

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

February 2011

"The story as it's told."

Volume 13 • Number 2

2011 State of the Band Recap



Toya Stewart Downey

Nay Ah Shing students sang the national anthem. The students included (from left to right) Brandon Wade, Marquis Fisher, Thomas White, Wyatt Oswaldson, Toni Weous, Hevin Shingobe, Meghanne Benjamin, and Chelsea Benjamin.

By Toya Stewart Downey

Chief Executive

The Ojibwe culture tells its people to share and care for one another. It tells its people to help Elders, nurture children, reach out to those in need, and embrace a sense of responsibility for the community. That's why the community – people coming together to make a difference – is one of the Band's most important assets.

This was part of the message that Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive Marge Anderson delivered to a crowd of more than 1,100 people who gathered for the 2011 State of the Band Address on January 11.

"The tribal government has its role. It provides programs and services. It gives Band members tools for success. But the tribal government is not the creator or the center of this community," she said. "Community isn't just a place or

a thing. Community is a verb. Community is action."

Marge encouraged Band members to get involved in improving the reservation community and addressing difficult problems such as gangs, violence, drugs and alcohol.

"The government cannot fix these problems. Money can't fix our problems either," she said. "We, the people, need to step in and make a difference. Paying it forward is one of our highest ideals as Ojibwe people."

"We need the Mille Lacs community; not an Ojibwe community in name, but an Ojibwe community in action," Marge continued. "If this doesn't happen, we will cease to be Ojibwe people. We will only be the descendants of Ojibwe people."

Secretary/Treasurer

In his address Secretary Treasurer Curt Kalk provided an overview of the Band

Assembly's role – to appropriate money for programs and enact Band laws.

Curt shared some of the Band Assembly's goals, including ensuring that Band members who work on tribally funded projects receive a prevailing wage; that tribal elections are fair; that all Band members have an equal opportunity to run for public office; and that the Band's ethics code related to elected and appointed officials is fair and is followed.

To that end, Curt reminded the audience that his guiding principles were honesty, transparency and accountability.

"I have an open-book policy," he said. "If you have a question, I'll do my very best to answer it for you. If there aren't any answers, then something is wrong."

He pledged to uphold his principles and encouraged Band members to get involved in the process by offering suggestions and participating in Band Assembly meetings. Soon the Band Assembly will hold some of its meetings in the evenings in the outlying reservation districts, so that more community members can attend.

Curt also reminded people that before Grand Casinos existed, it was up to the people to "fix things themselves."

"We need to ask ourselves what we can do better when we go home today," he said. "Everyone needs to try to do a little better. We need to take care of each other. We need

unity. We need to put the healing process in front of us."

Chief Justice

Chief Justice Rayna Mattinas told the audience that the main goal of the Band's tribal court system is to serve Band members in a way that fits Ojibwe customs and culture, while staying within the bounds of the legal system.

She shared that the court met its goal of developing a manual to help court clerks better understand and carry out their roles in accordance with the applicable statutes and rules that govern the court system.

The judicial branch was also successful in meeting its goal of developing a judicial page on the Band's website. The page includes links to court forms, brochures, rules, and applications. A goal for the coming year is to add the court's weekly calendar to the website, so that the public has another way to view scheduled cases.

Another goal for 2011 is to update the court rules with a judicial conduct code, attorney discipline procedures, gaming appeal procedures, and election appeals procedures at the appellate level. The judicial branch is also considering implementing a paperless system, in which files are kept electronically.

According to Rayna, the Mille Lacs Band's tribal court heard 1,679 cases in 2010, a 5% reduction from 2009.

To read Marge and Curt's full speeches see pages 3 and 4.



MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE
43408 Oodena Drive
Onamia, MN 56359

www.millelacsband.com



Printed on 100% recycled paper

PRESORTED
FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BRainerd, MN
PERMIT NO. 472

Brad Kalk Becomes Commissioner of Natural Resources



Brad Kalk (right) was sworn in as commissioner of Natural Resources by Chief Justice Rayna Mattinas (left) on January 13.

Mille Lacs Band member Brad Kalk is the Band’s new Commissioner of Natural Resources. He is responsible for overseeing the Band’s natural resources and environmental programs; forestry, fish and wildlife improvement activities on tribal lands; and other natural resources management duties.

“Advocating for hunting, fishing and gathering traditions has been a constant part of my life, no matter what my career has been,” he said. “I am eager to serve the Band in an area that I am so passionate about – preserving and practicing our sovereignty and treaty rights.”

As Commissioner of Natural Resources, Brad wants to provide Band members with better, timelier access to hunting and fishing licenses. “Having the ability to exercise our treaty rights is important to Band members. I want to make sure there aren’t unnecessary barriers,” he said.

Brad believes the first step in making natural resource decisions is to assess how each decision impacts conservation. “Conservation of Mille Lacs Lake and our other resources is always the priority,” he said.

“Decisions aren’t about what we want to do today; they’re about the opportunities we want our grandchildren to have.”

“I want them to have better ricing and fishing opportunities. I want them to have healthier drinking water and fewer concerns about contaminants,” he added.

Brad and his wife of 25 years live in District I; they have six grown children and 11 grandchildren. Brad credits his mother, Loretta Kalk, as the source of his enthusiasm for the outdoors.

Brad is also involved in the community. He has served on the Woodlands National Bank board of directors for the past three years, and previously served on boards for ML Wastewater Management and the Mille Lacs Reservation Housing Authority.

One of Brad’s first efforts as Commissioner of Natural Resources has been to work with state officials on setting the 2011 safe harvestable limits for Mille Lacs Lake. He also serves on the board of directors and the lake taskforce for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wild Commission (GLIFWC).

Photo courtesy of the Chief Executive Office

Two Boys & Girls Club Leaders Chosen for Prominent Tribal Program



Justin Beaulieu

Photo courtesy of Boys & Girls Club



Phillip Sam

Photo courtesy of Boys & Girls Club

Justin Beaulieu, director of operations for the Boys & Girls Club of the Mille Lacs Band, and Phillip Sam, the Boys & Girls Club’s District 1 coordinator, have been selected to take part in the Bush Foundation Native Nations Rebuilders Program. The program will train participants in tribal nation-building, self-governance, and individual leadership development.

Justin, a Red Lake Band member, and Phillip, a Mille Lacs Band member, are two of the 19 people from Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota who were selected to participate in the 2011-2012 session of the program. These 20 individuals represent 14 of the 23 tribes in those states.

Program participants are expected to bring expertise and commitment to finding sustainable solutions to the tough problems facing Indian Country. They also take part in ongoing activities to share knowledge with their peers and governments, and will develop and implement nation-rebuilding action plans in the second year of the program.

Previous to his Boys & Girls Club role, Justin was in gaming for almost eight years, managing many different departments during his tenure. He also held positions managing youth services for nine counties in central Minnesota, including work to raise awareness of youth homelessness. He has an associate’s degree from Central Lakes College and a bachelor’s degree in business and marketing from the College of St. Scholastica.

A native of Milaca, Phillip recently completed the Community Leadership Program sponsored by the Blandin Foundation, began a term on the Mille Lacs Area Human Rights Commission, and recruited participants for the Minnesota Indian Youth Freedom Movement. He will graduate in 2011 with a bachelor’s degree in business management from St. Cloud State University.

The Bush Foundation strives to help shape vibrant communities by investing in courageous and effective leadership aimed at improving people’s wellbeing in Minnesota and the Dakotas.

Boys & Girls Club to Host Open Houses

Come learn more about the Band’s new Boys & Girls Club chapters at open houses in each reservation district.

