

OJIBWE INAAJIMOWIN

March 2011

"The story as it's told."

Volume 13 • Number 3

Vikings Donate to Band Youth



Chief Executive Marge Anderson, Assistant Commissioner of Administration and Commissioner of Natural Resources Bradley Kalk with past and present Vikings players.

By Toya Stewart Downey

This year marked the 16th winter that the Mille Lacs Band and the Minnesota Vikings teamed up for the annual Arctic Blast Snowmobile Rally.

The event, held February 12-13 in District I, drew dozens of participants and provided a plethora of family fun such as football games, face-painting, interactive games, and opportunities to meet and mingle with present and former Viking's players and cheerleaders.

Participants also had an opportunity to win approximately \$30,000 in prizes.

Another highlight of the event included a \$2,500 donation to the Band's Chief Executive Office youth fundraiser from the Vikings Childrens Fund.

Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive Marge Anderson said the longstanding relationship between the Band and the Minnesota Vikings and its players has been beneficial for all involved. She especially praised former player, Joey Browner, for his contribution to the Band's youth program.

"Thanks in part to Joey Browner's longtime support of the Community Youth Foundation, we have been able to provide meaningful opportunities for our youth to learn more about the Ojibwe language and culture," Marge said.

Joey Browner established his foundation in 2009 as a way to encourage the development of intellectual and physical well-being.

The foundation provides grants and scholarships to those who demonstrate desires to benefit society as well as for those who want to explore personal growth.

Elders and students from the Nay Ah Shing School also had an opportunity to interact with the Vikings players.

Students from the school's business program got involved in the visit by taking photos of the Elders with former players during a fundraiser breakfast at the Assisted Living Unit.

One dollar from each breakfast purchase was donated to the Mille Lacs Band Chief Executive Office youth fundraiser. The event also supported the Vikings Children's Fund.

Governor Dayton Proposes Budget

Governor Mark Dayton announced a \$37 billion budget proposal that would shave more than half of the state's \$6.2 billion deficit over the next two years by increasing income taxes on the wealthiest Minnesotans. The tax increase would affect only 5% of Minnesotans. Overall, Dayton's budget would raise more than \$4 billion in revenue while making \$950 million in permanent cuts.

Mini-casinos proposed

Some legislators who feel uneasy about supporting tax increases might look to gaming as a way to fix the budget deficit. Two proposals for neighborhood mini-casinos have already been introduced in the Legislature:

- The first proposal would authorize video lottery terminals in current lottery retail establishments that would be run through the Minnesota Lottery. Net revenue from this proposal would go to the state's general fund.

- The second proposal would allow electronic linked bingo, electronic pull-tabs, and video lottery terminals in retail establishments that have beer or liquor licenses.

Experts speculate that some legislators are waiting to propose divisive policy bills, such as additional gaming expansion bills, until after the finance deadline at the end of March. Grand Casino Mille Lacs and Grand Casino Hinckley could lose significant revenues if gaming expands.

Take action

To show your support for the economic vitality that Grand Casinos and the Mille Lacs Band bring to East Central Minnesota, visit the Mille Lacs Band Action Center on the Band's website (www.millelacsband.com).

At the Action Center, you can sign up to receive updates on the status of gaming expansion discussions in the Minnesota Legislature and voice your opinions to your legislators.

Ojibwemowin

March is Onabani giizis (walk on top of snow moon). It is also time to Nando ta wik binay she yag gay be do jig ziigwan (listen for the birds who will bring the spring)!

Editor's note: The Elders used to talk about this time of year, of hearing a bird or birds – usually a crow – not heard of for a while and, as

they step outside, would say, "Ahn day gwag day go shin awad me ni se gwang!" which means "When the crows get here, spring is here!" Or they would say, "Me a zhi gwa wa ba ni shi yung" which means "We're through the dark (time) and we are getting into another season" – as in the dawn of summer or into light of a new day or time.



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Names and Faces

Carla Big Bear



Photo courtesy of the Chief Executive Office

Band member Carla Big Bear is spending this semester in Washington, D.C., learning firsthand how the American political system works. As part of the Native American Political Leadership Program (NAPLP), she is taking classes at George Washington University, participating in hands-on internships, interacting with policy makers, and learning how public policy issues affect Native American communities.

Carla also shadowed Chief Executive Marge Anderson when Marge traveled to Washington. They attended the National Congress of American Indians' State of Indian Nations address and met NCAI President Jefferson Keel after the event. (See above photo.)

Dr. Arne Vainio



Photo courtesy of Ivy Vainio

Dr. Arne Vainio (left) recently received the 2011 Mark Rathke, M.D., Medical Leadership Award from the Arrowhead Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Association during its annual conference. A Mille Lacs Band member, Dr. Vainio serves patients on the Fond du Lac Reservation and has served as a firefighter/paramedic with the Virginia (MN) Fire Department. He was nominated for the award by Monte Fronk (right), emergency management coordinator for the Mille Lacs Band and member of the Arrowhead EMS Association. U.S. Senator Al Franken spoke at the awards ceremony.

Dr. Vainio also read his first published story recently at *The Country Doctor Revisited* book reading at the University of Minnesota-Duluth Medical School. He is one of several authors who contributed stories or poems to the anthology. His son, Band member Jacob Vainio, gave his first public piano performance at the event.

Molly Judkins

Band member Molly Judkins began serving a four-year term on the Minnesota American Indian Chamber of Commerce board of directors in January. Chief Executive Marge Anderson nominated her for the position.

Molly plans to get involved in several fundraising and public relations roles, and hopes to increase membership. She is excited to represent the Band as it promotes American Indian businesses and communities.

Dirty Moccasin Crew

The Dirty Moccasin Crew, which is made up of Mille Lacs Band members Ryan O'Brien, Gordy Davis, Shorty Buff, and Jon Buchanan as well as, Caleb Edmond, and DJ Pseudonym, will perform at Froggy's Bar in Pine City on March 5 at 8 p.m. The event, which is 21+ and costs \$5, will also feature live performances from Quake Jones, HomeGrown, and Shorty Buff.

Band Explores New Financing Option for Band Members

By Toya Stewart Downey

The Mille Lacs Band is exploring an option that could bring a new source of financing to Band members through a program whose mission is to serve markets that are typically underserved by traditional financial institutions.

"The tribe is looking at starting its own Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) so that we can promote other options for lending that we don't currently have available," said Commissioner of Community Development Sam Moose.

