

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

February 2008

"The story as it's told."

Volume 10 • Number 2

Band Elder Recognized for Traditional Artwork and Teachings



Photo courtesy of Jodell Meyer

Mille Lacs Band Elder Margaret Hill was honored with the "Community Spirit Award" by the First Peoples Fund for her traditional art and commitment to sustaining the Ojibwe culture on January 18.

By Jodell Meyer, Mille Lacs Indian Museum and Trading Post Program Supervisor

On Friday, January 18, Mille Lacs Band Elder Margaret Hill was

presented the "Community Spirit Award" by the First Peoples Fund, an organization that supports the advancement of American Indian arts. The "Community Spirit Award" was given to Margaret for her work in sustaining the cultural values of American Indians.

An award ceremony and reception was held at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum. The Little Otter Singers entertained the audience with hand drums and songs. Joe Nayquonabe Sr. honored the food and gathering with a prayer in Ojibwe. Despite the cold weather, many people came out to honor Margaret, including Nina Archabal, Director of the Minnesota Historical Society; Melanie Benjamin, Chief Executive; Jennifer Easton, Founding Donor of the First Peoples Fund; employees and board members of the First Peoples Fund; and other friends

and family members. Margaret was nominated by Vickie Benson, Sandra Blake, and me because of her commitment to community and tradition, her quality works of art, and for sharing her knowledge and skills with others.

For more information on the "Community Spirit Award" and the First Peoples Fund, visit www.firstpeoplesfund.org.

About Margaret and her work

Margaret was born and raised on the Mille Lacs Reservation and has worked as a teacher, artist and demonstrator for the Nay Ah Shing Schools.

Growing up, she learned how to do many traditional Ojibwe crafts from her mom, grandmother and aunts such as beadwork, making moccasins, quilting, and basket weaving. She has been working and

teaching at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum since 1966.

Margaret's work has been published in *Lost and Found Traditions of Native American Art 1965-1985*. Her work has been presented to visiting dignitaries including President Bill Clinton and Johnny Cash, and it is represented in many museums and airports across the world. She is an Honorary Council Member of the Minnesota Historical Society's Governing Board and was recognized for 30 years of service and teaching by Nay Ah Shing Schools in 2005. She is the first Mille Lacs Band member to receive the "Community Spirit Award."

Margaret helps with a number of monthly classes at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum. Please see the museum listings on page 5 in this month's *InaaJimowin* for upcoming classes.

Curt Kalk Elected Chairman of GLIFWC Board



Curt Kalk, newly elected board chair for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission

Curt Kalk, Mille Lacs Band Commissioner of Natural Resources, was elected chair of the board for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) in January. Curt has been on the board for seven years and has served as vice-chair for four years.

GLIFWC consists of 11 members, which are Ojibwe nations in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan that retain hunting, fishing and gathering rights based on treaties with the United States government. The members include the Mille Lacs and Fond du Lac bands in Minnesota; Bad River, Red Cliff, Lac du Flambeau, Lac Courte Oreilles, Sokaogon,

and St. Croix bands in Wisconsin; and the Bay Mills Indian Community, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, and Lac Vieux Desert Band in Michigan.

GLIFWC assists its members in implementing harvest seasons and in protecting treaty rights and natural resources. GLIFWC also provides natural resource management expertise, conservation enforcement, legal and policy analysis, and public information services. The organization is based on the Bad River Reservation in Odenah, Wis.

GLIFWC's board, comprised of a representative from each member tribe, provides the

organization and its staff with direction and policy. Other officers elected for 2008 include Red Cliff Tribal Chairwoman Rose Gurnoe as vice-chair and Keweenaw Bay representative William Emery as secretary.

"Curt is the most knowledgeable and passionate person I know of when it comes to caring for natural resources and managing tribal treaty rights," said Melanie Benjamin, Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive. "The Mille Lacs Band is proud of Curt's leadership on the GLIFWC board and his contributions to preserving resources for future generations."



MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE

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Checks and Balances Help Safeguard the Band's Money

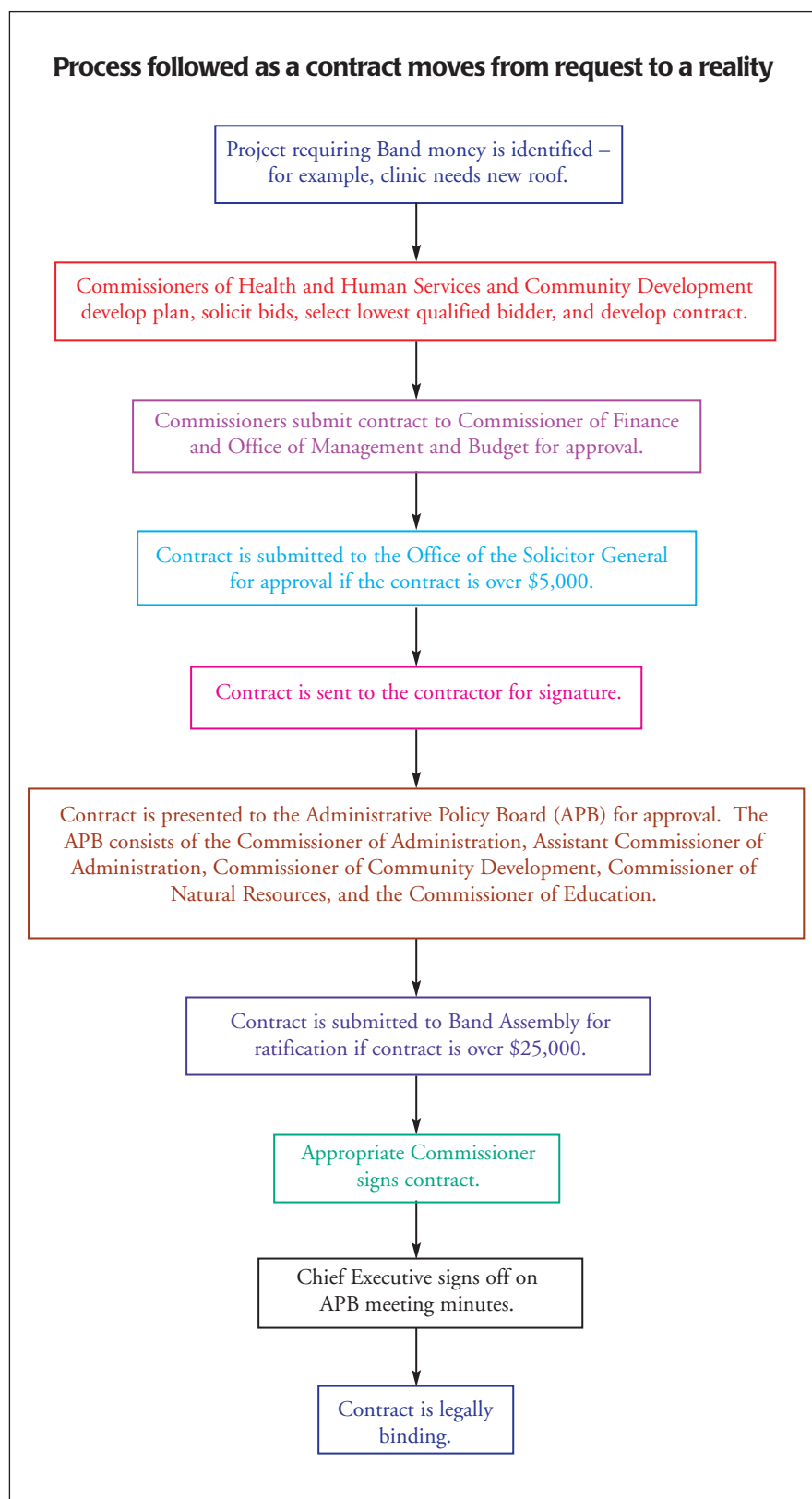
By **Christine Costello, Commissioner of Administration**

The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has a system of government unlike any of the other five bands that are members of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. As Commissioner of Administration, I spend a great deal of time answering questions from Band members and employees about our system and clarifying our processes.