- District I Community Center: Friday, February 4, 7-9 p.m.
- Chiminising Community Center (Isle): Tuesday, February 8, 6-8 p.m.
- District III Community Center: Wednesday, February 9, 5:30-8 p.m.

- District II Community Center (East Lake): Thursday, February 10, 5-8 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to join us for refreshments and games.

If you have any questions, please contact Adrienne Benjamin, administrative assistant for the Boys & Girls Club, at 320-532-4744.

The Newspaper of the Mille Lacs Band
OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN
“The story as it’s told.”

Kelly Sam, Editor
Phone 651/292-8062 Fax 651/292-8091
kelly@goffpublic.com
Goff Public
255 East Kellogg Blvd., Suite 102
St. Paul, MN 55101

Please provide news tips and other information by the 15th of the previous month.

2011 State of the Band Speeches



Chief Executive Marge Anderson

Aaniin. Mr. Speaker, members of the Band Assembly, Madam Chief Justice, Justices, Commissioners, Band members, and guests, I am honored to be with you today.

I am speaking to you as the elected leader of the Mille Lacs Band tribal government. But I am also here as a proud member of the Mille Lacs Band community.

Sometimes we use the words “tribal government” and “community” as though they mean the same thing. We

say “the Mille Lacs Band is doing this” or “the Mille Lacs Band is doing that.”

But let’s talk today about the tribal government and the community as two separate things.

Government has its role. It provides programs and services. It gives Band members tools for success.

But the tribal government is not the creator or the center of this community. A community is made up of people with a uniting quality, living in a particular area. We are individuals, families, neighbors and friends in the circle of life.

Our uniting quality is our Ojibwe culture – a culture that tells us to share and care for one another. It tells us to help our Elders and nurture our children. It tells us to reach out to people in need.

Sharing ... Caring ... Helping ... Nurturing ... These ideas are all part of a larger concept to pay it forward.

Paying it forward means doing kind things for someone else. This is one of our highest ideals as Ojibwe people. It compels us to look past ourselves – and instead look at others in our families and community.

Paying it forward doesn’t require the government to get us started or keep us going. It only requires ourselves – the people of the Mille Lacs Band. It takes us acknowledging that we are a part of this community, and we are going to do something to truly MAKE this a community.

Community isn’t just a place or a thing. It’s people coming together to make a difference. It’s one person, plus another person, plus another person paying it forward.

Community is a verb. Community is action.

We have seen examples of the community in action in the past year, as some of our Band members have faced their most difficult times. Our sympathies go out to the four Mille Lacs Band families that tragically lost their children.

Many other lives have been lost or deeply impacted by gangs, violence, drugs and alcohol.

This can easily make us feel helpless. We are sad and frustrated, and we want the situation fixed.

But the government cannot fix these problems. Money can’t fix our problems either. The government can help ... and funding can help. But they are not the answers. And we are kidding ourselves if we believe that we will ever be without problems.

We will always have challenges. Every culture does.

But that’s where the community comes in. That’s where we, the people, step in and make a difference.

When William Nickaboine disappeared in July, Band members formed a search party. They were the ones who found William.

The members of the search party did all that they could. They put their own life plans aside, and they put another Band family first.

After the deaths of the four Band youth, the community held a feast to help us share our grief and ideas. You, the people, gave your thoughts on what can be done to help young Band members and stop the violence.

Then came the Community Healing Project. The shocking deaths of young people in our community led local Band members to form a support group, where people could come together each week to talk about how to make our reservation a safer, better place.

Carmen Behnkie and Rachel Shaugobay are two of the group’s organizers. I want to share what they said in a recent article in the *Inaqjimowin*.

Carmen said: “Our government can’t fix this, so it is up to us, as community members, to help ourselves ... One person can’t do it, but maybe a healthy group of caring Mille Lacs Band members can.”

Rachel said: “We didn’t feel that it was fair to drop our many concerns and complaints off to our elected officials and ask them to fix it. We believe we all

need to work together as Mille Lacs Band members to support and help one another.”

Mii gwech to Carmen, Rachel, and the dozens of other people who are involved in the Community Healing Project. You are paying it forward. You are sharing the healing that our culture can provide.

This is one of many examples of community involvement to be proud of in the last year.

Our Mille Lacs Band youth helped create a video that we will watch shortly. They share their feelings on gangs, drugs, and the pressures around them. These youth are living proof that despite the problems in our community, we have a lot of great kids. They know what Native pride is, and they aren’t afraid to show it. Congratulations to the youth who helped make this video.

We can also be proud of our record enrollment at Nay Ah Shing Lower School. This tells us that more Band members are recognizing that Nay Ah Shing will help start their children down the path to knowing their culture. In turn, this helps us continue to make progress with our language and culture programs, which is critical to sustaining who we are.

Many of you have heard the quote, “Without our language and culture, we are not Ojibwe people. We are only descendants of Ojibwe people.”

Mii gwech to all of the Band members who are working to make sure that we remain Ojibwe people, whether it is by sending your children and grandchildren to Nay Ah Shing, getting them involved in our ceremonies and traditions, or teaching them the language.

The Elders have noticed that more young people are coming to our weekend ceremonial dances. We are proud and excited to see this.

Youth: I want you to know that your participation in ceremonies and traditions can help keep you on a healthy path. It can also help you practice the teachings that can make you the keepers of our culture down the road.

We are fortunate to have many cultural keepers with us today, including our warriors. Some of them we keep in our minds and hearts – the Band members who are currently serving in the military. Others are our veterans, who continue to serve our community in other ways. They serve as honor guards at events, they donate their time, and they talk to children about what it means to serve our country. Mii gwech to all of our warriors for building up our community in such positive ways.

The many examples of Band members creating community show that there are opportunities for all of us. The video that we’ve seen today shows the Mille Lacs community in action. It gives us even more inspiration to make a difference. Mii gwech to Band member Toya Stewart Downey for taking the photos, and to our Nay Ah Shing students for making this video.

Some people might think that community action sounds like a lot of work – a burden.

I promise you it is just the opposite. All of you here who have paid it forward know how energizing it is.

Doing something kind for others is a reward in itself. Sharing your time and ideas creates goodwill that continues building each time someone takes part in a ceremony or speaks at a support group meeting.

Paying it forward is also one of the truest sources of pride. Our Nay Ah Shing students sang a song today called “Proud.” Several times they asked, “What have you done today to make you feel proud?”

That’s a serious question for us to ask ourselves. It’s especially serious because it implies that we should do something every day to make us proud.

That might sound overwhelming when we first hear it. But it makes sense.

Think of it this way: The Ojibwe culture wouldn’t be a culture if people only participated in it from time to time. It isn’t a culture of convenience. It isn’t a culture that exists on its own. We have to practice it every day. We have to nurture it through our actions so that it can nurture us in return.

That’s why we need to work on our Native pride every day. The work is hard some days, but on other days it is almost effortless. It can be as simple as bringing a child ricing or to a powwow. Perhaps an Elder needs help shoveling. Or maybe it’s picking up litter in your neighborhood.

On the tougher days, it might involve reporting a crime. But as tough as it may be to report someone you know or love, you might be preventing a bigger crime from hurting the whole community.

Doing any of these things is a source of pride. And if we all do our part, we will thrive off the pride that we create for our entire Ojibwe culture.

Our pride and our culture won’t erase our problems. But they are exactly what we need to address our problems.

At last year’s State of the Band event, I told you that one of our biggest failures has been our inability to provide our kids with a safe, nurturing place to grow. I told you that the Mille Lacs Band government would do everything it could to start changing this.