One of the reasons the Band is exploring this option is because CDFIs can provide a unique range of financial services and products and can give the Band more leeway in providing different types of loans to Band members, Sam said.

"By having a CDFI, we could look at micro-lending options for someone who might have trouble going through the traditional banking system," he added. "There are potential gaps in services as well as opportunities for lending that we see. A CDFI could close those gaps."

For example, if a Band member wants to start a business and needs a small loan, he or she could apply through the CDFI rather than through a bank or other lender.

The Band would oversee the program and a board of directors would be responsible for establishing lending guidelines that meet the

requirements of operating a CDFI.

The Band is in the preliminary stages, but is currently working with a group that has helped other tribes start CDFIs through a program designed specifically for Native Americans, called the Native American CDFI.

"We are in the beginning of this process. We wrote a grant and submitted it, and we got a resolution to move forward," Sam said. "It doesn't mean we'll get a CDFI, but we are exploring the idea."

Volunteers needed

The Band is seeking volunteers who can be a part of the steering committee and can oversee the process of developing a CDFI. The steering committee would identify potential lending opportunities and could help tailor them to fit the needs of the community.

Those who are interested in serving on the committee should have a background in one or more of the following areas:

- Financial institutions/lending
- Public relations/marketing/fundraising
- Legal services
- Social justice/human services
- Small to large businesses
- Government sector
- Community sector

Those who are interested in applying to serve as a volunteer should contact Sam Moose at 320-532-7508.

Native Vote Alliance Recognizes the Mille Lacs Band

The Native Vote Alliance of Minnesota (NVAM) honored the Mille Lacs Band for its years of commitment to the organization's mission of empowering and mobilizing Native people. The Band recently donated \$50,000 to the organization to support its nonpartisan programs. Sam Moose, Commissioner of Community Development, accepted the award on behalf of the Band.

NVAM also recognized the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe for its support of the organization.

Spring Per Capita Check Distribution

Per capita checks will be distributed to all eligible Mille Lacs Band members on **April 7** at each Band member's home district. This distribution will include all adult Band members. **Reminder: checks will be given only to the person whose name is listed on the check.**

Pick-up locations

Elders, handicapped and homebound persons living in District I, II, IIA, III and the Twin Cities urban area can pick up their per capita checks on **April 7**. The distribution sites for Elders include the District I Assisted Living Unit, the East Lake Community Center, the Isle Chiminising Community Center, the Lake Lena Community Center, and the Urban Office. Hours are 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

If you are an Elder or handicapped person, live in Districts I, II, IIA, III, or the Twin Cities, and are unable to travel to your distribution site, please call the contact person below to make arrangements for your check to be delivered to you on April 7.

- District I: Kathy Heyer, 320-532-7472 or Jana Sam, 320-532-7466
- District II: Renee Moore, 218-768-3311 or 877-768-3311
- District IIA: Carmen Green, 320-676-1102 or 877-676-1299
- District III: Michelle Peer, 320-384-6240 or 877-884-6240
- Urban Office: Barb Benjamin-Robertson, 612-872-1424

Check pick-up sites will be at the following centers, depending on where you live:

Mille Lacs Government Center

For Band members living in Aitkin, Brainerd, Garrison, Hillman, Milaca, Onamia, Pierz and Wahkon.

East Lake Community Center

For Band members living in McGregor.

Isle Chiminising Community Center

For Band members living in Isle.

Lake Lena Community Center

For Band members living in Askov, Braham, Brook Park, Danbury, Finlayson, Grasston, Hayward, Hertel, Hinckley, Markville, Moose Lake, Mora, Pine City, Rush City, Rutledge, Sandstone, Siren, Sturgeon Lake, Webb Lake, Webster, and Willow River.

Urban Office

For Band members living in Andover, Anoka, Apply Valley, Arlington, Blaine, Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Burnsville, Champlin, Columbia Heights, Coon Rapids, Crystal, Eagan, Eden Prairie, Edina, Fridley, Golden Valley, Ham Lake, Hilltop, Hopkins, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Lauderdale, Little Canada, Maple Grove, Maplewood, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Mounds View, Newport, New Brighton, New Hope, Oakdale, Plymouth, Ramsey, Richfield, Robbinsdale, Roseville, Savage, Spring Lake Park, St. Anthony, South St. Paul, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Wayzata, and Woodbury.

For all Band members who do not live in the towns/cities listed above, per capita checks will be held at the Mille Lacs Government Center unless you make arrangements for pick-up at one of the other districts. To make arrangements, call the contact people listed earlier under "Pick-up locations."

The deadline for changing your pick-up site is noon on **April 1, 2011**. Any changes after this time will not be valid. Call Kathy Heyer at 320-532-7472 or Jana Sam at 320-532-7466 to verify your change. There will be no exceptions.

Checks by certified mail

Those who can't pick up their checks on the dates listed will have their checks sent out by certified mail on **April 8, 2011**, to the address listed with the Tribal Enrollments Office. If you do not receive your check by **April 29, 2011**, contact Kathy Heyer at 320-532-7472 or Jana Sam at 320-532-7466.

Address and name changes

If your address or name has changed since the last per capita payment, it is very important that you send in

your information to the Enrollments Office. The deadline for address and name changes is noon on **March 28, 2011**. There will be no exceptions.

All returned checks will be held at the government center and will not be sent out again until the Enrollments Office has received your updated address or name information.

Other important information

- You must show a picture identification to receive your per capita check.
- Per capita checks will only be given to the enrolled Band member to whom the check is issued. There will be no exceptions.
- Per capita checks will be used to pay delinquent Band loans, discretionary loans, Emergency Services loans, or Mille Lacs Band Court of Central Jurisdiction fines if they have not been paid. For loan status, call Pam Boyd at 320-532-7467. For court fines status, call Gilda Burr at 320-532-7401. For emergency services status, call Pat Charleson at 320-532-2552.
- Per capita checks are taxable; therefore, all Band members who receive a per capita check should report it as income in the year received. You will receive a 1099-MISC form to remind you of how much income you should report on your tax return. Per capita checks should be reported on Form 1040 as "other income not subject to self employment tax." All future 2011 per capita checks will have federal income tax withheld as the amount of the per capita checks now exceeds the IRS required withholding limits for 2011.
- If you are receiving public assistance from the county, please contact your caseworker because the per capita check may affect the amount you receive. If, based on discussions with your caseworker, you wish to decline receipt of your per capita check(s), please contact Kathy Heyer in the OMB office at 320-532-7472 to get a per capita declination form.