First, let me describe what our government is NOT. Other bands of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe have a Reservation Business Committee (RBC) system. In the RBC system, the Tribal Council – which is comprised of the Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer, and District Representatives – has the authority to make decisions on a wide array of issues. Some RBCs function as administrators and make day-to-day decisions, such as approving the hiring and firing of staff and contractors. This is NOT how decisions are made in the Mille Lacs Band's system of government.

Under our system, the elected officials are not involved in hiring and firing staff. That authority is delegated to the Commissioners via the Band's statutes. Because the Commissioners are entrusted to lawfully conduct the Band's business, we take an oath when we are sworn in to office, promising to support, honor and respect the Constitution of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, the Constitution of the United States of America, and the laws of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

Neither the Commissioners nor the elected officials can spend Band money independently. In fact, under our system of government, the elected officials are deliberately many steps removed from the day-to-day steps involved in spending Band money. Before issuing a check or entering into a contract, many officials and staff must sign off on the paperwork. Every dime of Band money is very carefully tracked.



Many steps taken before writing a check or signing a contract

For instance, let's say the clinic needs a new roof (see chart). First, the Commissioner of Health and Human Services would work with the Commissioner of Community Development to develop a plan for the project. Under our procurement laws, they must solicit bids from contractors. After selecting the lowest qualified bidder, the two Commissioners would develop a contract and submit it to the Commissioner of Finance (in the legislative branch) for approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB ensures that funds are available in the budget and that the payment terms are reasonable for processing. If the contract is over \$5,000, it is next submitted to the Office of the Solicitor General to ensure it is lawfully written. After being signed off by OMB and the Solicitor General, it is sent to the contractor for his/her signature. Only then can it be brought before the Administrative Policy Board (APB). (See description below of APB authority).

If the APB votes to approve the contract to repair the roof and the contract is over \$25,000, it must be sent to the Band Assembly for ratification. If the Band Assembly ratifies the contract, it only becomes effective with the signature of the appropriate Commissioner as the Band's contracting agent. The Chief Executive must sign off on the meeting minutes of the APB, but does not sign contracts.

We have an equally complex process for spending Band money. Let's assume that the roof of the clinic has been fixed, and now the contractor wants to be paid. The contractor would submit an invoice to the Commissioner of Health and Human Services, whose staff would prepare a check request along with documentation that the work has been completed. After the Commissioner signs the check request, it would be sent to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in the legislative branch. OMB would ensure that funds are available and verify that the contractor has a valid contract and is not asking for more money than is available in the budget or authorized by the contract. If these assurances are met, OMB would make a check out to the contractor. All checks over \$10,000 require the signatures of both the Chief Executive and the Secretary/Treasurer. After both elected officials have signed, the check would be sent to the contractor.

Why checks and balances are important

Our separation-of-powers form of government was adopted in the early 1980s to ensure a system of checks and balances. The bureaucratic requirements of our system can result in several months passing before contracts can be entered into and Band money spent.

But these requirements safeguard the Band's money. Only in rare instances have individuals found a "back door" through these safeguards. In each situation, however, the alarms sounded and the wrongdoing was caught and stopped, which means that our system IS working to protect the Band.

No system of government is perfect, and the Band is always seeking to improve upon its policies and procedures. As Commissioner of Administration, I am very proud of the fact that our system of government has so many layers of accountability. Your Commissioners always strive to provide the best service we can to Band members and faithfully carry out our oath to uphold the laws of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, and the United States of America.

The Commissioner of Administration chairs all APB meetings and votes only to break a tied vote. The APB meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month and rotates meetings in each of the districts. These meetings are open to the public and are recorded and transcribed. Within five days the official record must be presented to the Speaker of the Band Assembly and the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive's only involvement is to sign off on the APB minutes.

What is the Administrative Policy Board?

The Administrative Policy Board (APB) is comprised of the Commissioners of Administration, Natural Resources, Health and Human Services, Education, and the Assistant Commissioner of Administration. The APB has the authority to negotiate and enter into all contracts and grants on behalf of the executive branch, administer and ensure the lawful activities of grants and contracts, authorize the submission of proposals to outside entities, hear personnel grievances, and perform all duties as assigned by the Chief Executive.

The Future of Ojibwe Ceremonies Depends on All of Us

By Joycelyn Shingobe (drumkeeper), Sam Moose (ceremonial drum member), and Peter Nayquonabe (hereditary chief)

Last year, Band spiritual leaders approached Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin and told her about one of their gravest concerns: That unless we act now, we won't have Band members able to conduct some of our most important ceremonies in the next decade or two. "And we're not getting any younger," is how Lee Staples framed their concern. At the request of these spiritual leaders and concerned Elders, Melanie directed the three of us at this year's State of the Band Address to provide support and assistance to the Band's spiritual leaders as they plan for the future of fulfilling Band members' ceremonial and spiritual needs. We have only just begun the planning process, but this initiative is of utmost importance to us.

Band members' involvement is critical to ensuring that we have spiritual leaders for generations to come. We need Ojibwemowin speakers for naming ceremonies, talking for a dish, talking at the drum ceremonies, speaking for the Midewewin, and conducting funerals and sweat lodge ceremonies. We need Anishinabe to be prepared for the important responsibilities that our spiritual leaders fulfill. As our spiritual leaders told Melanie, if we don't continue to prepare people from the younger generations for these tasks, "we could lose everything that makes us Anishinabe."

The answer is within us as Mille Lacs Band members. We have our own ceremonies and our own traditions. We don't need to go hundreds of miles or to other Ojibwe cultures. We need to look right here in our own Band.

That's why we are asking Band members to think seriously about our need for spiritual leaders. Some of you may have been told – possibly through dreams – that you are suited to perform this type of service. Some of you may think that you or someone you know is ready to learn more about what it takes to be a spiritual leader.

Anishinabe today are culturally hungry. We as Anishinabe – no matter what our age group – want our traditions, our culture, and our language to continue to be in our lives. So we must begin to talk like Anishinabe and think like Anishinabe. Revitalizing our Ojibwe language and culture is the key to keeping our traditional ways strong for those who will continue to walk and talk the Anishinabe way of life forever. What a gift that is for future generations.

The Band government's role in the "Spiritual Leaders For The Future Project" will be limited, and will work mainly through the Education Department. **Our spiritual and cultural leaders – the ones who are fluent in Ojibwemowin and active in the ceremonies of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe – will be the ones who guide the way.** We will also collaborate with the Band's other language and culture programs.

Meanwhile, the Band government will be here to support our spiritual leaders of tomorrow. One hundred years ago, our spiritual leaders didn't need to worry about giving up their income. Today this is a real concern, and the Band government will help watch out for these leaders and their families, so that they can devote the time they need to learning and serving.

What our spiritual leaders are saying

Following is some information and guidance from two of our spiritual leaders, Larry Smallwood and Lee Staples.

Why do we need spiritual leaders?

Larry: We believe our ceremonies are what brought us to where we are today. We never gave up the faith, the culture, or the beliefs. Some tribes put away their ceremonies because they feared the government or were overrun by churches or missionaries. But many people stayed with their traditions. That is what makes us Anishinabe.

We are at a critical time. Not just anyone can perform our ceremonies. We need younger people to take it upon themselves to learn the ceremonies. There are a few,

but many of our younger people are into other things.

How does someone know if they are "meant to be" a spiritual leader?

Larry: It's inside you. It's in your mind. But you have to seek it out by learning the language and the ceremonies.

Lee: You should also ask yourself some questions first to make sure you are ready. We expect qualities such as:

- Have a strong desire and motivation to learn our language and ceremonial rituals.
- Be dependable and committed to this learning process.
- Be in a good spot on a spiritual and emotional level.
- Have the ability to retain what you are learning.
- Be willing to spend long hours pursuing cultural knowledge.
- Be prepared for sessions with your Master Instructor(s), and be ready to speak in Ojibwe as much as possible.
- Remember that you are a role model once selected as a student of this program.
- Make sure your home life is nurturing, peaceful, and conducive to learning.
- Be able to sing and learn ceremonial songs.
- Have the freedom to spend a lot of time away from home during the summer ceremonial events, when you will learn at actual ceremonial sites.