(Continued to page 4)

State of the Band Speeches

(Continued from page 3)

This year I’m telling you that the government is doing what I said it would do. More importantly, I’m telling you that we need your help.

We need the Mille Lacs community. Not an Ojibwe community in name, but an Ojibwe community in action. A community whose members make a daily habit of sharing, caring, helping and nurturing.

If this doesn’t happen, we will cease to be Ojibwe people. We will only be the descendants of Ojibwe people.

So this isn’t a State of the Band where I tell you all of the things that your Chief Executive and commissioners are going to do in the next year. The commissioners’ directives have been printed out for you so that you know more about what the tribal government will be doing. Much of our work will support Band members and the community.

Just as importantly, I am here today to challenge all of us to keep our community going the way that our ancestors did – by living our culture, practicing it every day, and taking pride in it.

Government cannot do this. Only the people can.
Mii gwech.

Secretary/Treasurer Curt Kalk



Curt delivered prepared remarks. The key points of his speech follow.

- My top priorities as Secretary/Treasurer continue to be honesty, openness and accountability.
- The legislative branch of the government enacts laws, adopts resolutions, and ratifies contracts to move programs forward that benefit the welfare of all Band members.
- The Band needs to create campaign finance laws that ensure fair elections and equal opportunity as people run for office.
- We need an ethics code for elected and appointed officials. This would

include following the Band’s laws that gifts received need to be reported to the proper branch of government.

- Band members that work on tribal land and tribally funded projects should receive the prevailing wage whether they are working for a subcontractor or a contractor.
- Programs and services are administered through the executive branch of the tribal government.
- The Band Assembly understands that Band members sometimes have serious emergencies. When I get a call from someone who needs help, I refer them to the Band’s programs, services or the appropriate commissioner.
- We have nearly 4,300 Band members and a budget of about \$140 million a year. In 1984 there were about 1,500 Band members, and we had a \$1.4 million budget.
- Even with Grand Casino revenues and higher tribal government budgets, we cannot fix everything. We are just getting started on fixing things.
- Each of us as individuals needs to do better for ourselves. I’m not talking about money. The best times I’ve had in my life haven’t related to how much money I’ve had. They’ve involved spending time with family.
- I never want to see a Solicitor General of the Mille Lacs Band with a gun at the government center. The Solicitor General’s job is to serve the Band with justice, not a weapon.
- I will ask the Band Assembly to start meeting once a month in the evenings in each district. We hope this will enable more Band members who work during the day to attend our meetings.
- Speaker of the Band Assembly and Secretary/Treasurer are two separate jobs. The first part of my remarks related to my role as Speaker.
- In my role as Secretary/Treasurer, I am putting a new set of eyes on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Band members.
- The legislative branch has an open-book policy for Band members. If you want to see something from the OMB, or if you have questions about something you’ve seen or need an answer, I will help you find the answer.
- * Each year OMB processes about 7,900 purchase orders, 50,000 vendor checks, 42,000 payroll checks, and 48,000 bonus distribution checks. That’s not easy.
- All households will receive a series of update letters from me.

Serving on a Mille Lacs Band Board or Committee

By Curt Kalk, Mille Lacs Band Secretary/Treasurer

There are many opportunities for Band members to get involved with the Band’s boards and committees. Each department generally has an advisory committee that provides suggestions and oversight. The boards have different membership requirements, most of which can be found in the Band’s statutes under each department.

Generally, Band members are nominated to serve on boards by the Chief Executive and then the Band Assembly either approves or disapproves their nominations. There are some exceptions in which board members are nominated by other officials and then chosen by the Chief Executive.

Here are a few examples of Band boards, but please note that this is not a complete list of all the boards and committees:

Corporate Commission Board of Directors

Five board members are nominated by the Chief Executive and ratified by the Band Assembly to serve a four-year term on this board. The board supervises the Band’s business and investment decisions and oversees Band-owned businesses.

Nay Ah Shing School Board

The school board sets policies for the Band’s school programs and employees. The board members, who must be Band members 21 years of age or older, are elected to serve four-year terms.

The Gaming Authority Board

The board is responsible for ensuring that the Band’s

gaming activities comply with the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act and Band laws. The board has five members who are nominated by the Chief Executive or a Band Assembly member to serve four-year terms.

Housing Board

The board consists of seven Band members who must be at least 18 years old. Each Band Assembly member nominates two people for the board and submits their names to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive chooses one person from each pair of names to serve on the board. The Chief Executive also nominates two people to the board, and the Band Assembly chooses one. For the final two positions on the board, the Speaker of the Assembly and the Chief Executive nominate two people each and the Band Assembly chooses two of the four nominees for the positions. The Housing Board oversees the Band’s housing policies, grants housing loans, and upholds and approves housing programs.

Circle of Health Board

Board members serve three-year terms on this board, which oversees the Circle of Health budget and appeals process. The board consists of seven members, two of whom must have some professional health care experience. Board members are nominated by Band Assembly members and selected by the Chief Executive.

Because each board has different requirements, terms and processes, please contact me at 320-532-4181 for more information about serving on boards and committees.

Appointed Officials Separation of Employment

By Curt Kalk, Mille Lacs Band Secretary/Treasurer

A Band member raised a question recently about the reason why public statements are not made concerning employee departures. Personnel matters often raise sensitive issues that are best handled

internally. It is therefore the general policy of the Mille Lacs Band government not to discuss the circumstances surrounding an employee’s departure. This policy was created to protect both the Band government and the employee. Thank you for your question!

New Approach Designed to Keep Families Together

By **Toya Stewart Downey**

The Band's Department of Family Services has a new way of doing business. Instead of telling families what their path needs to be, the department is empowering families to decide what their plans should be.

The program called, "wrap-around service" focuses on the individual family, the needs of the family members, and the strength of the family as a whole. Plans are created that draw from each member's unique strengths, said Suzanne Merrill, one of the department's social workers.

"We lead families to make decisions about their vision for how their families should operate," said Ryan Champagne, the Band's director of family services. "Our job is to give them the resources to meet their vision."

The Department of Family Services works with each family to develop a customized approach to help the family meet its goals of developing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Families get involved with the program either by referral or on a voluntary basis.

"We'll offer parent assistance and will work with them one on one, we'll get private tutors, and we'll provide transportation to school events," Ryan said. "The case workers see families every single week, and they help the families rank their goals and develop their vision."

"Some people think the concept is case management, but we call it 'support for the families,'" said Suzanne. "We rely on the community – aunts, uncles, cousins – to help offer the support that the family needs."

Proponents of the wrap-around approach say that the process helps families develop an effective support network while increasing their own sense of competence because they acquire new skills and ways to help their families succeed. It also allows for crisis and safety plans that help minimize fear and uncertainty. Families often feel more hopeful.

A departure from traditional approaches

The wrap-around approach is a departure from the way social services were originally designed, Suzanne said.

"The stereotypical view is that

social workers will take the kids and then will tell the families what they need to do to get them back," she said. "But what we want families to know is that we're here to keep their families together. We want to work with families to keep them together."

Challenges

The wrap-around approach is labor-intensive. It is also challenging to educate those who are unfamiliar with the approach, because they were taught a different way of doing social work.

Both Suzanne and Ryan say that not every family wants help or wants to use the wrap-around plan, even though they can benefit from the approach.

"It's hard to change people's perspective," Ryan said. "Some families expect you to solve their problem because, 'that's your job.'"

Eventually, they come around and realize that they are a part of their own success, Suzanne said.

Still, the family services staff is undeterred.