Circle of Health Update

By Circle of Health staff

Private coverage

If you have attained health coverage from an employer or any other coverage, it is important to contact your claims processor to inform him or her of the effective date right away.

Private coverage plans paid on your behalf are expensive, and in most cases our office is unable to retrieve any premiums made back to the new coverage's effective date. The result is that two plans were paid on your behalf, so if a submission is made to reimburse premiums, it will be denied.

Annual updates/Circle of Health cards

We have received many updates this year, and the names of those we received by February 15 were entered into our drawing for a \$50 and a \$25 gift card. Our forms have been updated, and we now can receive your forms by fax or e-mail.

If you need new Circle of Health cards, please send us completed forms and copies of the front and back of your insurance cards. There is an area to indicate that you need new cards halfway down the enrollment form. If you have already sent in your enrollment form and would like new cards, call your claims processor.

As always, please show your Circle of Health program card at every visit. If you get a diagnostic test, you will need to wait until you receive the statement, call the 800 number on the statement, and provide your Circle of Health information. It is not the responsibility of the original provider or physician to ensure that this information was provided to the outside source if X-rays, MRIs, or any other scans are referred.

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 Michele Palomaki, director of Circle of Health, at 320-676-8214 or 800-491-6106.

Clinics Implement Electronic Medical Records

By Toya Stewart Downey

Full conversion required by 2014

Walking into any doctor's office, it's become commonplace to see computers in the examination room. The same holds true at the clinics operated by the Band. As of July 2011, a system that records medical files will be fully functioning.

"It will provide us a more complete medical history, it will be faster to find and view a patient's records, and it can be viewed by health care providers anywhere a patient gets service," said Dr. Salina Rizvi, the Band's health director.

The Band's health care providers have been integrating the electronic system into their daily practices for more than a year by adding data such as immunization information, height, weight, and blood pressure statistics. A federal mandate requires all medical providers to fully convert their patient records to an electronic system by 2014, according to Louise Sather, the registered health information administrator (RHIA) and Band's clinical applications coordinator.

"Medical records will be kept for the span of someone's life and beyond," Louise said. "And they're completely confidential, because they're kept on a secure server, not on a particular workstation."

That means the only people with access to a patient's

information are the caregivers they're working with. It also means that records from different departments – such as dental, optometry, mental health, and the pharmacy – can be viewed in one place so that medical providers can coordinate care, if necessary.

"Medical providers can input the reason for the visit, see the lab work that was done, and see all the medications a patient is taking," Louise said. "They can also graph information such as weight loss goals or glucose readings so that patients can see their progress."

There's also a place where caregivers can record notes about reproductive health or if a patient has substance abuse issues or other health-related problems.

"Everything that's needed for complete care is in the electronic record," Louise said.

Currently the Band's medical departments have separate systems, but they expect to connect the software in the future.

The system will also be connected to the East Lake Clinic and later, Lake Lena. One challenge in Lake Lena is that the Internet connection is spotty, which could present problems with the server.

"Patients who have been to the clinics are used to seeing us do this, so they're aware of the changes we've been making. But they may not know how much it will benefit them," Salina said.

Community Development Urges More Accountability From Renters

By Toya Stewart Downey

Last year, the Community Development Department asked residents who live in Band-owned properties to study their leases, comply with regulations, and recertify their rental applications.

Because some renters have not followed, the department is taking a tougher stance on those who aren't following the rules – even going as far as evicting tenants, said Arlene Weous, the Band's housing director.

Rental payments

One of the biggest issues that the department confronts is getting people to pay their rent.

"In the past, we haven't forced our tenants to pay rent on time or at all," she said. "This year, we're making it a priority to bring our rental collections up to date."

In order to comply with the Housing and Urban Development program (HUD), the Band must collect rent on the properties that were funded through the federal program. The Band has 114 HUD homes in the three districts.

If the Band doesn't comply with the rules of the federal program, then it also risks having to repay some of the funds it was given for its housing program.

"Evicting someone is the last thing we want to do, but if people don't comply with their leases, which say they must pay their rent, then we don't have a choice," Arlene said.

During a careful examination of rental records, the department has discovered that some renters haven't paid their rent for months or even years.

The department is in the process of determining which tenants have outstanding rent and how much it is. They're also looking at the amount that each renter might owe due to property damages. (Renters are held liable for damages to Band properties.)

In the past, there wasn't a system in place to determine who was paying rent, but now there is, thanks to a newly created spreadsheet system that tracks rental payments.

"We're trying to make people accountable," said Arlene. "We've sent letters to renters and asked them to recertify. That's a part of the compliance piece that they need to do to continue living in Band housing."

The department is willing to work with Band members to help them become current in their rental payments and advises tenants to contact department staff for further information.

"We don't want to put anyone in the street," Arlene said. "As landlords, we're responsible for maintaining units so that they will remain livable in the future."

Lease violations

The housing department has a three-strike policy that could result in eviction for those who don't meet leasing terms.

Strikes would result from violations such as failure to keep up with utility payments; harassing neighbors; having noise complaints made against them; having criminal activity take place on the property; and having vicious dogs.

"We want to have nice, peaceful neighborhoods and tenants who take care of our properties," Arlene said.

If a lease violation goes on for five days it becomes a part of the resident's permanent record. If it's addressed right away, it could be resolved. If the violation is addressed right away, the issue could be removed from the resident's record. The department will evict renters if issues are not resolved.

"We have to change the culture here," Arlene said. "It's tough to do, but we have to follow the policies and procedures that the Band Assembly has adopted."

Elder renovation program

There are two options available to Elders who need financial assistance with home renovations.

The Band's housing program can grant up to \$50,000 for renovations based on needs.

The Indian Community Block Grant program also helps Elders who own homes with renovations. The grant is originally written as a five-year loan but becomes a grant after five years.

While both of these programs will help pay for renovations that make a house more accessible to those with disabilities, neither of them will cover the cost of adding on to a home.

"Elders have to make choices about what needs to be done, because there is a ceiling on the amount of money they can receive," Arlene said. "They need to decide what can be done to make life more comfortable."

Elders should also know that funds from the Community Block Grant program may not always be available, so now is the time to act.

To be eligible for either program, Elders must own their own homes and live within 30 miles of one of the Band's districts. For more information or to get an application, contact Richard Hill at 320-532-7415 or Gina Anderson at 320-532-7456.