Are there requirements for becoming a spiritual leader?

Larry: The most important requirement is knowing the language. If you don't already know it, you need to begin learning. The Ojibwe language is the backbone of our culture and essential to our ceremonies.

What are the responsibilities of people learning to be spiritual leaders?

Lee: Students should be prepared for a number of duties:

- Assist in cultural and language presentations to communities and organizations.
- Listen and learn from tapings of funerals and other ceremonies.

- Be self-motivated to study on your own at least two days a week.
- Report monthly to a group of Elders monitoring the Spiritual Leaders For The Future Project to help show your progress.
- Take language classes at Mille Lacs Cooperative College and attend language round tables to supplement the language teachings.
- Travel with your Master Teacher to various ceremonies for the Anishinabe.
- Meet with other Elders who are knowledgeable about our Ojibwe culture as another avenue for learning.
- Assist in developing Ojibwe language curriculum to be utilized in our schools.
- Perform ceremonies during the course of this program; this is the focus of learning and being in the program.
- Keep a daily journal outlining your activities, pointing out any difficulties you may have experienced in the learning process, listing any teaching methods that you found helpful, and highlighting what you learned that day.
- Spend time assisting in the language and culture classes provided in our schools, day cares, and college.

Do spiritual leaders have to live on the reservation?

Larry: You can live anywhere. Ceremonies happen in other places. It would be *easier* to live on or close to the reservation, but it's not *essential*.

What should someone do if they want to learn more about becoming a spiritual leader?

Larry: People are identified by their participation in ceremonies. You need to learn the language and come to the ceremonies. I'm happy to talk to anyone who is interested.

Just know that this is a very rewarding life, but in a different way than a job. This isn't about 8 to 5, Monday through Friday. And the training isn't like college. Everyone learns and prepares at a different pace.

2008 Band Election Candidates

Chief Executive

- Margie Ann Anderson
- Melanie Ann Benjamin, incumbent
- Kirstie Lee Davis Deyhle
- Devona Lee Haskin
- Vincent Hill
- * Mushkooub
- Larry M. Nickaboine

District I Representative

- Sandra Lee Blake
- Daniel D. Boyd
- Peter J. Gahbow
- Alicia Lydia Skinaway, incumbent
- Arlene R. Weous

District I School Board Chairperson

- Ruth Anne Sam, incumbent
- Rose Wind

District I School Board Member

- Dale Day Ballinger, incumbent
- Leann Sue Benjamin

District II School Board Member

- Cheryl Sue Miller
- There will be no primary election for the school board positions; these will be voted on during the general election on June 10.*

Mille Lacs Band Candidate Forums Coming Up Soon

Two Mille Lacs Band offices are up for election this year – Chief Executive and District I Representative. Mille Lacs Band members are invited to attend a local candidate forum to learn more about the candidates running for these positions. The forums provide an opportunity for Band members to learn about candidates' qualifications for office and their positions on key issues.

Below are the dates, times and locations of the forums:

Chief Executive Candidate Forums

- February 20, 5-9:30 p.m., District I Community Center, Onamia
- February 21, 6-9 p.m., East Lake Community Center, McGregor
- February 22, 6-9 p.m., Lake Lena Community Center, Sandstone
- February 23, 1-5:30 p.m., All Nations Indian Church, Minneapolis
- March 3, 6-9 p.m., Chiminising Community Center, Isle

District I Representative Candidate Forums

(District I Representative candidates will speak after Chief Executive candidates.)

- February 20, 5-9:30 p.m., District I Community Center, Onamia
- February 23, 1-5:30 p.m., All Nations Indian Church, Minneapolis

The Mille Lacs Band primary will be held on April 1 and the general election will be held on June 10. If you have any questions about the candidate forums, please contact Mary Sam, Mille Lacs Band Local Government and Community Relations Coordinator, at 320/532-8853.

Please note that the candidate forums are separate from the elections. Please refer to page 5 for information on the election schedule. If you have any questions about the elections, please contact Election Judge Roberta Fox at 320/532-7428.

Candidate Forum Guidelines

I. Purpose

- To inform and educate voters about the candidates and the key issues facing the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe;
- To offer candidates an opportunity to inform voters of their qualifications for office, positions on key issues, and plans should they be elected; and
- To inform and educate the candidates of the key issues facing the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

II. Format

- Each candidate will sign in with the moderator to determine the order of opening statements.
- Each candidate will have three (3) minutes to make an opening statement and three (3) minutes to make a closing statement. A timekeeper will be seated in the front row and will signal the candidate with timing cards when there are 30 seconds remaining and when time has expired (stop).
- Following opening statements, the moderator will ask candidates to move to a quiet waiting room, while the screening team works with the moderator to coordinate questions for the candidates.
- While the candidates are making their opening statements, constituents in attendance can submit questions in a written format (3" x 5" cards and pens will be provided). Questions must be addressed to all candidates. Questions can be submitted only during the time candidates are making their opening statements.
- The cards will be collected and screened by representatives of both the executive and legislative branches of the Mille Lacs Band government to avoid duplication, and to ensure the questions are respectful and not personal. The moderator will make the final determination on the appropriateness of any question. Candidates and constituents are asked to respect the moderator's decisions.
- Candidates will be invited back into the forum individually to respond to the set of questions presented by the screening team, and agreed upon by the

moderator. Once the candidate finishes answering questions, he/she will go back to the waiting room while the next candidate responds.

- All candidates will have one (1) minute to respond to each question. The timekeeper will signal the candidate with timing cards when there are 15 seconds remaining and when time has expired (stop).
- Due to time constraints, all questions submitted may not be asked.
- At a specified time, the moderator will end the questions-and-answers phase and invite candidates back into the forum, and will ask each candidate to give his or her closing statement. Closing statements will be in the reverse order of opening statements. The timekeeper will alert the candidate when there are 30 seconds remaining and when time has expired (stop).
- The forum will conclude promptly following the last closing statement.

III. Rules

- The audience will give each speaker an opportunity to be heard. This is not a community meeting, so comments from the audience will not be accepted.
 - A table for campaign materials will be provided outside of the candidate forum meeting room. No campaign materials will be allowed in the forum meeting area.
 - In deference to our limited time, please hold applause until the end of the evening.
 - The moderator has the authority to adjust ground rules to meet unexpected circumstances.
 - Timelines and rules will be strictly followed and the forum will end promptly as scheduled.
 - Please turn off cell phones and pagers. If you must make a call, please leave the meeting area.
 - Child care will not be provided, so please make appropriate arrangements for your children.
- In the interest of fairness to everyone involved, it is vitally important that everyone conduct themselves in a positive and respectful manner during these forums. Mii gwetch!*

Election Calendar for 2008

- February 22: Notice of certifications to TEC
- February 27: Deadline for appointment of election boards
- February 27: Deadline for appointment of election contest judge
- February 29: TEC provides ballots for primary election
- February 29: Notice of primary
- **April 1: Primary**
- April 2: General reservation election board certifies primary results
- April 3: General reservation election board publishes primary results
- April 4: Deadline for request for recount
- April 8: 5 p.m. – Deadline for contest of primary election
- April 9: (Results, if allowed or 7th or 8th if earlier request) – decision on request for recount and results of recount
- April 18: Decision on contest
- April 21: Deadline for appeal to court of election appeals
- April 24: Record of contest to court of election appeals
- April 28: Last day for hearing on appeal
- May 7: Last day for decision on appeal
- May 9: Notice of regular election TEC provide ballots
- **June 10: General election**
- June 11: General reservation election board certifies results of election
- June 12: General reservation election board publishes election results
- June 13: Deadline for request for recount
- June 17 (5 p.m.): Deadline for notice of contest
- June 18 (or 17, 16, if request for recount is filed before deadline): decision on request for recount and results of recount, if allowed
- June 27 (or ten days from notice of contest whichever is sooner): decision on contest
- June 30: Deadline for appeal to court of election appeals
- July 3: Record of contest forwarded to tribal court of elections appeals
- July 7: Last day for hearing on appeal (hearing within seven days of notice of appeal)
- July 8: Winning candidates assume office by operation of law, unless sooner seated, or the election is subject of appeal to the court of election appeals
- 10 days from hearing on appeal: deadline for decision of the court of elections appeal
- Day following decision of appeal: winning candidate prevailing on appeal takes office

Agreement Reached on Band and Mille Lacs County Law Enforcement

Approximately three months after the mutual aid agreement ended between Mille Lacs Band and Mille Lacs County law enforcement, a new agreement is in place.