"Our goal is not to be working with families forever," Suzanne said. "We want them to do well on their own, without our help. But we also want them to know that we're always here for them."

Promising results

So far, the results seem promising, Ryan said.

"By using the wrap-around approach, the number of children in home placement has gone down and more children are home with their families," he said. "It makes sense to help families take care of their kids while they're still at home, rather than when they're in a group or foster home."

Part of the success of the program may be due to the Band's Family Services Department tailoring its services to meet the specific needs of American Indians. That means that if a family wants to consult with a medicine man, participate in a sweat, or attend a ceremonial event, they can include that in their family's overall plan.

Families are also enjoying being part of the decision-making. "When they realize it's their plan, they're more apt to do it," Suzanne said.

Joycelyn Shingobe Assumes New Role



Joycelyn Shingobe

By **Toya Stewart Downey**

Band member Joycelyn Shingobe has assumed a new role as the interim director of the Workforce Center/Department of Labor.

In her new post, she is responsible for administering Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the 477 Program, TANF Child Care Program, Summer Youth, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) program, and Adult Employment Services Programs. She will also oversee the management and supervision of all staff within the Workforce Center departments.

"I am looking forward to assisting Band government in the restructuring phase of the newly developed Department of Labor," said Joycelyn. "I enjoy seeing Band members succeed."

In the past year, Joycelyn has focused her attention on her own family and helping them succeed in their education and employment endeavors. Now she wants to focus on the larger community, as she has done in the past during her long history of working with the Band.

Her most recent job with tribal government was GED trainer. Previous to that she was the Band's Commissioner of Education from 2002 to 2009. For four years prior to her job as commissioner, she was a superintendent assistant at the Nay Ah Shing Schools. Joycelyn was also the site manager for the Mille Lacs Indian Museum for more than a decade. She worked for the Minnesota Historical Society for almost 20 years, including her time at the museum. She is also an artist and often makes presentations on American Indian topics.

Joycelyn is passionate about personal and professional growth and wants Band members to strive for a better way of life through education and their careers. That's one of the reasons why she feels like her current job is a good fit for her.

In a 2008 interview, Joycelyn expressed her thoughts about the importance of seeking educational opportunities for

Band members who want to be successful in their careers.

"Education is the way to better ourselves and our community," she said. "This is a way up and out of hopelessness. Our ancestors put so much effort into making sure that we had our land and our traditional ways. As a community we need to continue to remember the sacrifices they made by keeping ourselves culturally and educationally strong for our children and grandchildren."

"We need to open up the barriers identified in our TANF program that will help our clients move forward toward being employable," Joycelyn continued. "Our program staff will continue to work towards moving people forward and in a direction that demonstrates positive change."

One of Joycelyn's program goals is to see an active cultural component in the Department of Labor. "I believe that a connection to our spiritual selves helps to guide us as we go through the ups and downs of life."

The most important lesson she has learned along her spiritual path is to respect and cherish Anishinaabe traditions and ceremonies. "I will follow the cultural traditions of my community for the rest of my life," she said.

Carolyn Shaw, Assistant Commissioner of Administration, is thrilled that Joycelyn is leading the Department of Labor. "I'm confident that Joycelyn's previous leadership, knowledge of TANF, and background in education make her a perfect fit for this position," she said. Joycelyn will oversee the day-to-day operations of the department as well as help identify barriers of our clients and the programs and services that will help them overcome those barriers to employment."

Band Assembly recently approved the restructuring of the Workforce Center. This begins with the new "Department of Labor" name. The restructuring is now in the middle stages. Program and job descriptions are being revised to better fit the employment and training needs of Mille Lacs Band members and their families, Carolyn said.

In addition, a revised three-year federal TANF plan was recently approved that allows for more employment and training programs, including a series of work readiness and life skills programs for adults and youth.

"Once the department restructuring is complete, more information about the Department of Labor's new efforts and opportunities will be communicated to community members," Carolyn said.

Internship Opportunities

By Jodell Meyer, Band member development

Band members currently enrolled in college can find paid internships through Internship Credit Experience (ICE). ICE is a Band member development program that has been placing students in internships since 2002.

College students participating in the ICE program will receive:

- Real business experience
- Assignments and projects that will enhance their academic studies
- The opportunity to earn college credits, depending on the student's major and school

The dates of each internship are flexible, but most coincide with the student's summer break. Some internships are available during the school year.

To be eligible for an internship, a student must:

- Be an enrolled Band member
- Be enrolled and actively attending an accredited institution of higher learning
- Meet the academic requirements of the institution for a minimum of one semester
- Meet the academic requirements of the Mille Lacs Band Scholarship Office for a minimum of one semester

Contact information

For internship opportunities, contact the following people:

- Grand Casino Mille Lacs or the District I area: Loretta Hansen (800-746-9805, ext. 8843)
- Grand Casino Hinckley or the outlying area: Salena Fox (800-472-6321, ext. 4872)
- Corporate Commission or small businesses: Jodell Meyer (800-746-9805, ext. 8880)

Grand Casino Hinckley to Host Job Fair in Lake Lena

By Sarah Barten, Grand Casino public relations specialist

Grand Casino Hinckley is hosting a job fair for Mille Lacs Band members at the Lake Lena Community Center on Tuesday, February 15, from 1-4 p.m.

Information on open positions at the Grand National Golf Course, as well as other job openings at Grand Casino Hinckley, will be available at the job fair. Wanetta Thompson, vice president of human

resources, and Casey Fahey, director of golf operations, will be on hand to answer employment questions and distribute applications for the open positions.

Mille Lacs Band members are encouraged to apply. If you have any questions, call Vicki Kroschel, director of human resources, at 800-472-6321, ext. 4930, or Wanetta Thompson, vice president of human resources, at 800-472-6321, ext. 4909.

Professional Boxing Returns to Grand Casino Hinckley

By Jim Erickson, executive director of the Department of Athletic Regulation

Live professional boxing is returning to Grand Casino Hinckley on Saturday, February 26.

Phil "The Drill" Williams (11-3-1, 10 KOs) and Caleb "Golden" Truax (16-0-1, 10 KOs) will fight in a rematch of their hotly contested Minnesota State Super Middleweight bout.

Williams and Truax's first bout in April 2010 ended in a draw after 10 rounds. Each fighter believes he won the first time around and is looking to add to his knockout ledger and

take the decision out of the judge's hands.

Popular Hinckley boxer Tim Taggart (4-2-2) will go up against Charles Meier (4-1-1) in what promises to be an action packed bout.

Ugandan power-puncher Ismail Muwendo (7-0, 6 KOs), and Minneapolis prospects Jamal James, Tony Lee, and Jonathan Perez will put their undefeated records on the line when they battle at Grand Casino Hinckley.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the first bout starts at 7:30 p.m.

Band Opening Child Support Enforcement Department



Photo courtesy of Grand Casinos

Amy Doyle

By Toya Stewart Downey

There's still an office to fill, staff to hire, and a host of other items that need to happen before opening the doors to the Band's new Tribal Child Support Enforcement Department. But director Amy Doyle, a Leech Lake Band member, is up for the challenge that comes with launching a new venture.

Amy, who assumed her new post on January 24, says this is exactly the kind of work that excites her.

"I'm interested in the organizational piece of this...getting set up, creating, implementing...these are my strengths," said Amy, who earned a bachelor's degree in organizational behavior management from the College of St. Scholastica.

As director, Amy will plan, direct and administer the Band's child support enforcement, which recently received a federal grant.