Bulgarians Tour the Mille Lacs Reservation



Chief Executive Marge Anderson met with visitors from Bulgaria in February. The Bulgarian visitors toured the reservation to learn more about the Band's culture and government.

Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Scott

Nay Ah Shing Students Participate in Art Contest



Photo courtesy of Gloria Songetay

(left to right) Selena Bueno, Courtney Boyd, and Sahen Davis each placed in the Secondhand Smoke Project's art contest.

By Gloria Songetay,
Secondhand Smoke Project
Outreach Coordinator

Six Nay Ah Shing students competed in the Secondhand Smoke Project's art contest. Each artist drew an educational drawing showing the difference between smoking commercial tobacco and using traditional tobacco.

The winners included Courtney Boyd (12th grade) in first place, Sahen Davis (11th grade) in second place, and Selena Bueno (8th grade) in third place. Paige Mitchell, Jakob Cash, and Toni Weous received honorable mentions.

Courtney's drawing will be pictured on the t-shirts that will be given away at the community health fair in March. The submitted artwork is also featured on the Mille Lacs Band's Facebook page.

The health fair planning staff would like to say *chi mii gwech* to all of the contestants. Each of the drawings were very impressive. The drawings delivered visual messages about the health risks of smoking commercial tobacco and the effects and dangers of breathing in secondhand smoke. *Mii gwech* for helping share the message, "*gego zagaswaaken*," which means "don't smoke."

Recipe of the Month

Submitted by Chris Kegg,
nutrition education assistant

Chicken Enchilada Casserole

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 cup chopped red onion
- 1 can (4 ounces) diced mild green chili peppers
- 2 cans (10 ounces each) mild enchilada sauce
- 12 ounces shredded cooked chicken breast
- 2/3 cup sliced green onions
- 12 (6-inch) corn tortillas, divided
- 3/4 cup (3 ounces) shredded reduced-fat Mexican cheese blend, divided
- 1/2 cup fat-free sour cream (optional)

Directions

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add red onion and chili peppers; cook and stir 4-5 minutes or until onion is tender. Add sauce, chicken and green onions.

2. Spray 2 1/2 quart oval casserole dish with cooking spray. Place 4 tortillas in bottom of dish. Spoon 2 cups chicken mixture over tortillas; top with 1/4 cup cheese. Top with 4 tortillas, 1 cup chicken mixture and 1/4 cup cheese. Complete with remaining 4 tortillas, chicken and cheese.

3. Cover and bake 20 minutes. Remove cover and bake an additional 10 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Let stand 10 minutes before serving. Serve with sour cream, if desired.

Makes 8 servings.

Cobell Settlement Could Mean Land, Funds or Assets for Indians Nationwide

By Toya Stewart Downey

Fifteen years ago, Elouise Cobell, a member of the Blackfeet Indian Tribe, filed a class-action lawsuit over mismanagement of royalties of American Indian lands. Cobell knew that it would be an expensive and long process, but she was determined to see it through.

That happened in December 2010, when the lawsuit was settled.

Now tens of thousands of American Indians across the country – including Mille Lacs Band members – are receiving letters about a proposed settlement for a class-action lawsuit for individual Indian land, funds, and other assets that have been held in trust by the federal government. The \$3.4 billion trust settlement is more commonly known as the Cobell settlement. In the courts, it is referred to as Cobell vs. Salazar.

Two groups of individuals may qualify for this proposed settlement:

1) Historical Accounting Class Members:

- Had an Individual Indian Money (IIM) account anytime between October 25, 1994, and September 30, 2009, **and**
- The account had at least one cash transaction.
- Includes estates of account holders who died as of September 30, 2009, if the IIM account was still open on that date.

2) Trust Administration Class Members:

- Had an IIM account recorded in currently available data in federal government systems any time from approximately 1985 to September 30, 2009, **or**
- Owned trust land or land in restricted status as of September 30, 2009.
- Includes estates of landowners who died as of September 30, 2009, where the trust interests were in probate as of that date.

Lisa Johnson, the Band's director of real estate, said that if Band members believe that they fit into one of the two groups described above, they should contact 800-961-6109 or visit www.IndianTrust.com. To view a video with more information, visit www.IndianTrust.com/video_en.

"The phone number and website have been set up by the lawyers in the class-action lawsuit and are not affiliated with the federal government," she said. "In addition, if you wish to find out information about your IIM account or trust or restricted lands, you may contact some of the following individuals and/or call centers listed in the box below."

If individuals still have questions after they have talked to someone at the call center, contact the Mille Lacs Band Real Estate Department at 320-532-7552.

For more information about your IIM account or trust or restricted land

- Beneficiary Trust Call Center, run by the Office of Special Trustee. Call 1-888-678-6836. Hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Friday, and 8 a.m. to noon on Saturdays (Mountain Time). Please have information available so that the call center can verify who you are. This may include what tribe you are affiliated with and your enrollment number, as well as your current address.
- Fiduciary Trust Officer-Field Operations, Minnesota Agency, Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians. Call 218-751-4338 or e-mail RogerHeger@ost.doi.gov.
- The Mille Lacs Band Real Estate Office at 320-532-7552. This office has information regarding ownership in trust or restricted lands for Mille Lacs Band members only. Please have your name, enrollment number, and date of birth available. You will be provided with a report, which may take awhile to receive, depending on the response of the Land Titles Record Office.

Tribal Police Improve Public Access to Crime Reports

Mille Lacs Band members now have better access to timely, reliable information on crimes that the Mille Lacs Tribal Police Department responds to in and around the Mille Lacs Reservation. The Band is partnering with CrimeReports to share data with the public at no cost.

At www.CrimeReports.com, you can learn if crimes have occurred in your neighborhood, what types of crimes have been committed, and if any level three predatory offenders live nearby. You can also sign up to receive crime alert e-mails and submit an anonymous tip if you have any information on a crime.

"Partnering with CrimeReports enables Band members to stay aware of any crimes being committed in their neighborhoods and proactively share information," said Police Chief Dwight Reed. "We hope that this will be part of the solution to make the reservation a safer place."

How to learn about crimes in your area

To access a crime map for your area and sign up for daily, weekly or monthly crime alert e-mails, go to www.CrimeReports.com. You can also link to the site from www.millelacsband.com, click on "Programs and Services," then click on "Tribal Police." You will

only need to type in your address.