In the absence of an agreement in November, December and January, the county sheriff's department experienced added expense and workload burdens that the Mille Lacs Band had assumed under the first law enforcement agreement. Now that a new

agreement is in place, tribal law enforcement officers are again allowed to respond to all types of situations as they have over the past decade.

The new agreement follows many of the same provisions followed by the previous agreement, but this one more clearly defines the lines between Band reporting procedures under state law and Band authority under tribal and federal law.

Ask Melanie

By Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin

What happens to anonymous letters addressed to you?

I receive a fair number of anonymous letters each month, and I read each and every one. I appreciate getting feedback from Band members and reading about their hopes and concerns, and I only wish that I could respond back to them.

I understand that people may fear that if they sign a letter, they might be seen as a complainer. Or perhaps they doubt the quality of their ideas. Sometimes their concern is about something an employee said to them, how someone treated them, or something they witnessed that they think needs addressing. In order for me to address these issues, however, I oftentimes need additional information. If people don't sign their names, it makes it very difficult – if not impossible – for me to do anything about these kinds of issues.

I want everyone to know that I am here to listen. No idea is too small. Every question and every suggestion are worth my time. And if Band members have a problem or a concern, I can't tell them how I addressed the problem if they don't sign their name. The best way for me to help people is to be able to respond to them.

So, I urge everyone to sign their letters to me. If you leave me a phone message, leave your name and phone number. Always know that I value the time and effort that you put in to giving me your thoughts and feedback.

Do you have a question?

If you have a question that you would like me to answer, please fax it to 320/532-5800 or mail it to:

Chief Executive's Office
Attn: Ask Melanie
43408 Oodena Drive
Onamia, MN 56359

Chief Executive Calendar

To keep Band members informed about what Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin has been working on, here is a look back at just a few of the items from her recent schedule:

- Met with numerous Band members on a variety of issues
- Hosted an Elder advisory meeting
- Participated in the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council meeting at Mystic Lake Casino

- Attended Board of Directors meeting for Women Empowering Women in Indian Nations (WEWIN)
- Held cabinet meeting
- Attended and presented at the urban area community meeting
- * Attended the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe finance meeting at Mystic Lake Casino
- Held a compromise hearing with Band Assembly

Nay Ah Shing Students Showcase Quilts



Nay Ah Shing Middle School students showcase quilts they made in their elective sewing class. Back row (left-right): Andrea Sayers, Jodi Nickaboine, Kirby Benjamin, Dan Shingobe, Luis Sanchez, and Dean of Students Mary Simon. Front row (left-right): teacher Donna Benson, Allison Mitchell, Anna Davis, Sage Hard Heart, and Bruce Anoka.

Photo courtesy of Eric North

Finding the Right Man (or Woman)

By Sarah Oquist, Commissioner of Corporate Affairs for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

"It may not be easy, but I believe it's worth the time and effort."

I was sitting at lunch with a friend of mine recently when she asked me, "So how's the search going for Mr. Right?" Although I had a few adversarial thoughts about her question – "Who says there is only 'one' right person?" – I didn't share my thoughts with her. I knew I had become defensive, which is rarely an effective time to discuss something, and I wanted to make it home before dinner. So, instead I responded, "It may not be easy, but I believe it's worth the time and effort."

Sitting in my office recently, I thought of the conversation with my friend. How do I go about finding the right man? But I wasn't thinking about finding a lifelong mate, I was thinking about something that occupies my mind and my conversations a whole lot more – finding the right man or woman *for the job*. And, more specifically, finding the right Band member.

More times than I can count, I have been asked, "Why doesn't the Corporate Commission or its businesses hire more Band members?" I am asked that at community meetings, elected officials meetings, community events, on the gaming floor, in the Grill, and pretty much everywhere. So, I have been investigating this very question – Why don't the Corporate Commission and its businesses hire more Band members?

Throughout my research, I have discovered that the Corporate Commission and its businesses do hire Band members when they apply. In the last three months, we filled

369 job openings at our casinos. Of those 369 positions, only 33 positions had Band member applicants, which is less than 10%. For those 33 positions, we hired 32 Band members, which is more than 96%. These numbers tell us that we don't get many Band member applicants, but when we do get them, we most likely hire them. The numbers for the Corporate offices and small businesses are still coming in, but the initial numbers tell the same story – we need to increase the number of Band member applications!

Finding the right people to fill our job openings and increasing the number of Band member employees is extremely important. So, how do we do that? One of the first critical steps is to hire a Corporate Director of Band Member Development to work on this very issue. A summary of the job posting is below. For the full posting, contact the Corporate Human Resources Department at 800/746-9805 or go to www.corporatecommission.com; the deadline to apply is March 3.

If you or someone you know meets the qualifications and is interested in the position, please apply. Then, stay tuned for future articles and information as the new Corporate Director begins to implement our strategic plan, including recruiting more Band members, assisting in the retention and career development of current Band member Associates, and identifying and resolving any challenges that stand in our way. Finding Band members who want to work at the Corporate Commission and its businesses and getting them to apply may take time and a lot of work. It may not be easy, but I believe it's worth the time and effort.

Corporate Commission Seeks Director of Band Member Development

The Corporate Commission of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians is currently seeking candidates for the position of Director of Band Member Development.

This position will collaborate with the Associate Directors to develop and implement a strategic plan that ensures Band member development goals and objectives are achieved.

Candidates are expected to have a bachelor's degree in education or a related field or a minimum of six years of related training, professional career development or counseling

experience, or an equivalent combination of education and job related experience. They must also have a minimum of four years of supervisory experience and leadership abilities demonstrated through progressive supervisory/managerial experience. As always, Band member/American Indian preference will be applied in the hiring process.

For a complete job description and application details, please contact our Human Resources Department at 800/746-9805.

Circle of Health Update

By Circle of Health Staff

Annual updates

Every year Circle of Health requests Enrollment Form and consent for Release of Confidential Information Form updates from all Band members. Files can be audited at any time. Any Band member's file that is missing either form can be put on a "hold for reimbursement" status until the forms are received.

The release of information is vital so Circle of Health staff can talk directly to a health/dental provider regarding claims, an insurance agency regarding premiums, other health and human services departments, or any designated family member who may be assisting due to a Band member's health condition. If you receive personal reimbursements, you should have received these forms with your last reimbursement check. If you have not received these forms, please call our office so we can mail them to you directly.

Private insurance

If you have acquired a private insurance plan with the assistance of the Benefit Coordinator, you will receive your insurance cards in the mail. Please keep in mind that our office needs copies of the front and back of the cards immediately. This allows our office to print Circle of Health program cards.

Unfortunately, many new policy holders have not completed this last step and the assumption is that once you show your insurance card, the

provider knows that Circle of Health can be billed. This is not true, and has resulted in bills going to collections. There are at least three letters sent before bills are turned over to collections. It is your responsibility to call your provider and verify that they have Circle of Health information. Circle of Health cannot pay for additional charges by a collection agency. Circle of Health will make every attempt to assist you in remedying a collection issue, but we cannot guarantee your provider will allow a third party to be involved or that they will accept payment from our office.