"I know how counties can be overloaded, and often it takes a

long time [for clients] to get answers," she said. "I'm hoping to change that for Band members. And I want our program to be a role model for other tribes."

Amy previously worked for Grand Casinos for 12 years. Most of her time was spent marketing as a community representative, a role in which she served as a public outreach ambassador. Though Amy enjoyed her work, she felt a strong pull to have a greater impact on people's daily lives.

"I have a passion for children, and I know that what happens with them today affects their future, and they are our future," she said.

How Band members will benefit

Once the department is operational, Band members will be able to apply for child support within the community. Other benefits include:

- The Band is in the best position to understand Band members' issues.
- The Band's enforcement methods differ from those of the state. (The Band won't incarcerate people or take away their drivers licenses.)
- In-kind payments would be acceptable if both parties agree to the terms.
- The Band would be able to better locate non-custodial parents, because it may have more accessible resources and better relationships with Band members.

Nay Ah Shing Students Ring Bells for the Salvation Army



Photo courtesy of Bugs Haskin

Nay Ah Shing students rang the Salvation Army Bell in December to collect funds for the less fortunate in the Brainerd Lakes area. Secretary/Treasurer Curt Kalk agreed to match the funds they raised.

During some of the coldest nights in December the group bundled up and rang the bell for a total of nine hours. The students raised a total of \$456.34. Salvation Army Major Jeff Strickler met the group at the Mille Lacs Band Government Center where Kalk presented a \$500 check that matched the donations.

February Diabetes Class

By diabetes program staff

The next diabetes education group class will be held at the District I Community Center on Thursday, February 24, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The class will cover the following topics: understanding type II diabetes, goal-making for health changes, medications for diabetes, medical care, risk reduction and healthy choices, nutrition and food labels, foot care, resources, and making a follow-up plan.

Lunch will be provided, and participants will have the chance to win door prizes and play blood sugar bingo.

To register, contact Arielle Beaulieu at 320-532-7852. Registrations are due on Tuesday, February 22.

New staff

Mille Lacs Band member Millissa Alger recently joined the diabetes team. She conducts monthly diabetes talking circles in

each district and helps with healthy heart classes.

Millissa enjoys her new role with the diabetes team. “I like that I get to meet new people and help community members deal with the life challenge of diabetes,” she said.

Millissa has associate degrees from Leech Lake Tribal College and the Institute of American Indian Arts.

February diabetes talking circles will be held on the following dates:

- Isle Community Center: February 2 at 10 a.m.
- Hinckley ALU: February 7 at 9 a.m.
- Aazhoomog Community Center: February 7 at 1 p.m.
- Mille Lacs ALU: February 14 at 1 p.m.
- East Lake Community Center: February 16 at noon

For more information about the talking circles, contact Millissa at 320-532-7712 or millissa.alger@millelacsband.com.

Circle of Health Update

By Circle of Health Staff

Diagnostic tests

We are still having problems with the billing process for radiology tests, including x-rays, MRIs, and CT scans. Even if you present your card during your visit, the information is not passed to the radiology provider or the radiology provider does not assume responsibility to bill secondary payers.

Once you receive the first statement, you must call the billing office to give us your secondary or Circle of Health information. The billing office will ask for the date of the service and the account number. If you receive a second statement, call the billing office again and let us know that you have encountered problems. In our experience, these claims are sent to collections without hesitation.

Annual updates

Thank you to those of you who completed your annual updates at State of the Band. To be included in the gift card drawing, you need to submit copies of the front and back of your insurance cards by Tuesday, February 15. The gift card drawing will be held on Friday, February 18.

Currently all personal reimbursements have the annual Enrollment and Consent to Release Information forms, allowing all Band members to enter into the drawing. If you have not submitted any

reimbursement requests and would like to enter the drawing, call our office so we can mail, fax or e-mail you the forms. The forms can also be found on the Mille Lacs Band’s website (www.millelacsband.com) under programs and Circle of Health.

Without this information on file, any future reimbursement requests will be put on hold. Beginning in April we will not process reimbursement requests from accounts with hold statuses until we receive the requested information. This information is vital to contacting you, sending letters, and corresponding with providers, insurance companies, and employers on your behalf.

Medicare premium reimbursements

The next processing of Medicare quarterly reimbursements will be the second week of April. If you have not received your reimbursement for the months of January, February and March 2011 contact your benefit coordinator. We may not have received your annual award letter for 2011.

Contact information

Please allow a two- to six-week grace period for reimbursement claims from the date of submission. If you have any questions, please contact David Boyd (A-L), Roberta Lemieux (M-Z), or Michelle Palomaki, director of Circle of Health, at 320-676-8214 or 800-491-6106.

Public Health Updates

Home Care Program

Elder care would like to inform you about what services are available from the Mille Lacs Band Elder Care program. Our program offers at-home care for Elders and/or disabled Band members. We can provide care including homemaking, assistance with personal care, medication assistance and ordering, toenail care, and nail care for diabetics. These are just a few of the services we offer.

If you are interested or know of anyone who could benefit from our services, please contact Jackie Jensen at Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Public Health at 320-532-7776 or 320-532-7783.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

WIC is a nutrition program that helps eligible pregnant women, new mothers, babies, and children younger than five eat well, learn about nutrition, and stay healthy. The program provides nutrition education and counseling, nutritious foods, and referrals to health and other social services.

For more information, contact Joanne Boyd at 320-532-7821.

Maternal Child Health (MCH)

MCH welcomes Allison Harr, RN PHN as the new MCH coordinator. Her goals are to create new programs and to extend services to outer districts with a focus on prenatal, postpartum and breastfeeding education. MCH continues to provide well child visits that include home safety checks and education. Please contact Allison with any questions or referrals at 320-532-7511.

Community-Based Doula Program

Community members trained as doulas provide physical and emotional support during pregnancy, delivery, and after a baby’s birth. These women are advocates for the birth mother and incorporate cultural traditions into the birth experience.

If you are pregnant or know someone who is pregnant and would like to learn more, please contact Kari DiGiovanni at 320-532-7457.

February Healthy Heart Class

The next healthy heart class will be held at the District I Community Center on Tuesday, February 22, at noon.

The class will cover the differences between heart disease in men and women. A healthy meal will be provided.

The Healthy Heart Program holds monthly classes that include cooking demonstrations, motivational speakers, and fun learning experiences for people who are trying to improve their

lifestyles and make healthier food choices.

The Healthy Heart Program is designed to help people with diabetes reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease. The goals of the program are to help people lose 7% of their body weight and increase physical activity.

To register for the February class, contact Cyndy Edgerton at 320-532-4163, ext. 7840. Registrations are due on Thursday, February 17.

Gego Zaagaswaaken Video to Air on TV

By Gloria Songetay, Secondhand Smoke Project outreach coordinator

The Secondhand Smoke Project’s video, *Gego Zaagaswaaken* (meaning “don’t smoke”), will air on Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) on Saturday, February 26, at 8:30 p.m.

The video shares the struggles and triumphs of Mille Lacs Band members and employees who have quit or are

quitting smoking. It is an education tool to help people learn about the health risks of commercial tobacco and the effects and dangers of secondhand smoke. The video was part of the Mille Lacs Band Public Health program and wasponsored by ClearWay Minnesota.

I’d like to thank everyone who was involved in making the video. You did an excellent job in your roles. Chi mii gwech!

Weight Loss Challenge Winners

After eight weeks of working out during the Mille Lacs Band’s weight loss challenge, hundreds of pounds have been shed across the reservation and the results are in.