By going to the Mille Lacs Band's website, you can also view the most recent week's arrest report from the tribal police department. The arrest report is a listing that provides the name of the person arrested, the offense, the date, and the address.

CrimeReports gives you a more thorough picture by showing you a map of your area with dots in the locations where crimes have been committed. Due to federal public information laws, the offenders' names and exact crimes are not provided, and blocks rather than specific addresses of crimes are shown. Crimes committed by juveniles are also not listed.

Some locations not shown on CrimeReports

CrimeReports is the largest public crime-mapping and citizen tip network in North America. More than 1,600 law enforcement agencies share information through CrimeReports. However, very few agencies in the reservation area participate. In Mille Lacs County, only Princeton and the Mille Lacs Band are partners. The Band is the only participating agency in Aitkin and Pine counties.

Meet the New Family Services Staff

Three new staff members started recently with the family services department.

Bernadene Crampton



Bernadene Crampton has worked in child welfare and social work for more than eight years. She attended Muskegon Community College, Western Michigan University, and Grand Valley State University. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in public administration.

Bernadene has travelled to reservations across the country to learn about Indian child welfare. She loves working with Native people, because there aren't the extremes found in other populations. "I just usually feel like one of the family," she said.

Bernadene is a native of Muskegon, Michigan, and a member of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians.

Suzanne Merrill



Suzanne Merrill is a social worker for the family services department, a position she also had in the early 1990s. Before being elected as the District I Representative in the late 1990s, she also worked in other areas, including education and tribal operations. Suzanne has completed coursework for a

master's degree in social work from the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

Suzanne enjoys building relationships with the families with whom she works. She is committed to utilizing the Ojibwe culture and traditions to help families get back some of what has been lost.

"I believe that everyone has something to offer, and I utilize that when working with families," said Suzanne. "I believe that we need to build our people up and encourage them to grow."

Suzanne lives in Mille Lacs with her three daughters, Cassandra (13), Meghan (10), and Alexandra (7), who she raises with her significant other, Dan Wise.

Nancy Saboo



Nancy Saboo has more than a decade of experience working for American Indian communities. She worked with 3- to 5-year olds at the Huron Potawatomi Head Start for four years. After that she worked for the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians, and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians.

Nancy has a bachelor's degree in behavioral science from Grand Valley State University.

"Native children and families are extremely precious. I am very thankful for this opportunity to serve the Mille Lacs Band," Nancy said.

Nancy is a native of Lowell, Michigan, and is an enrolled member of the Bay Mills Band of Ojibwe, which is located in the upper peninsula of Michigan.

Mille Lacs Band Honors Congressman Oberstar



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Scott

Elizabeth Scott, Mille Lacs Band local community coordinator (right), and Sierra Edwards (middle) mingled with former Congressman Jim Oberstar at a reception in Duluth on February 12. The event, which was sponsored by the DFL Party, honored Oberstar for his decades of service.

Chief Executive Marge Anderson also recognized Oberstar at an event in his honor in Saint Paul. Marge presented him with a Pendleton blanket as a token of the Band's appreciation for his friendship and support of Indian Country while he was in office.

Team Available to Help Expecting Women and New Moms



Toya Stewart Downey

Allison Harr, the program's coordinator and Kari DiGiovanni, coordinator of the Doula and Women, Infants and Children programs help make up the Band's Maternal Child Health Program.

By Toya Stewart Downey

It's common for a pregnant woman to have lots of questions about her body, her unborn child, and how her pregnancy is progressing. And once the child is born, no matter if it's her first baby or third, she still has questions because each birth and each child is unique.

Thanks to the Band's Maternal Child Health (MCH) Program, Band members and their families can get individualized assistance based on their needs. The MCH team is available from the beginning stages of a pregnancy until long after the baby is born.

"We use a team approach to work with families because we want to make sure we meet the needs of our clients," said Allison Harr, the program's coordinator. "Besides being there during the pregnancy, we will do home visits for up to two years after a baby is born, and services can continue after the two years, depending on the needs of the family."

Since Allison assumed her post in December, she and the MCH team have been promoting their services so that Band families know the options available to them. The services include home visits for prenatal and postpartum women and children, with a focus on normal body changes, nutritional needs, healthy choices, baby's normal growth and development, family planning, breastfeeding counseling, parenting education and support, and home safety checks and education. The MCH team makes referrals to other available services as needed.

Services are provided regardless of health insurance status. However, because of the benefits of having health insurance, the MCH team helps

clients find the resources to obtain health insurance. They work within the three reservation districts' service area, but not in the urban area.

In the past three months, Allison has been busy working on community partnerships, access to state and national resources, and program development. She has also been learning more about District I in an effort to increase health education and medical accessibility to people's homes. To reach that goal, the team is streamlining its approach and providing universal services for its clients.

"Our aim is to make home visits to everyone who is pregnant and has had a baby to assess what the need is during those visits."

Public Health Director Lisa Blahosky said it's not a new program, but the team is working to make MCH services more efficient and improve follow-through with clients.

"We're increasing our collaboration with physicians, clinics, and medical providers, because what we know is that we all have to provide the same services and work as a team to provide the best care possible for the families we serve," Lisa said.

Kari DiGiovanni, coordinator of the Doula and Women, Infants and Children programs said the team is striving to connect with women who are pregnant because too often, "we don't find out that a baby is born until afterwards. We'd like to find out earlier so that we can offer prenatal services as soon as possible."

One of the new services that the team hopes to launch this spring is to offer a group education class on topics including pregnancy, nutrition,

mental and emotional health, cultural aspects of pregnancy, childbirth, and child rearing. They would also like to offer tours of the facilities where the women will deliver their babies.

"We will have an incentive program, and families who participate will be able to gain points to purchase items that may be needed after a baby is born," Allison said.

The team will also work with other Band departments that offer education classes to ensure that they're delivering a consistent message. The team is also hoping to encourage more moms to consider breastfeeding their newborns.

"We want to educate women and families on the benefits of breastfeeding and help them feel comfortable doing it," Lisa said.

Still, despite the best interests of the MCH team, there are challenges to providing services.

"One of the challenges is that at times there are lapses in some families' insurance coverage, or transportation is unreliable so they have to miss appointments. They might be in a crisis situation financially or be dealing with substance abuse issues such as smoking or drinking," Kari said. "We are trying to help remove those barriers and will do everything we can to work with a family."

Allison has a maternal child health background. She was a labor and delivery nurse and previously worked for Indian Health Services in New Mexico. Before moving to MCH, she worked in District III as a public health nurse.