Volunteers

Circle of Health is asking for volunteers to acquire quotes for long-term care premiums. This has been an issue for quite some time. We have tried to get rate quotes for different age groups and health histories, but cannot get them without submitting information for actual people. If you would be willing to contribute your time and information, please call our office at 320/676-8214.

Reimbursements

On a final note, please allow reimbursement claims a two- to six-week grace period from the date of submission to process. If you still haven't received a reimbursement or denial after six weeks, contact Michele Palomaki, Circle of Health Director; David Boyd, Claims Processor for A-L; or Roberta Lemieux, Claims Processor for M-Z at 320/676-8214 or 800/491-6106.

Showtime's Shobox Televises Boxing Matches at Grand Casino Hinckley

Showtime's Shobox series televised the main boxing events during the Mille Lacs Band Boxing Commission's February 1 event at Grand Casino Hinckley. Nearly 1,800 people attended the show and watched junior middleweight boxer Alfredo Angulo knock out Ricardo Cortes and junior lightweight boxer Mickey Bey Jr. win against Roberto Acevedo.

"This was an exciting event for the Boxing Commission, as we hosted our first televised boxing match," said Anibal Miramontes, Mille Lacs Band

Boxing Commission Executive Director. "We look forward to continuing to gain more national attention for our boxing matches."

Other results included:

- Kenny Kost won against James Crayton after six rounds
- Tim Taggart beat Cheyenne Ziegler
- David Estrada beat Robert Kamy by a technical knock-out (TKO)
- Chris Avalos won against Juan Guerrero by a TKO

2008 Legislative Session

By **Jamie Edwards, Mille Lacs Band Government Affairs Coordinator/State**

On February 12, the state Legislature convened for its second year of the legislative biennium. This year is typically devoted to the passage of a bonding bill; a long-term funding approach for state-sponsored construction projects. The first projects selected are almost always those for higher educational facilities and other public buildings. We expect that Governor Tim Pawlenty and the Legislature will agree on a bonding bill close to \$1 billion this year.

There will be several other high-profile issues on the agenda this year:

State budget

In December, the Minnesota Department of Finance projected a deficit of \$373 million in the state's budget by mid-2009. With increasing news about an economic downturn in Minnesota and a possible recession across the nation, many government observers expect that the next state revenue forecast due out at the end of February will show an even greater deficit. Spending cuts or possible tax increases may be required to close this gap.

Transportation

Transportation remains a high priority, especially following the 35W bridge collapse last summer. This has led to talks about the possibility of raising the gas tax to help fund bridge and road repairs, new construction projects, and mass transit. Some organizations that usually oppose

tax increases are backing this measure, while the Governor remains in opposition. In January, the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce – of which the Mille Lacs Band is a member – adopted an official position endorsing a gas tax increase of 7.5 cents per gallon, which is an increase over the chamber's previous position. While the 35W bridge collapse may have softened the Governor's stance on a gas tax increase, there will likely be extensive discussion on this topic.

Health care and education

Health care and education remain top issues. However, a large-scale health care reform package would require substantial funding, which the state doesn't have at this time. Education advocates will face similar challenges in obtaining more state funding. Many legislators would like to provide more funding in this area, but rising local property taxes and the possibility of an extended recession will make it very difficult to do.

With the state's slowing economy and many programs in need of state funding, we continue to stay vigilant regarding any discussions or proposals to expand gambling. While it is not likely that any such proposals would be successful this session, the increasingly glum economic news makes this threat more possible. We are also watching for the next state revenue forecast, when it may become more clear as to the direction party leaders will take this legislative session.

Band Member Jamie Edwards on Youth in Government Board

Mille Lacs Band Government Affairs Coordinator/State Jamie Edwards was recently selected to serve on the Minnesota YMCA Youth in Government State Board starting this March. The board oversees the Minnesota YMCA Youth in Government program, which provides hands-on opportunities for middle and high school students to learn about government, law, international relations, media, and other areas.

"As a board member, I want to help increase awareness of Youth in Government among American Indian students and encourage our youth to get involved and learn more about the governmental process."

Each January, Youth in Government holds a model assembly session that brings students from around the state together to participate in a model Legislature. Participants learn

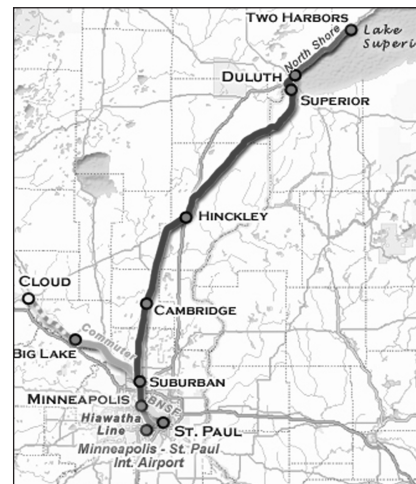
how government works by serving as a governor, legislators, lobbyists, judges, or other positions as they attend meetings. Other Youth in Government sessions include a model United Nations, national affairs conference, and other retreats and training sessions.

Jamie said he wants to engage tribal youth councils across the state to get more American Indians involved in the program.

Get involved

Although the model assembly session already took place this year, the model United Nations session will take place in March. Students in grades 7-12 are eligible to participate. For more information about Youth in Government, visit www.mnyig.org or call 612/823-1381.

Proposed Rail Line Could Bring More Economic Development to Hinckley



A proposed passenger rail line would run from Minneapolis to Duluth with likely stops in Coon Rapids, Cambridge, Hinckley, and Superior.

The Mille Lacs Band's Grand Casino Mille Lacs and Grand Casino Hinckley attract millions of visitors each year and boost economic development in the region. A proposed passenger rail line that would run from Duluth to Minneapolis – with a likely stop in Hinckley – could support even further development along the corridor.

A feasibility study was recently completed on the proposed passenger rail line that would likely stop in downtown Minneapolis, Coon Rapids, Cambridge, Hinckley, Superior, and Duluth. The study, prepared by Transportation Economics & Management Systems (TEMS), expects the line to generate nearly \$2 billion in new development around the stations and produce more than 13,000 jobs.

Representatives from the Mille Lacs Band, along with officials from Anoka, Hennepin, Isanti, Pine, and St. Louis counties, have been involved in planning meetings for the last 15 months

regarding the rail line and its potential impact. The Mille Lacs Band has also established its own internal task force to explore the possibility of a direct stop at Grand Casino Hinckley and examine its role in the project. The Band continues to work with the counties on the proposed 150-mile rail line, which could start operating in 2012.

"The Mille Lacs Band is dedicated to expanding economic development in our communities," said Tadd Johnson, Mille Lacs Band Special Counsel on Government Affairs. "We are excited about the positive impacts this rail line could have on East Central Minnesota."

State-of-the-art passenger rail line

The passenger rail line would be able to reach speeds up to 110 miles per hour, and up to eight trains may run each day. The trip from Minneapolis to Duluth would take approximately two hours. As many as 3,000 passengers are expected to ride the rail line each day.

The proposed line is estimated to cost between \$360 million and \$400 million, not including the costs for the stations. While funding for the rail line is still to be determined, the project has won support from U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar and Norm Coleman, and U.S. Representative Jim Oberstar, who chairs the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. In order to obtain federal funding, the project next needs to complete an environmental study, which may take approximately 18 months.

Nonpartisan Precinct Caucus Training Held

By **Elizabeth Towle, Government Affairs Department Administrative Assistant**

On January 31, two nonpartisan, non profit organizations and the Government Affairs Department co-sponsored precinct caucus training at the Grand Casino Mille Lacs Events & Convention Center for anyone who wanted to participate. The training was nonpartisan and did not endorse either political party. The purpose of precinct caucus training is to answer questions, provide information about what takes place at the caucuses, and encourage people to become involved in the entire voting process. Those who attended were encouraged to participate in their caucus, which is a way

to bring attention to issues that are important, including our status as a sovereign nation. During the process, individuals nominate and elect delegates to represent them at the next level of the convention process. Participants enjoyed themselves as they went through the process of simulating a "walking caucus," which involved precinct attendees trying to persuade others within the main caucus to join their caucus on certain issues or candidates. The training was helpful, educational and fun for the participants.