Carrie Moras and Miranda Buetel from Hinckley won first place, losing a combined 9.6% of their body weight. Tammie Wickstrom and Sarah Cosgrove won second place, losing a combined 8.5% of their body weight.

Carrie and Miranda each won \$500 and Tammie and Sarah won \$250 each. Half of their winnings came in the form of a Band gift certificate, which is redeemable at Band-owned businesses.

More than 150 Band members and employees participated in the weight loss challenge, which lasted from October 15 to December 17.

“Congratulations to everyone who participated in the challenge and lost weight. You are all winners,” said Jim Ingle, fitness coordinator.

Many participants joined a weightlifting program as a part of their conditioning. “The key to losing weight is to involve as many muscles as you can in a workout,” said Jim.

The next fitness challenge, which will have a different goal, will begin sometime in February.

“We want to encourage everyone to participate in the next fitness challenge. The challenges are a fun way to stay fit and active,” said Jim.

For more information about the next challenge, contact Jim at 320-532-7840.

Free Hearing Evaluations

To schedule an appointment for **Friday, February 11**, at Ne-la-Shing Clinic, call 320-532-4163. Walk-ins are welcome. We will do our best to serve you.

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

How to Rid Houses of Mold

By Richard Hill, housing general manager

Starting this month in the *Inaajimowin*, the Housing Department will provide tips to help community members take better care of their property. This month we have tips about how to deal with mold.

Large mold colonies are dangerous to humans and to the structural health of buildings. Mold thrives in homes made of wood and lined with paper, especially when moisture is present.

Cleaning up mold is relatively easy – just scrub the area with a detergent solution and wear proper protective equipment. Porous materials such as ceiling tiles, sheetrock, or carpet may need to be replaced because they absorb mold.

Once you have cleaned up the mold, identify the source of the moisture. If you don’t know how to do that, consult a professional.

Mold sources

Homes that leak water from roofing or that condense water from exterior surfaces or piping have a structural problem. Moisture builds in homes when the roof or pipes leak water or when exterior surfaces or piping condense water.

Sometimes the problem is minor and easy to fix by replacing a gasket, tightening fittings, or replacing new gutters that drain water away from the house. Other problems are less easy to fix and require adding insulation, replacing the roof, or replacing a broken pipe.

Changing some of your household habits or furniture arrangements can also help diminish unwanted moisture sources.

- Don’t use a blanket as window insulation; don’t place a mattress directly on the floor; and don’t install carpeting on an unheated basement slab. These practices cause condensation.
- Use ventilation fans whenever cooking or bathing.
- Increase the speed of fans or open windows to accommodate extra people for in-home gatherings.
- Inspect and fix water leaks from sinks, toilets, and laundry machines.

If you have any questions about how deal with mold, visit the Environmental Protection Agency’s Indoor Air Quality website (www.epa.gov/iaq) or contact Richard Hill, housing general manager, at 320-532-7415.

Tribal TANF Meeting

By TANF staff

An orientation meeting regarding the new Tribal TANF Plan will be held at the Grand Casino Mille Lacs Events & Convention Center on Wednesday, February 9, at 10 a.m.

At the meeting, case managers will review the changes in the new Tribal TANF Plan and how these changes will affect participants in Districts I, II and III. Participants will also have the opportunity to ask questions.

A luncheon buffet and refreshments will be served at the meeting. Participants should contact their case managers to set up any necessary child care and transportation.

Letters with information pertaining to the meeting have been mailed. Participants should contact their case manager if they have not received the letter.

The Urban TANF Office will schedule a separate meeting for participants receiving services in the urban area.

Tribal Noteboard

Happy February birthday to:

Jenny on February 3, with love from Kelly, Jay, Kellen, Tracy, Rachel, June, Taya, Noah, Deek, and Wesley • **Antavia Pendegayosh**, 5, with love from Mom, Dad, Ellie, Grandma June, Pap, Auntie Renee, Uncle Steve, Thalia, and Nino • **Corporal Sam (Bone)**, 24, with love from Mom • **Dalow**, from your sister Neesy • **Joshua Nayquonabe**, 9 on February 8, from Auntie Jan and kids, TJ, and Kali • **Keira Sam**, 1 on February 11, from TJ and Kali • **Jalissa Lynn**, 2 on February 15, from Auntie Jan and kids, TJ, and Kali • **Jim Mack**, 50 on February 17, from Jan and kids, TJ, and Kali • **Nikki Sam**, 19 on February 20, from Tiff and Kali Anne • **Nicholas (Fo Realz) Mitchell**, 25 on February 24, from TJ and Kali • **Will Nayquonabe**, 17 on February 25, from Auntie Jan and kids, TJ, and Kali • **Tyler Nayquonabe**, 11 on February 28, from Auntie Jan and kids, TJ, and Kali • **Jordan Nayquonabe**, 4 on February 28, from Auntie Jan and kids, TJ, and Kali • **Lil Nana** on February 17, from Kyla Lynn Gahbow • **Nancy Gahbow** on February 17, with love from Dakota and Bundy • **Bob** on February 17, with love from Kyla, Coda, Bundy, and Nancy • **Isaiah Potter** on February 10, from Aunt Lenore, Tyson, Eva, Jon, Tiffany, Uncle Evan, Susan, and Grandpa Lenny • **Clay Jr.** on February 7, from Lenore, Tyson, Jon, Eva, and Tiffany • **Raina**, from Lenore, Eva, Jon, and Tiffany • **Rosa** on February 26, from Lenore, Tyson, Tiffany, Eva, and Jon • **Tina Sam** on February 7, with love from Mom, Dee, Dulce, Eric, Dana, Tanya Jean, Junior, David, Sarah, Prince, Trinity, Rainy, Jim, Jay, Matty, Niss, Aniyah, Valerie, Waylon, Great Aunt Jean, and the rest of your family • **Ozzio O.** on February 20, with love from Auntie Niss and family • **Doll** on February 12, from your little sister • **Audrey Bonilla** on February 7, from your sister Lulu and family • **Irene Jones** on February 4, with love from Rhonda, DJ, Torry, Josh, Kali, and Baby Noah • **Noah Richard Jones Petite** on February 13, with love from Mom, Dad, brothers and sisters.

Happy February birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Nancy Arnoux
Laura Ashcroft
Frank Benjamin
Melanie Benjamin
Debra Blake
Judy Carlson
Harry Davis
Bonita Eagle
Douglas Eagle
Eileen Farah
Eugene Garbow
Beverly Graves
Donald Houle
Irene Jones
Conrad Kegg
Maggie Kegg
George LaFave Jr.
Dwight Madison Jr.
Victoria Mitchell
Gilbert Moose
Robin Oswaldson
Alan Pindegayosh
Lawrence Reynolds
Ellen Roth
Bette Sam
Darlene Sam
Gladys Sam
Alvera Smith
Elizabeth St. John
Robert Staples
Audrey Staples
Bernice Sutton
Emma Thomas
Tony Weous
Patrick Weyaus
Marilyn Whitney
Clyde Wind
Dorothy Wistrom

Anniversary

Congratulations to **Alice and Don Olson** for celebrating their 42nd wedding anniversary. *From Dorothy and family.*

Thank you

Thanks to **Patricia Jones** for asking your baby sister to chaperone you on the Elder trip in November. It was an awesome time. Thanks to the Mille Lacs Band as well.

Birth announcements

Congratulations to Tina Sam and Eric Avalos on the birth of their new baby girl. **Dulce Sirena-Marie Avalos** was born on February 8. She weighed 6 lbs., 13 oz., and was 19.5 in. long. She is welcomed home by Mom, Dee, Dana, David, Tanya, Junior, Sarah, Prince, Trin, Jim,

Rainy, Jay, Matty, Valerie, Niss, Aniyah, Way Way, Great Aunt Jean, and the rest of your family.