Allison grew up in Larchwood, Iowa. She has a bachelor of science degree in psychology from Viterbo University in La Crosse, Wisconsin. She earned her nursing degree from the University of Minnesota.

Kari has worked for the Band for six years. She is a registered nurse and worked as the school nurse at Nay Ah Shing Lower School and at the Ne-la-Shing Clinic before becoming a public health nurse. She grew up in Aitkin and graduated from Central Lakes College.

SHIP Health Survey

The State Health Improvement Project (SHIP) is conducting a survey of Native American tribal members living in the Mille Lacs community. Everyone who completes the survey will receive a \$25 gift certificate for fresh fruits and vegetables at the Grand Market. The survey takes between 10-15 minutes to complete.

If you are interested in the completing the survey please contact Shelly Foster, the Band's SHIP coordinator, at 320-532-4163.

New Band Member Owned Business in Hinckley

Band member Troy Hill opened a business called A Plus Automotive. Band members will receive a 10% discount and Elders will receive a 15% discount on all labor.

The repair shop will only charge the cost of fuel to tow cars needing repairs. Payment plans are available for Band members who cannot afford the cost of repairs on their vehicle.

A Plus Automotive is located at 100 Hwy. 61, in Hinckley. If you have any questions contact Troy Hill at 320-384-0293.

Community Health Fair

All Mille Lacs Band members and employees are invited to attend the Community Health Fair on Wednesday, March 30, from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. The fair will be held at the District I Community Center and will include informational booths, a light lunch, health screenings, complimentary t-shirts, door prizes and gift cards throughout the day.

For more information, contact Amanda Nickaboine-Meyer at 320/532-7771.

Household Uses for Baking Soda

By Housing Department staff

Baking soda, a common ingredient in baked goods, also doubles as a safe, efficient, and money-saving cleaning tool. With gentle scrubbing, baking soda can help clean your floors, pots, pans and much more.

The following are a few ways to use baking soda to clean your house. You can find more online tips at http://itep68.itep.nau.edu/itep_downloads/IAQ_Resources/IAQ-0610ManualDocs/CleanBakSoda.doc.

- Sprinkle in garbage cans, on carpets, and other places where odor is a problem. Leave the baking soda overnight and then vacuum it up in the morning.
- Scrub crayon off of a no-wax floor. Wet a sponge and sprinkle baking soda on the area and rub the crayon off the floor.
- Use baking soda to wash your clothing or bedding if you have allergies to laundry products.
- Use baking soda in your dishwasher to help eliminate streaks and spots from hard water.
- Soothe bee stings and mosquito bites with a baking soda and vinegar paste; relieve itch from poison ivy with a baking soda and water paste; and soothe chicken pox with a cool (not cold) 30-minute bath in baking soda.
- Remove splinters with a baking soda and water paste. Apply the paste under a plastic bandage and leave for a day. When you remove the bandage, the splinter will be sticking above the skin and can be pulled out easily.

Free Hearing Evaluations

To schedule an appointment for **Friday, March 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.

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Tribal Government Monthly Financial Report

January 2011

	Approved budget for FY 2011	Actual expenditures through 1/31/11	% of budget expended
Administration (1)*	18,240,032	5,129,507	28.1%
Workforce*	13,955,407	1,363,677	9.8%
Judicial	667,229	198,241	29.7%
Law enforcement*	5,159,198	1,214,691	23.5%
Education*	16,667,567	4,911,188	29.5%
Health and human services*	25,986,700	8,219,156	31.6%
Natural resources*	4,778,436	1,411,009	29.5%
Community development*	29,597,722	4,560,816	15.4%
Gaming authority	4,845,292	1,438,652	29.7%
Bonus distribution	22,391,762	17,595,642	78.6%
Economic stimulus	2,910,000	2,908,000	99.9%
Total expenditures	\$145,199,344	\$48,950,578	33.7%

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 2010 fiscal year.

Nay Ah Shing Students Named to National Honor Society



Eight Nay Ah Shing students were named to the National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society. The students are (from left to right) Aaron Nayquonabe, Kayla Cash, Shawna Benjamin, and Toni Weous. Jordan Smith, Kelsey Benjamin, Paige Mitchell, and Gaylyn Moose are not pictured.

At a ceremony honoring the students, each student signed their name into the official book, lit a candle, and said a pledge to the society. The ceremony also included a prayer by Dorothy Sam and a dinner for the new members and their families.

Mille Lacs Indian Museum Events

Ojibwe moccasin workshop

This class will be held on Saturday, March 12, from noon-4 p.m. and Sunday, March 13, 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.

Maple sap harvest workshop

This class will be held on Saturday, March 19, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

The workshop costs \$10 for the general public and \$7 for Minnesota Historical Society members and Mille Lacs Band members. Depending on the weather the class may be moved to March 26.

Please call 320-532-3632 for more information.

Tribal Noteboard

Happy March birthday to:

Kelly, on March 14 from your whole family • **Dominic**, on March 27 from Tracy, Rachel, Taya, Noah, Kelly, Jay and Kellen • **Jayden and Jordan Sayers**, on March 3 with love from Auntie Barb • **Sam and Knute**, on March 12 with love from your Sister Barb • **Jeremy Lafromboise**, on March 16 with love from Auntie Barb • **Sissy Poo Sam (Sharon)**, on March 31 with love from Auntie Barb • **Keith**, 21, on March 13 from Grandma June, Grandpa Gush, mom, Liz, Dylan, Dylan Jr., Malerie, Leroy, Sebastian, Chelsie, Lydia, Sam, Dan, Chuck, Hunter, Elvis, Amber, Sunshine, Elliott, Ethan, Jazz, Tyrese, Manny, Marvin, Terry, and the girls • **Mary Kay**, 27, on March 28 with love from Danielle, DeaLayna, Stone, Derek Jr., Frances, mom, Rachel, Joe, Simone, Donovan, Sheila, Baby Joe, Jim, Jack, Bruce, Nettie, Simon, Selena, Dante, Baby Mase, Shawsha, Daymon, Day Day, Soul Son, Shawsha, Mase, Dante, Beaner, mom, Franny, Moobutts, Sheila, Joey, and Jeannette • **Donovon**, 10, on March 10 with love from mom, dad, Simone, Sheila, Baby Joe, grandma, Danielle, DeaLayna, Stone, Derek Jr., Frances, Mary, Selena, Dante, Shawsha, Jim, Jack, Bruce, Nettie, Simon, Mase Jr., Mary, Beaner, Dante, Mase, Shawsha, Soul, Day Day, mom, dad, Moobutts, Joey, Marissa, Greg, Gramma Vera, and Jeannette • **Tasha**, 17, on March 2 from Anna and family • **Kali**, 11, on March 15 from Anna and family • **RaeAna**, 6, on March 16 from Anna and family • **Jarvis**, 7, on March 18 from Anna and family • **Waylon James**, 19, on March 23 with love from mom, Clayton, Christina, Stacy, Tehlissee, Cilla, Lisa, Rachel, Angel, mama, Anna, Sil, Stacy, 2-Sox, Yoshi, dad, Josie, Laney, Maris, Tosh, Clay, and Betsy • **Da Old Man**, on March 14 from Anna and family • **Cheryl**, on March 24 with love from Raenelle, Jereck, Larissa, Corbin and Lia • **Nae Shotz**, on March 12 with love from Gram AA, Karen, Brad, Valerie, Mariah, Kevin, Tracy, Marvis, Shelby, Max Dean, Jake, Jamie, Aiva, Marky, DeBreanna, Emery, Nicole, Jameson, Cordell, Lil Chris, Sharon, Wally, Rave, Melodie, Bruce, Jayla, Lili, Brad Eric, Kristy, Peyton, Braelyn, Eric, Wesley, Randi, Rachel, Waylon, Jay, Katie, Taylor, and Adam • **Jayla**, on March 18 with love from dad, Lili, Papa Brad, Gram AA, Karen, Valerie, Mariah, Kevin, Tracy, Marvis, Shelby, Max Dean, Jake, Jamie, Aiva, Marky, DeBreanna, Emery, Nicole, Chris, Jameson, Cordell, Lil Chris, Sharon, Wally,

Rave, Melodie, Bruce, Jayla, Lili, Brad Eric, Kristy, Peyton, Braelyn, Eric, Wesley, Randi, Rachel, Waylon, Jay, Katie, Taylor, and Adam • **Dude**, on March 19 with love from your sisters and brothers, and Rachel and Waylon • **Darrian Moose**, 17, on March 8 from mom, Dennis, and your sisters • **B-Boy**, on March 9 from your we-ehs Denise, Rachel and Waylon • **Gaylyn**, 16, on March 17 with love from mom, Dennis, and your sisters • **Willow Thomas**, 7, on March 24 with love from mom, dad and your sisters • **Anessa Hicks**, 8, on March 21 with love from Sandy, Erykah, mom, dad and sisters • **Carla Littlewolf**, on March 12 from Uncles Bun and Age • **Marissa**, 16, on March 28 from Mary, Day Day, Selena, Shawsha, Soul, Mase, Dante, DeaLayna, Moobutts, Mariah, Marissa S, Samantha, and Julia • **Joseph Bonilla**, on March 21 from mom, dad, Alex Jr., Jonathan, Priscilla, Chico, and family • **David Bonilla**, on March 1 from mom, dad, Alex Jr., Jonathan, Priscilla, Chico and family • **Damien Stump**, 1, on March 3 with love from mommy, daddy, grandma, Destiny, Katelyn, and Little Wax • **Lexie Stump**, 2, on March 14 with love from mommy, daddy, grandma, Destiny, Katelyn, and Little Wax • **Rena Marie**, 21, on March 12 with love from mom, Zach, Jerry and Kira • **Tawnya Stewart**, on March 24 with love from Toya, Dawne, Brittany, Jessica, Blake, Mehki, Steven and Dallas • **Aunt Penny**, on March 14 with love from Toya, Tawnya and Dawne • **Bennett John Martin Kegg**, on March 11 from mom, dad, Kevin, Casey, grandmas, aunts and uncles • **Kacie**, on March 17 from your we-eh, Dena and Kiyawna • **Craig**, on March 30 from mom, dad, Tiffany and Tori • **Koje**, 32, on March 3 from Rachel and Waylon • **Darkness**, 28, on March 21 from Rachel and Waylon • **Papa Doug**, on March 7 from Rachel and Chum Lee (Waylon) • **Tosha**, 17, on March 2 from Rachel and Waylon • **Leroy**, on March 1 from dad, mom, Dylan Jr., Malerie, Gramma June, Papa Gushy, Lydia, Amber, Sunshine, Sam, Dan, Chuck, Hunter, Elvis, Elliot, Ethan, Jaz, Ty, Keith, Chelsie, Sebastian, and Uncle Manny • **Hunter**, on March 2 from mom, dad, Amber, Sunshine, Sam, Dan, Chuck, Elvis, Gramma June, Papa Gushy, Elliot, Ethan, Jaz, Ty, Keith, Chelsie, Sebastian, Liz, Dylan Sr., Dylan Jr., Malerie, Leroy, and Uncle Manny • **Terry**, on March 12 from the Smith and Garbow families • **Gushy**, on March 22 from your kids, grandchildren, and the Smith and Garbow families • **Desi**, on

March 29 from the Smith and Garbow families • **Bev**, on March 30 from Roger, Juni, Jillian, Roy, Ahnung, and the Smith family.

Happy March birthday to Mille Lacs Band Elders!

Ramona Applegate
Debra Barge
Nancy Bearheart
Cynthia Beaulieu
Marie Bengtson
Larry Benjamin
Lorelei Benjamin
Randy Benjamin
Robert Benjamin
Joseph Budeese
Patricia Christofferson
James Dorr
Robert Dorr
Mary Flores
Terry Frye
Beverly Garbow
Cheryl Garbow
Virginia Goodman
Marie Gudim
Kathleen Hill
Sandra Kegg
Barbara LaBlanc
Mert Liebgott
Barbara Machen
Pauline Moose
Shirley Munson
Victoria Nichols
Larry Oswaldson
Laurie Pardun
Marie Paschke
Marlene Poukka
George Premo
Douglas Sam
Fred Sam
Kathryn Sam
Roy Sam
Francis Schaaf
Susanna Schaaf
Russell Shabaiash
Edward Skinaway Jr.
Merle Skinaway Jr.
David Smith Jr.
Sandra Smith
Sharon Sutton
Sami Thomas
Robert Tibbetts
Carol Towle
Marlene Wakanabo
Barbara White

Thank you

I want to thank all my friends and family for their support during the loss of my son, **Larry Smallwood Jr.** Thanks to all the Mille Lacs Band departments for the plants. I would also like to thank the Emergency Assistance Office and OMB for their assistance during this time and the Chief Executive and District Representatives for their

assistance with the rooms. Your thoughts and kindness at this time will not go unnoticed. I especially want to thank "Spud" Gahbow and Jada Grap for being there from the beginning to the very end. Parents – please love your children.
Thanks again, Larry Smallwood Sr.