"It was interesting and inspired me and my son to attend our caucus," said Band member and tribal employee Nancy Wood.

Casino Shopping!

Grand Casino Hinckley

Carole's
Grand Salon, Inc.

320-384-7737 Monday - Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wireless Hotspot!

VELVET BEAN
COFFEE SHOP

Monday - Saturday 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Sunday 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM

Two Eagles Art & Floral

Monday - Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sunday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Grand Casino Mille Lacs

NATIVE GROUNDS
Coffee Shop

Wireless Hotspot!

Sunday - Thursday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Friday - Saturday, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Weekend hours coming soon!

Time For You
Salon & Spa

Monday-Friday 10:am-6:pm
320.532.5030

The Candy Cupboard

7 days a week
10 am - 10 pm

**Support your fellow Band Members,
Visit today!**

Mille Lacs Band Of Ojibwe Tribal Government Monthly Financial Report

September 2007

	Approved Budget for FY 2007	Actual Expenditures through 9/30/07	% of Budget Expended
Administration (1)*	14,046,954	11,797,775	84.0%
Workforce*	9,223,401	5,879,000	63.7%
Judicial	948,944	840,133	88.5%
Law Enforcement*	3,720,453	3,091,981	83.1%
Education*	19,237,107	16,110,376	83.7%
Health and Human Services*	24,208,745	21,522,408	88.9%
Natural Resources*	5,771,013	4,656,832	80.7%
Community Development*	50,878,336	27,745,428	54.5%
Gaming Authority	4,314,052	4,009,641	92.9%
Bonus Distribution	35,275,873	35,250,770	99.9%
Total Expenditures	\$167,624,878	\$130,904,344	78.1%

Financial Notes:

- (1) Administration includes Chief Executive, administration, finance, Solicitor General, legislative, government affairs, and district operations.
- (2) The amounts above do not include casino operations. However, they do include government operations funded by casino distributions.
- (3) The Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has its financial statements audited every year by an independent public accounting firm. Audit reports from previous years are available for review at the government center.
- (4) Economic development appropriations have been excluded as of October 31, 1997. As of October 1, 1997, the Band has separate accounting functions for the Corporate Commission from the tribal government.

* These departments include continuing appropriations from the 2006 fiscal year.

* This finance page was not final as of print time.

Jury Duty

By Alvina Aubele, Chief Justice

The Court of Central Jurisdiction is updating its jury source list in anticipation of upcoming jury trials. Potential jurors include Band members and Band employees. If your name is added to the jury source list, you have a civic responsibility to perform jury duty. Names are selected at random from the jury source list.

More information about jury duty will be provided in upcoming months in the *Ojibwe Inaajimowin*. If you have any questions before then, please call 320/532-7400.

Business Management Training Class

The next Business Management Training Class starts on May 5 in Minneapolis. We will also be holding a training class in Hinckley starting in September. Classes will be held on Monday nights from 5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. for 10 weeks.

Please call Sharon James at 320/532-8817 for more information and to register.

Healthy Heart Class

The Band's Diabetes Team has a Healthy Heart Program to help people learn more about good health and make healthy lifestyle choices. The program holds a variety of activities throughout the year. The next Healthy Heart meeting will be held on February 26 from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the District I Community Center. The participants will enjoy a heart healthy lunch, an educational program and social time. For more information about this meeting, call Cyndy Edgerton at 320/532-4163, ext. 7840.

Free Hearing Evaluations

Ne-la-Shing Clinic

When: Friday, March 14

To schedule an appointment, call 320/532-4163.

Walk-ins are welcome, we will do our best to serve you.

Twin Cities locations

Where: Hearmore Hearing offices in St. Paul, Osseo, and Bloomington

When: Monday-Friday

To schedule an appointment, please call the St. Paul office at 651/771-4019, the Osseo office at 763/391-7433, or the Bloomington office at 952/884-3007.

Please check your insurance policy to find out if you are eligible for \$1,000 toward the purchase of hearing aids.

Tribal Noteboard

Happy February birthday to:

Jenny, on February 3 with love from Deek, Wes, Tracy, Kelly, Rachel, Taya and Noah • **Dehlina Sam**, 3, on February 6 from mom, dad, Isaac (Felix), Grandma Angie, and Mahlon • **Darius Barnes**, on February 17 from Grandma Sharon • **Mahlon Barnes**, on February 21 from mom, Sharon, Angie and Darius • **Sherissa Harper**, on February 2 from Grandma Sharon • **Mike Eagle**, on February 2 from Auntie Angie • **Pam Pewaush**, on February 22 from Sharon • **Meganne**, on February 27 from mom, Robert, Chris, Jonathan and Rodney • **Shawna**, on February 17 from mom, Robert, Chris, Jonathan and Rodney • **Maggie**, on February 17 with love from all your children and grandchildren • **Conrad**, on February 25 from mom, Chris, Jonathan, Robert and Rodney • **Rose Wind**, on February 19 from Chris, Robert, Jonathan and Rodney • **Ameed Abuhamed**, 3, on February 17 from mom and family • **Aseil Abuhamed**, 8, on February 26 from mom and family • **Melissa Peet**, on February 26 from Bo • **Rhonda Peet**, on February 26 from Bo • **Jourdaine**, on February 6 from Lorelei • **Uncle Mister**, on February 13 from Lorelei Dawn • **Pauline**, on February 12 from Cilla, Linz, Trina, Desi and Huey • **Antwaun Boswell**, 9, on February 18 from Uncle Keith, Jaagaab, Laila, Wax, Shannon, Neema, Grandma Francis, Marlow, Franny, Deangelo, and the rest of your family on Henry Davis Drive • **Miranda Boyd**, on February 19 from the Boswell family • **Marlow Davis**, 9, on February 23 from Uncle Keith, Jaagaab, Laila, Wax, Shannon, Neema, Grandma Francis, Marlow, Franny, Deangelo, and the rest of your family on Henry Davis Drive • **Deb Blake**, on February 20 from Howard, Carrie, Renae, Zachary, Jerry, Kira, Shawntel, Gabbi, Jarrod and Sherry • **Dylan Johnson**, on February 4 from dad • **Baby Chris**, 2, on February 7 with love from mom, dad, Jameson, Cordell, Grandma AA, Grandma Karen, Sharon, Ravon, Junior, Tracy, Shelby, Jarvis, Jacob, Jamie, Aiva, Val, Kevin, Pie, and Baby Kevin • **Jacob**, 19, on February

16 with love from mom, dad, Jameson, Cordell, Grandma AA, Grandma Karen, Sharon, Ravon, Junior, Tracy, Shelby, Jarvis, Jacob, Jamie, Aiva, Val, Kevin, Pie, and Baby Kevin • **Cordell**, 7, on February 23 with love from mom, dad, Jameson, Cordell, Grandma AA, Grandma Karen, Sharon, Ravon, Junior, Tracy, Shelby, Jarvis, Jacob, Jamie, Aiva, Val, Kevin, Pie, and Baby Kevin • **Braelyn**, on February 22 with love from mom, dad, Jameson, Cordell, Grandma AA, Grandma Karen, Sharon, Ravon, Junior, Tracy, Shelby, Jarvis, Jacob, Jamie, Aiva, Val, Kevin, Pie, Baby Kevin, Isabel, Luis, Grandma Delores, Nicole, Brittany, Michelle, Thomas, Ana, and Ang • **Doll**, on February 2 from Barb, Boy, Junior, JoAnna, Cedric, Bear and Brandon • **Isaac Klenk**, 1, on February 6 from Auntie Les, Uncle Bubbie, Tre'von, and Quincey • **Rosa Sam**, 18, on February 26 with love from mom, Al, Paige, Alvina, Freddie, Tweety, Ivan, Grandpa Fred, and Kathy • **Arlyn Sam**, on February 18 from Chris, Al, Rosa, Paige, Freddie, Tweety and Ivan • **Jayinessa**, on February 3 with love from Gram, Tina, Deondre, Jim, Dana, Dave, Tanz, mom, dad, Sherraine, Minnow, Naughty, and the rest of the family • **Natheena Sam**, on February 7 with love from mom, Double D, Jim, Dana, dave, Tanz, Jay, Naughty, Minnow, Shanna, and the rest of the family • **Ozzie**, on February 21 with love from Auntie Niss and family • **Kaitlin Sam**, 6, on February 2 from Grandma Ruth, Bryan, Brent, and your little bro • **RaeAnne Sam**, on February 13 from mom, brothers and your children • **Dawn**, on February 5 with love from Raenelle, Jereck, Larissa, Corbin and Lia • **Audge**, on February 7 from Raenelle, Jereck, Larissa, Corbin and Lia • **Baby Dee**, on February 16 from Raenelle, Jereck, Larissa, Corbin and Lia • **Chantelle**, on February 3 from Raenelle, Jereck, Larissa, Corbin and Lia • **Damon Anderson**, on February 17 from Raenelle, Jereck, Larissa, Corbin and Lia • **Claire Bear**, on February 1 from Raenelle, Jereck, Larissa, Corbin and Lia • **Morgan Thompson**, on February 20 from Raenelle, Jereck, Larissa, Corbin and Lia • **Dionne Thompson**, on

