3430

**Non-Emergency Phone:** 320-630-2994

**Chief Executive's Office**

320-532-7484

### Commissioners:

Administration: Sam Moose: 320-630-2607; Assistant

Commissioner: Maria Costello: 320-630-7643, or

763-260-0164

Community Development: 320-630-7643, or 763-260-0164

Education: Niiyogaabawiikwe, Brooke Mosay Gonzalez:

320-362-4245

Finance: Mel Towle: 320-532-7475

Health and Human Services: Nicole Anderson: 320-364-9969

Natural Resources: Kelly Applegate: 763-221-0320

### Housing Emergency On-Call

Districts I and IIa: 320-630-2498

District II: 320-630-2492

District III: 320-630-2497

Dan Boyd, Housing Director: 320-630-2620

### Public Works

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

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

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

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

Chad Dunkley, Earthworks: 320-630-4763

### Health and Human Services

24/7 Nurse Line: 320-630-0855

Provider appointments: 320-532-4163 option #2

Nurse Line Clinic: 320-630-0397

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

Mental Health call line: 320-674-4385

Substance use assessments and counseling: 320-532-7773

Pharmacy: 320-532-4770

Dental emergencies: 320-532-4779

Commodities: 320-630-8362

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

Family Violence Prevention 24/7 Crisis Line: 866-867-4006; or Kristen Allord: 320-630-2677

Elder Advocate: 320-630-4395

### Other frequently requested phone numbers

**Court Administrator**

Gilda Burr: 320-532-7401

### Legislative Inquiries

Brianna Boyd, Legislative Affairs Director: 320-532-7536

(work); 320-630-8702 (cell); 320-532-7506 (fax)

### Band Assembly Inquiries

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

### Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Inquiries

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

### Aanjibimaadizing Case Managers

District I — Candace Benjamin, Director of Case Management: 320-362-0014; Kaari Weyaus: 218-316-2437, Rosa Sam: 320-364-3187; Julie Peterson: 320 290 8729; Camille Smith: 320-982-0836

District II/IIa — Winona Crazy Thunder: 320-364-3049; Autumn Ballinger: 320-674-0655; Mary K Boyd: 320-630-1307

District III — Renee Allen: 320-591-0559; Kathy Nelson:

320-630-2671

Urban — Winona Spaulding: 612-360-7219

### Office of Management and Budget

Economic Support and Per Cap: Katy Radunz: 320-532-7471, or Per Cap: 320-532-8928

**Enrollments:** 320-532-7730



## CEREMONIAL GROUNDBREAKING AT MINNESOTA MILITARY MUSEUM IN CAMP RIPLEY

Mille Lacs Band member Elder and Vietnam veteran Joe Nayquonabe Sr. is honored to participate in the ceremonial groundbreaking held Sunday, September 17 in Little Falls of the Minnesota Military Museum to be constructed at Camp Ripley. Work is expected to begin early 2024 and be complete by 2026. Plans for the museum are to construct a 40,000-square-foot building with an investment of \$32 million from the state Legislature, another \$5 million in private funding and a family's donation of the 32-acre plot where construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2024 and is expected to be complete in late 2025. The museum is also expected to provide a look into service post-9/11, leading up to the fall of Kabul in 2021, where the Minnesota National Guard played a major role. Photo courtesy of Minnesota Military Museum.