Liberty Ella Rose Porter

Congratulations to Freedom and Shannon Porter on the birth of their new baby girl. **Liberty Ella Rose Porter** was born on December 9, 2010. She weighed 6 lbs., 7 oz., and was 20 in. long. Liberty is welcomed by her great-grandfather Tony Weous, Grandmothers Carmen Weous Behnkie and Beverly Sutton, Aunts Allison Porter and Amber Porter, “sisters” Cali Rae Weous and Alexis Porter, and many great-aunts, great-uncles, and cousins. Liberty is named in honor of her great-grandmothers, Ellerraine Weous and Rose Hunter Porter.

Special dedication

Young Band member Clara Gahbow wrote the poem below for her uncle, Band Elder Pete Gahbow.

My silly uncle Pete. He has a hard belly and brown skin smile. He has a cologne smelling Viking shirt, oh how I love you. You are the best. He is a mac lover mac cooker. I love it when you sing the side step with the other men. He loves pop and juice and always the Viking you are loud-loveable and a very restful hunter. And a silly-searcher oh how I love you. I feel care-cuddly safe loving and very funny-weird.

In memory

In loving memory of **Joe Sam**. Its been two years since you have been gone, Dad. But until there is a cure, we will just have to remember yesteryear. The jokes, the laughter, and the love and memories we once shared showed your girls just how much you cared. You were brave and a fighter until the end, and when the Creator

called, you took his hand and left it all. You taught us well and prepared us for life. We will share with our grandchildren and great-grandchildren the wonderful dad that we once had. We love and miss you, Dad. *From your daughters, Lulu, Audrey, and Kathy.*

Dedicated to my friend, **Mervel “Tiger” Jones Jr.**

The loss of a loved one is so hard to face, you just want to hide, go somewhere to escape. But death is something we all must go through, I know its hard when its someone you loved and knew. Just know now he’s in a better place, no more hurt or pain shall he face. It seems unfair and yes, this is true, but he is in heaven now watching over me and you. The Creator has called him home to rest, and he’s being well-taken care of, because the Creator knows best.

On February 21, it will be four years since I have lost my very close friend. Everyday I think of his smiling face. Never putting himself before others, he always had great stories to tell, always made me laugh to help sheer me up when I was down. Coffee and a cigarette in the morning with a good story to listen to, was what I looked forward to every time I woke up. Never would have thought I'd miss him this much. Now that he is gone, what am I to do but dwell in the past of the great memories we had. Not a day goes by that I don't thin of him. Until we meet again (and I’m sure we will) I try to keep smiling and to keep on going forward. May 6, 1956-February 21, 2007. *Submitted by Stacy Boyd.*

Obituaries

John (Jack) Leonard Sam

Born – 8-3-1949

Died – 12-21-2010

Resided in Isle, MN

Bruce Alvin Martin (Benjamin)

Born – 1-6-1952

Died – 12-25-2010

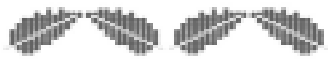
Resided in Sandstone, MN

Nancy Jeanne Gisch

Born – 10-31-2010

Died – 12-28-2010

Resided in South St. Paul, MN



Upcoming Events at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum

Storybook reading and kids crafts

Come to the Mille Lacs Indian Museum on Saturday, February 5, to listen to museum staff read from storybooks from noon to 2 p.m. From 2-4 p.m., kids will learn how to put together a corn husk doll.

The reading is free, and the cost for the corn husk doll kit is \$6. Please allow an hour to make the craft.

Ojibwe mitten workshop

Come learn techniques of working with leather at this two-day workshop, and create a pair of authentic Ojibwe-style mittens to take home. The class will be held on Saturday, February 19, from noon-4 p.m. and Sunday, February 20, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The workshop costs \$50 for the general public and \$45 for Minnesota Historical Society members and Mille Lacs Band members, plus an additional \$25 supply fee.

Registration is required by February 16. A minimum of five participants is required for the workshop. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Please call 320-532-3632 for more information.

Spring 2011 Ceremonial Dance Dates

- Merlin & Mick, Mille Lacs, April 1-2
- Vince & Dale, East Lake, April 8-9
- Ralph & Andy, Mille Lacs, April 15-16
- Dave & Skip, Lake Lena, April 22-23
- Lee & Larry, Lake Lena, April 29-30
- Ole & Elmer, Mille Lacs, May 6-7
- Joe & Reginald, Mille Lacs, May 13-14
- Tim & Tom, East Lake, May 20-21
- Niib & Mushkooub, East Lake, May 27-28
- Lynda & Joyce, Mille Lacs, June 3-4
- Melvin & Perry, Mille Lacs, TBD

Band Members Create Traditional Ceremonial Drumsticks



Toya Stewart Downey

Band member Adrian Bugg helped create the sticks.

By Toya Stewart Downey

Pete Gahbow has been a part of the drum since he was a child so he knows firsthand what it's like to partake in the drum ceremonies that are the heartbeat of Anishinaabe people.

He knows the importance of the songs that serve as prayers of the people and that without the drum, the songs are meaningless.

That's why when it came time to replace the drumsticks that he and other drummers had used for many years, Pete made it his mission to do so.

"It was a big learning process for me," he said. "I found out the traditional way by talking to the Elders. They told me that we needed to use white oak instead of white ash which I tried two years ago."

He began making new drumsticks with help from his sons, brother, and other Band members who were a part of the Band's Day Labor Program.

The program paid the wages of the men as they embarked on the fulfilling journey of creating the 130 drumsticks – 15 for each drum – that would be used in the fall for the Ceremonial Drums.

Creating the drumsticks

The workers created the drumsticks in Pete's garage using an assembly line. Each worker took ownership of one part of the process.

The workers started by cutting down a tree, dividing the tree into logs, and whittling the wood down to sticks that could then be filed and shaped to create the drumsticks.

Initially they made each stick using traditional methods and would start with a piece of wood that was 2 inches by 3 inches

thick. Then they'd whittle the stick down to half the diameter and then to 5/8 of the diameter. Finally, they would sand the stick into the drumstick, explained Erik Gahbow, who worked on the project as a contractor.

Each stick took a few days to make until the group got more powerful equipment. Education Commissioner Dennis Olson paid for the electric tools that the men used to speed up the process to about five hours per stick.

After the sticks were filed and sanded down to the appropriate size, Pete added cloth to the handles and coated the wood with bear grease given by a Band Elder.

A spiritual experience

Daniel Pawaush, who worked on the project through the Day Labor Program, said while the work was especially challenging before getting the new tools, it was important to him to be a part of the process.

"It meant a lot for me to do this," Daniel said. "It's helped me connect with my culture, and I've learned a lot. What is most important to me is that we helped preserve our culture by making the drumsticks that are used for the ceremonial drums."

"It would be easy to find fiberglass sticks, but what some people may not know is that these sticks for our drums must come from Mother Earth," Daniel added.

While creating drumsticks, Adrian Bugg reconnected to the cultural practices that he had drifted away from.

"I have respect for the drum and the culture, so it was a privilege to make the sticks," he said. "I actually went to ceremonial powwows, and it felt good to get back in touch with that. It felt good to sing again. I even have my son singing around the house."

The workers were conscious about keeping their spirits positive while working since Elders told them they must put good energy into their work while creating the sticks.

Erik said that the men were dedicated to their work and that their work will continue to impact the community for many years to come as they participate in the ceremonies.