February 27 from Raenelle, Jereck, Larissa, Corbin and Lia.

Happy February birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Nancy Arnoux
Laura Ashcroft
Judy Carlson
Douglas Eagle
Eileen Farah
Eugene Garbow
Beverly Graves
Donald Houle
Irene Jones
Conrad Kegg
Maggie Kegg
George LaFave Jr.
Dwight Madison Jr.
Gilbert Moose
Joseph O'Brien
Adeline Pewaush
Alan Pindegayosh
Francis Reynolds
Lawrence Reynolds
Mary Reynolds
Ellen Roth
Bette Sam
Darlene Sam
Elizabeth St. John
Audrey Stately
Berniece Sutton
Emma Thomas
Tony Weous
Marilyn Whitney
Clyde Wind
Dorothy Wistrom

Anniversary

Happy first anniversary to **Jarrod and Sherry Ballinger** with love from mom, Leonard, Howard, Carrie, Renae, Zachary, Jerry, Kira, Shawntel and Gabbi.

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Rhonda Peet** for making the Dean's List for the fall semester at Minneapolis Community and Technical College. *From your son Bo.*

Thank you

The family of Jordan and Craig Beaulieu Jr., would like to thank the **Chief Executive Office, District I Representative, housing and all the community members** for their help and support when our house burnt down. Chi mii gwetch for all your generosity and support. It was greatly appreciated. *From Craig Beaulieu Jr. and Jordan Beaulieu.*

Banana Cream Pie

Submitted by Natasha Merrill, Nutrition Education Assistant

I know there are a few of you who made New Year's resolutions that involved eating healthier. I thought that I would start off the year right with something sweet, simple, and most importantly, low in fat and calories. Yummy!

Ingredients

12 low-fat honey graham crackers (3 full sheets) made into crumbs

1 tablespoon butter
1 teaspoon water
4 bananas, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
1/2 cup cold water
1/3 cup sugar
1-1/2 cups plain fat-free yogurt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Grated lime zest

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350° F; spray a nine-inch pie plate with nonstick spray.
2. Combine graham cracker crumbs, butter, and water with a fork in a medium bowl. Press into the bottom and on the sides of the pie plate.
3. Bake until firm (three to five minutes) and then cool.
4. In another bowl, toss the bananas with the lime juice and set aside one cup. Arrange the remaining bananas over the crust.
5. In a small saucepan, sprinkle the gelatin over the cold water and let stand for two minutes. Add the sugar and cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until the gelatin and the sugar dissolve and the mixture boils (about two to three minutes).
6. Remove from the heat and whisk in the yogurt and vanilla. Pour the mixture into the pie plate. Arrange the reserved bananas over the pie and sprinkle with the lime zest.
7. Cover and refrigerate until chilled (two to three hours).

Nutrition per serving

1/8 pie contains:
146 calories
2 g fat
1 g saturated fat
0 g trans fat
5 mg cholesterol
59 mg sodium
32 g carbohydrates
2 g fiber
4 g protein
86 mg calcium

District III Position Open on Corporate Board of Directors

By Sarah Oquist, Commissioner of Corporate Affairs for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

The Corporate Commission of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians operates and manages all Mille Lacs Band-owned businesses, including Grand Casino Mille Lacs, Grand Casino Hinckley, Grand Market, Grand Makwa, Grand Venture Travels, ML Wastewater Management, MLB Convenience Store, Crossroads Convenience Store, and East Lake Convenience Store. The Corporate Commission also identifies and develops other business opportunities to create more jobs and provide additional revenue for the Mille Lacs Band. The Corporate Commission, among other things, also provides small business support to Band member-owned businesses.

The Corporate Commission Board of Directors oversees businesses and economic development decisions. The Board is chaired by the Commissioner of Corporate Affairs and meets quarterly. The

Board is comprised of five Band members, one from each of the three reservation districts and two "at-large" members. Each Board position is a four-year term.

The term of the District III position expires on March 31, 2008. The Chief Executive will nominate a Band member who resides in District III and provide the nomination to the Band Assembly for confirmation. The Band member selected will serve a four-year term, expiring on March 31, 2012. Because the Board oversees gaming-related matters, the Band member must pass a background check and obtain a gaming license through the Gaming Regulatory Authority.

For specific questions about serving on the Board, please contact me at 800/746-9805.

If you reside in District III and would like to be considered for this Board position, please submit your written letter of interest to Chief Executive Melanie Benjamin at 43408 Oodena Drive, Onamia, MN 56359, by February 29, 2008.

Community Development is Moving Forward

By Peter Nayquonabe, Assistant Commissioner of Administration and Acting Commissioner of Community Development

In July 2007, the Mille Lacs Band initiated an investigation of the Community Development Department after discovering potential wrongdoing involving Band funds. As the Assistant Commissioner of Administration, I have been the acting head of the Community Development Department since the investigation began. Following is an update on the situation.

Status of investigation

As a result of information discovered during the investigation, the Band has terminated its relationship with some employees and contractors. The results of the investigation will be provided to Band members as soon as they are available.

Status of community development

Currently, each part of the Community Development Department is operating in the same manner as it did prior to the investigation, with the exception of the Housing Initiative. It was necessary to place new Housing Initiative projects on temporary hold because of the status of the investigation.

I'm pleased to inform Band

members that we will soon resume our Housing Initiative projects. The executive branch has a proposal before Band Assembly that would, if adopted, provide funding for 20 new homes, one four-plex unit, and two duplex units across the three reservation districts. Funding is also planned to provide qualifying Band members with home loans to purchase an additional 15 homes off the reservation, including in the urban area.

In the past, the average waiting period for new homes was approximately three years. Because construction and loan processes slowed down during the course of the investigation, there may be an additional delay for those Band members currently on the waiting list. We will do everything we can to ensure that delays are minimized.

Further, the Band is absolutely committed to helping Band members in the urban area find affordable housing. The American Indian Community Development Corporation (AICDC), which the Band previously partnered with on urban housing projects, was recently reorganized and its projects stalled. The Band has sent a letter in support of AICDC, and we continue to support the creation of more affordable housing opportunities for Mille Lacs Band members in Minneapolis.

Band Members and Employees Participate in First Responder Training



Photo courtesy of Monte Fronk

Band members and employees participated in a first responder course to be trained in trauma response, CPR, defibrillator use, patient stabilization, and other basic emergency preparedness skills.

By Monte Fronk, Emergency Management Coordinator

Twelve Mille Lacs Band members and employees participated in a training course to become first responders. First responders are volunteer citizens who are trained in trauma response, CPR, defibrillator use, patient stabilization, and other basic emergency preparedness skills. Following the training course, the students completed a written exam and a skills test in

order to be certified by the Minnesota Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board as first responders.