## DRUG TIP HOTLINE

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





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Talking Circle</b> 10 a.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>Men's group</b> 6 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>First Tuesday SNAP</b> see page 7</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Women's group</b> 5:30 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>Red Brick NA Meeting</b> 6 p.m. at Red Brick.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety</b> 6 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>Ceremonial Dance Mille Lacs</b> Nick and Syngen</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>On the RedRoad</b></p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>Ceremonial Dance Mille Lacs</b> Nick and Syngen</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Talking Circle</b> 10 a.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p><b>Migizi Meeting</b> 7 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Men's group</b> 5:30 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Women's group</b> 5:30 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p><b>Red Brick NA Meeting</b> 6 p.m. at Red Brick.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety</b> 6 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p><b>Ceremonial Dance Mille Lacs</b> Steve and Andy</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>On the RedRoad</b></p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p><b>Ceremonial Dance Mille Lacs</b> Steve and Andy</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>
<p><b>15</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Talking Circle</b> 10 a.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p><b>Migizi Meeting</b> 7 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Men's group</b> 5:30 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p><b>District II Minisinaakwaang Community meeting</b> 5:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Women's group</b> 5:30 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p><b>District IIa Chiminising Community meeting</b> 5:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>Red Brick NA Meeting</b> 6 p.m. at Red Brick.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p><b>District III Community meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. Grand Casino Hinckley</p> <p><b>Wellbriety</b> 6 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p><b>Ceremonial Dance Mille Lacs</b> Linda and Leann</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>On the RedRoad</b></p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p><b>Ceremonial Dance Mille Lacs</b> Linda and Leann</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>
<p><b>22</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Talking Circle</b> 10 a.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p><b>Migizi Meeting</b> 7 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Men's group</b> 5:30 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Women's group</b> 5:30 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p><b>District I Community Meeting</b> 5:30 p.m. DI Aquatic &amp; Fitness Center</p> <p><b>Red Brick NA Meeting</b> 6 p.m. at Red Brick.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p><b>Vote Early Day</b> Let your voice be heard</p> <p><b>Wellbriety</b> 6 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p><b>Ceremonial Dance Mille Lacs</b> Joe and George</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>On the RedRoad</b></p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p><b>Ceremonial Dance Mille Lacs</b> Joe and George</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p>
<p><b>29</b></p> <p><b>Wellbriety Talking Circle</b> 10 a.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p><b>Migizi Meeting</b> 7 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Men's group</b> 5:30 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p><b>Halloween!</b></p> <p><b>Zooming towards Recovery NA</b> 8 p.m. via Zoom conference.</p> <p><b>Women's group</b> 5:30 p.m. Old District I Community Center</p>	<p><b>SEND US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS!</b></p> <p>The Government Affairs Department, which is in charge of communications with Band members, is compiling a list of email addresses so we can send weekly news summaries and breaking news updates to Band members. Send your email address to <a href="mailto:news@millelacsband.com">news@millelacsband.com</a> so we can add you to the list!</p> <p><b>ELDERS NEEDED!</b></p> <p>The Government Affairs Department is seeking Elders to tell their stories for a new Moccasin Telegraph series as well as to preserve video and audio in the Mille Lacs Band archives for future generations. If you are willing to participate in a video interview to share your memories, please email <a href="mailto:news@millelacsband.com">news@millelacsband.com</a> or call 320-630-8195.</p>			





O J I B W E

# I N A A J I M O W I N

B I N A A K W E - G I I Z I S • O C T O B E R 2 0 2 3 | V O L U M E 2 5 | N U M B E R 1 0

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

## GE-NIGAANIZIJIG YOUTH HARVEST MANOOMIN

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MILLE LACS  
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DEPRESSION & MENTAL  
HEALTH MONTH  
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SAMPLE OF WILDER  
SURVEY  
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EXCLUSION REVIEW  
PROCESS  
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### UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS

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

### ABOUT US

Ojibwe Inaajimowin is produced monthly by the Government Affairs Department of the Mille Lacs Band's Executive Branch. Please send questions, comments, corrections, or submissions to [news@millelacsband.com](mailto:news@millelacsband.com) or call 320-630-8195. The November issue deadline is October 15.

### NEED HELP?

If you or someone you know is injured or in immediate danger, call 911 first.

**Tribal Police Department dispatch:**  
888-609-5006; 320-532-3430.

**Emergency Management Services:**  
24-hour fire, disaster, and emergency management response: Monte Fronk, Emergency Management Coordinator: 320-362-0435.

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

**Community Support Services:  
Family Violence Prevention.**

District I: 320-532-4163 ext. 7793

District II: 320-630-7666

District III: 320-630-2691

**24 Hour Crisis Line:** 866-867-4006

**Batters Intervention:** 320-532-4163 ext. 7793

**Elder Services:** 320-532-7854

**Emergency Services Loans:** 320-532-4163 ext. 1755 or 1757

**Food Shelf:** 320-362-4672

**Waivered Services:** 320-362-0027

**Heating, water, or other home-related maintenance problems:** If you live in a Mille Lacs Band Housing-maintained home, call our Customer Service Representative at one of the following on-call numbers:

District I and IIa: 320-630-2498.

District II: 320-630-2492.

District III: 320-630-2497.

**Mille Lacs Band Family Services:** 320-532-4163, ext. 1714

On-Call Social Worker/After Hours Emergency 320-630-2444.

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