"When you make the sticks, they're a part of you," he said.

Before gifting the sticks to the drums, they held a small feast to make the sticks a part of each drum. The men received gifts for the sticks but were not paid for them.

"We are now getting requests from other communities, like White Earth, to make sticks for their drums," Pete said. They've also received accolades from the drummers who used the sticks during the fall ceremonials.

"Making sticks is an art that has been forgotten for two generations," said Erik. "These guys figured out how to do it, and they even figured out how to use the knots in the wood for handles."



Toya Stewart Downey

Pete Gahbow (left), Erik Gahbow (middle), and Adrian Bugg (right) were part of the crew that helped create the drumsticks.

| Calendar of Events | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| February 2011 | | | | | | |
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| *To Purchase Tickets Visit a Grand Casino box office, call TicketMaster at 800-745-3000, or visit www.ticketmaster.com | If you would like an event included in the community calendar, please contact Kelly Sam at 651-292-8062 or write to Kelly at kelly@goffpublic.com | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | Narcotics Anonymous District I Community Center 6-7 p.m. Every Wednesday | Talking Circles District I Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: KC Paulsen, 320-532-4046 | Boys & Girls Club Open House District I Community Center 7-9 p.m. Contact: Adrienne Benjamin, 320-532-4744 | Storybook Reading Mille Lacs Indian Museum 12-2 p.m. Corn Husk Doll Making Workshop Mille Lacs Indian Museum 2-4 p.m. |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| | | Boys & Girls Club Open House Chiminising Community Center 6-8 p.m. Contact: Adrienne Benjamin, 320-532-4744 | District I Community Meeting District I Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: Judy Virnig, 320-532-7423 Boys & Girls Club Open House Lake Lena Community Center 5:30-8 p.m., Contact: Adrienne Benjamin, 320-532-4744 | Boys & Girls Club Open House East Lake Community Center 5-8 p.m. Contact: Adrienne Benjamin, 320-532-4744 | | Arctic Blast Grand Casino Mille Lacs 9 a.m. |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| | Pine Grove Leadership Academy Meeting 5 p.m. Contact: Amiliya Zago, 320-384-7598 AMVETS Meeting Grand Casino Mille Lacs, 6 p.m. Contact: Ken Weyaus, 320-309-6925 | District II Leadership Academy School Board Meeting 4 p.m., Contact: Raina Killspotted, 218-768-2345 Job Fair Lake Lena Community Center 1-4 p.m. | District III Community Meeting Grand Casino Hinckley 5:30 p.m. Contact: Katie Draper, 320-384-6240 | Talking Circles District I Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: KC Paulsen, 320-532-4046 | | Hank and My Honky Tonk Friends* Grand Casino Mille Lacs 2 p.m. & 6 p.m. Ojibwe Mitten Workshop Mille Lacs Indian Museum 12-4 p.m. |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| Ojibwe Mitten Workshop Mille Lacs Indian Museum 10 a.m.-2 p.m. | All government offices closed for Chief's Day | | District IIA Community Meeting Chiminising Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: Lesley Sam, 320-676-1102 | All Nations Indian Church 5:30 p.m. Contact: Barb Benjamin-Robertson, 612-872-1424 District II Community Meeting East Lake Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: Jenny Waugh, 218-768-3311 | | Professional Boxing Grand Casino Hinckley 7:30 p.m. |
| 27 | 28 | March 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| | | | | | | |

“What Is Your Dream Vacation?”

Carmen Behnkie



“It has always been Hawaii.”

Terry Smith



“Hawaii.”

Allison Porter



“The Atlantis Resort in the Bahamas.”

Jo Denise Nickaboine



“The Fiji Islands.”

Arlene Weous



“Nashville.”

Jericho Fisher



“Australia. It looks like a beautiful place, and there are so many beautiful animals.”

Bugs Haskin



“Ireland, because of Bono. Of course, I’ll be there and he’ll be here headlining at the casino.”

Dawne Stewart



“Hawaii, because I’ve heard it’s one of the best places to vacation – it’s beautiful and the food is great.”

Photos by Toya Stewart Downey

Band Partners with Central Lakes College on Education Initiatives



Photo courtesy of Central Lakes College

Chief Executive Marge Anderson told Central Lakes College employees at a diversity workshop that she anticipates “changing the face of education in Central Minnesota” through initiatives developed in partnership with Central Lakes College.

Central Lakes College and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe celebrated their higher education collaboration as part of a day-long event in Brainerd on January 6. In partnership with the Band’s Mille Lacs Tribal College, Central Lakes College has earmarked more classes and support services for Mille Lacs Band members.

“Across the state of Minnesota, the graduation rate for American Indian high school students is 41 percent,” said Chief Executive Marge Anderson in her address to Central Lakes College employees. “Finally, we have partners at the table who not only take notice of the crisis in education in Indian Country – we have you in the circle with us.”

Marge said the collaboration is “about changing the face of education in central Minnesota,” especially for tribal students. She

expressed support for initiatives such as an American Indian nursing program, a stronger Indian studies program, a spring powwow or dance exhibition, and an American Indian education summit near Brainerd.

“Together we can build self-sufficiency and pass the value of cultural and Western education on to the next generations,” she concluded.

Marge’s speech was part of a workshop for Central Lakes College faculty and staff. In addition to a college diversity update, workshop topics included “working with and engaging American Indian learners” and “building pathways to success for students of color and low-income youth.” The event began with a performance by the Nay Ah Shing drum group and honor songs introduced by Jack Kingbird, Ojibwe language and culture instructor.

Governor Dayton Supports Gaming Expansion

By Jamie Edwards, government affairs coordinator/state

With the Minnesota Legislature convening on January 4, the political landscape now looks much different than it did last year. Republicans control the Senate and the House of Representatives, and the DFL controls the Governor’s office and executive branch – a complete reversal from the past eight years. This legislative session will be challenging as lawmakers try to solve a \$6.2 billion projected budget deficit for the next two years.

Governor Mark Dayton has already announced his support for gaming expansion. Dayton recently reaffirmed his support of a state-owned and operated casino at the Mall of America, the airport, or downtown Minneapolis. He believes the state would derive maximum financial benefit from these locations.

There have also been serious talks about a proposal to add slot machines at Canterbury Park in the south metro and Running Aces in the north metro. Another potential proposal would add slots to bars across the state. Finally, the deflated Metrodome and constant threat of the Vikings leaving Minnesota continue to add fuel to the fire to find “easy” revenues from some form of gaming expansion.

A few private businesspeople would profit the most from new gaming ventures, and the remaining revenues would fund

a small portion of future state budgets.

What’s at stake?

The gaming industry in Minnesota is saturated, meaning that the number of gamblers would not increase if more casinos enter the market. As a result, any jobs created by a new state-owned casino in the Twin Cities would replace existing casino jobs in greater Minnesota. That would put some of the 3,000 jobs at Grand Casino Mille Lacs and Grand Casino Hinckley in jeopardy. The Mille Lacs Band is meeting with legislators to educate them about the economic value that Grand Casinos bring to East Central Minnesota and working aggressively to defeat any proposals that would injure casino employees and the Band.

Get involved

As the state considers gaming expansion as a way to help solve its budget deficit, the Band is uniting with its members, employees, vendors, neighbors and friends to help protect our region’s economy.

You can get involved at the Mille Lacs Band Action Center on the Band’s website (www.millelacsband.com). Once you sign up, you will receive updates on the status of gaming expansion discussions in the Minnesota Legislature and might be asked to voice your opinions to your legislators at key times.