Recertification training course

Current emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and first responders can renew their certification through a refresher course held at the District I ALU meeting room

on Mondays and Thursdays from February 21 to March 10, from 1-5 p.m. There is no cost to attend this course.

Current first responders and EMTs need to be recertified every two years, which includes taking a refresher course and passing an exam and a skills test.

To register for the course, contact me at 320/532-4181, ext. 2558 or at montef@millelacsojibwe.nsn.us.

Events at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum and Trading Post

Finish it up

Band Elder Margaret Hill is holding a monthly class called Gashkookwadimin Giishkwaadim (Finish it Up!), which is an informal sewing and beading circle designed for returning students who have unfinished projects and need assistance. It is a great opportunity to visit with Margaret and share food and ideas with other students. This workshop is held the second weekend in March, April and May. Students should bring their own supplies and a dish to share.

Ojibwe mittens workshop

Under the direction of Band Elder Margaret Hill, participants will create a pair of Ojibwe-style mittens with rabbit fur lining. This two-day workshop

will be on Saturday, February 23 from 12-4 p.m. and from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Sunday, February 24. The cost is \$50 for the public, \$45 for Minnesota Historical Society members, and \$30 for Mille Lacs Band members. There is also a \$25 supply fee.

Pre-registration and payment are required for most workshops. For more information, visit www.mnhs.org/millelacs or call 320/532-3632.

Hours of operation

Although the museum is closed for the season, you can still arrange a group tour or attend some great events. Group tours can be scheduled by calling the museum at 320/532-3632.

Calendar of Events

February 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>If you would like an event included in the community calendar, please contact Kelly Sam at 651/292-8062 or write to Kelly at 255 E. Kellogg Blvd. Suite 102 St. Paul, MN 55101</i></p>	<p>Commissioners on call A Mille Lacs Band Commissioner is available every weekend to help Band members handle emergencies. If you have an emergency, please contact the Commissioner on call at 877/239-2444. The emergency phone is answered from 5 p.m. Friday- 8 a.m. Monday.</p>	<p>*To Purchase Tickets Visit a Grand Casino box office, call TicketMaster at 612/989-5151, or visit www.ticketmaster.com</p>	<p>District III Community Meeting Grand Casino Hinckley Ballroom 5:30 p.m. Contact: Monica Benjamin, 320/384-1424</p>		<p>15 ProAm Kickboxing and Mixed Martial Arts * GCH 7 p.m.</p>	<p>16 Winter Dance Bash* GCML 5 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. <i>Commissioner on Call Nancy Wood, Office Director for the Office of the Chief Executive 877/239-2444</i></p>
<p>17 <i>Commissioner on Call Nancy Wood, Office Director for the Office of the Chief Executive 877/239-2444</i></p>	<p>18 All offices closed for Chief's Day</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20 District IIA Community Meeting Chiminising Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: Carmen Green, 320/676-1102</p>	<p>21 All District Elder Meeting 11:30 a.m. Contact: Nora Benjamin, 320/532-4181</p>	<p>22 Winter Dance Party* GCH 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>23 <i>Commissioner on Call Sam Moose, Commissioner of Health & Human Services 877/239-2444</i></p>
Mille Lacs Band Candidate Debates (see page 4 for details)						
<p>24 <i>Commissioner on Call Sam Moose, Commissioner of Health & Human Services 877/239-2444</i></p>	<p>25 District I Community Meeting District I Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: Becky Sam, 320/532-7423</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 District II Community Meeting East Lake Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: Jenny Waugh, 218/768-3311 Urban Area Community Meeting All Nations Indian Church 5:30 p.m. Contact: Pat or Barb, 612/872-1424</p>	<p>29</p>	

March 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>Pine Grove Leadership Academy Meeting Aazhoomog School 6:30 p.m. Contact: Skip Churchill, 320/384-6970</p>					<p>1 <i>Commissioner on Call Joycelyn Shingobe, Commissioner of Education 877/239-2444</i></p>
<p>2 <i>Commissioner on Call Joycelyn Shingobe, Commissioner of Education 877/239-2444</i></p>	<p>3 Onamia Indian Education Parent Committee Meeting Onamia School District Office Conference Room 12 p.m.</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8 <i>Commissioner on Call Curt Kalk, Commissioner of Natural Resources 877/239-2444</i></p>
<p>9 <i>Commissioner on Call Curt Kalk, Commissioner of Natural Resources 877/239-2444</i></p>	<p>10 AMVETS Meeting Grand Casino Mille Lacs 6 p.m. Contact: Ken Weyaus 320/309-6925</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 <i>Commissioner on Call R.J. Brunkow, Solicitor General 877/239-2444</i></p>

What Will You Do With Your Extra Day in February?

Andy Mitchell



"I will stay home and sleep."

Lenore Potter



"I will stay home and relax."

Sandra Blake



"I will work on getting sugar camp ready for spring (iskiqamizige)."

Carmen Green



"I will relax at home with my family."

Raenelle Weyaus



"I will have fun with my children and then go gamble."

Beverly Garbow



"I will watch soaps and relax."

Suzanne Merrill



"I will spend time with my children."

Ann Oswaldson



"I will spend quality time with my family."

Photos courtesy of Rick Anderson

Names and Faces

Minnesota Native Showcase television premiere



Photo courtesy of Beth Sabourin

Band members Rick Anderson and Susan Potter attended the television premiere of Rick's film on Twin Cities Public Television, which featured Susan speaking the Ojibwe language.

On January 25, Band members Rick Anderson and Susan Potter attended a television premiere with the executives from Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) for Rick's film debut on the show Minnesota Native Showcase. Rick's film featured Susan for her Ojibwe speaking skills and her determination to learn and carry on her Anishinabe traditions.

Lee Staples, Evan Potter, Beth Sabourin, Lenny Potter, Carol Gerving, and Troy Hill attended the premiere as Rick's and Susan's guests. Evan and Beth say they are very proud of Rick and Susan and hope that they will continue to work with TPT to share the importance of the Ojibwe language and tradition.

Stressing the importance of Anishinabe language and culture may inspire other Anishinabe people to learn their language and traditions so that they may carry them on for generations. Shows like Minnesota Native Showcase also help change any negative views people may have of indigenous people. It broadens people's knowledge of Anishinabe traditions, culture and language.

First Avenue's Best New Bands of 2007



Photo courtesy of John Benjamin

Mille Lacs Band member Matthew O. Moltaji is the drummer for the band Gospel Gossip, which was recently chosen as one of First Avenue's Best New Bands of 2007. The band was formed in May of 2006 and is from Northfield, Minn. The Band's CD, Sing Into My Mouth, was released in December 2007.

Where to Turn For School Closing Announcements

We all know that snowfalls can happen for a couple more months yet in Minnesota, and schools may need to cancel or delay classes due to bad weather. Following is information about where you can turn for school closing announcements.

Nay Ah Shing Schools

Information may be obtained by calling the automated phone answering system at 320/532-4695 (high school) or 320/532-4690 (Abinoojiiyag). Nay Ah Shing's telephone lines will have school closing announcements before 6 a.m. on the morning of any closing.

Also, Nay Ah Shing provides school closing information to the following radio and television stations:

Radio stations:

- WCCO 830 AM (Twin Cities)
- WJYY 106.7 FM (Brainerd)
- KCLD 104.7 FM (St. Cloud)
- KLIZ 107.5 FM (Brainerd)

Television stations:

- WCCO, channel 4

- KSTP, channel 5
- KARE 11, channel 11

Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy

Information can be obtained by calling the school at 218/768-3477 or through the following radio and television stations:

Radio stations:

- KKIN 94.3 FM (Aitkin)
- KQ 101.5 FM (Aitkin)

Television station:

- KSTP, channel 5

Newspaper Web site:

Duluth New Tribune, www.duluthnewtribune.com – You can also register with the online site to have an e-mail sent to you when a school closing occurs.

Pine Grove Leadership Academy

Information for school closings can be obtained from the following:

Radio station:

- WCMP 100.9 FM (Pine City)