The Potter family would like to thank everyone who attended and participated in the fundraiser/taco sale. A special thanks to the Chief Executive Office, Legislative Branch, and everyone else who sent in donations. The fundraiser was a huge success, and we couldn't have done it without those of you who pitched in to help. We appreciate all of you and we are grateful for all you have done!

Anniversary

Happy 12th anniversary to my husband **Jereck** on March 6.
With love from your wife Raenelle.

Happy anniversary to my husband **Jeff** on March 7. *With love from Nancy.*

In memory

Dedicated to **Kiley Jayden Jones**. The little one we long for was swiftly here and gone. But the love that was planted is a light that still shines on. And though our arms are empty, our hearts know what to do. Every beating of our hearts says that we love you. Born/Died on March 23, 2008. Our little Kiley would have been three years old. Our hearts ache everyday that we have to miss you; soon we will be together again. We love you forever, *from your mother Stacy Boyd and father Mervel Jones III.*

Obituaries

Marlene Theresa Nickaboine

Born – 7-6-1939

Died – 1-6-2011

Resided in Mora, MN

Ledger Dwayne Sam

Born – 1-14-2011

Died – 1-14-2011

Resided in Isle, MN

Richard Clarence Boyd

Born – 10-20-1955

Died – 1-14-2011

Resided in McGregor, MN

Joseph Jeffrey Juarez

Born – 11-12-1971

Died – 1-19-2011

Resided in Appleton, MN

Sandra Lynn Mishler

Born – 11-7-1961

Died – 2-3-2011

Resided in Sandstone, MN



Oji-Cree Round Dance and Hand Drum Special

An Oji-Cree Style Round Dance and Hand Drum special will be held at the District I Community Center on Saturday, March 5. Registration will open at 10 a.m., the opening pipe ceremony and feast will begin at 10 a.m., and the community feast will start at 5 p.m.

Prizes will be awarded in the following categories: men's hand drum, women's back up, youth, Oji-Cree challenge, the Sweetheart dance, two-step, and side step specials.

The event will feature Pete Gahbow and Gordon Tootoosis as announcers and Harvey Dreaver and Erik Gahbow as stickmen. The event is free and open to the public.

Gordon Tootoosis



Canadian actor Gordon Tootoosis will be one of the announcers at the Round Dance. He is best known for playing Native American Joe Saugus in *Auf Wiedersehen*, *Pet* in 2002. He also appeared in *By Way of the Stars*, *Legends of the Fall*, *Pocahontas*, and *Song of Hiawatha*.

Gordon, who is Cree, also served as the Chief of the Poundmaker Cree Nation and as Vice President of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations.

Band Member Becomes Book Illustrator and Embraces Ojibwe Heritage



Photo courtesy of Wesley Ballinger

Wesley Ballinger (right) interviews Doug Sam for an upcoming project.

By Toya Stewart Downey

To truly appreciate how Wesley Ballinger (Niiyo-giizhig) ended up illustrating a children's book that is written in Ojibwe, one must first understand the path he took to get to this point in his life.

Wesley's journey wasn't an easy one and certainly wasn't mapped out for him, yet it seems that it was his destiny to embrace the culture, learn the language, and create works of art that reflect the traditional Anishinabe lifestyle. Though, the 37-year-old Band member will admit, "I'm still on a long journey."

As a child, Wesley lived with his mom in Minneapolis and spent summers and some holidays in Mille Lacs with his father. Even though his parents had never married, the young boy felt a sense of love and security from both sides of his family.

A couple of things changed, though, including his grandmother's death and his father's divorce. Soon Wesley spent less time on the reservation with his paternal family and most of his time in the Twin Cities. He stopped going "up north" altogether when he was 12 years old.

"It was 18 years before I went back to Mille Lacs," he said, adding that even though his father and siblings were there, it didn't feel like home. These days he goes to Mille Lacs when he can and has reconnected with his family.

Learning Ojibwe

During his teen years, Wesley lived a typical teen's life and didn't think much about his ties to Mille Lacs. But as a senior at South High School in Minneapolis, something compelled Wesley to register for

an Ojibwe language class that was taught by Band member Don Pawaush, who has since passed away.

After high school graduation, he attended the University of Minnesota for one year, but didn't continue full-time. For the next five years he worked what he calls "dead-end jobs," but still managed to take classes from time to time.

"When I was 25, I decided to get serious about my education. I enrolled at Minneapolis Community College," said Wesley.

He earned his associate of arts degree there and then returned to the University of Minnesota, where he majored in art and the Ojibwe language in pursuit of a bachelor of arts degree.

"I discovered that the culture and the language are all connected," he said. "By studying the language, you are open to the worldview of creation and the philosophy of the relationship to existing creations. For example, the tree has a relationship to the world and that has a relationship to everything else, the insects, the birds, the people..."

"I came to these epiphanies through fasting, learning the language and the culture," he said. "It was a healing process, too."

It was also during this time that Wesley began to spend summers working at an immersion camp in Ontario.

Between his job as a teaching assistant for the University of Minnesota's Ojibwe language program and the work he did in the summers, Wesley's destiny continued to manifest itself.

When a job opened for a language specialist at the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, Wesley's mentor

and college professor, Dennis Jones, recommended him. Since moving into this role, Wesley has been involved in a number of culturally rich and important projects, including the book he illustrated.

Wesley's projects

The 96-page book, *Awesiinyensag*, is the first of three in a series and addresses issues such as bullying, divorce, teamwork, and other topics that are familiar to children in all cultures. The stories are told through the antics of animals who playfully deal with the situations in the stories. Twelve authors contributed to the stories in the book.

Wesley has also worked on a CD/DVD project called *Inaadiziwin* that tells the story of the seasonal harvests – including gathering rice, hunting, trapping, and fishing. Each part is narrated in Ojibwe based on interviews that Wesley conducted with first speakers.

"As a part of my job, which is funded through a three-year language preservation grant, I'm documenting and preserving stories of hunting and gathering."

Wesley, who is in the beginning stages of recording different first speakers including Doug Sam and Larry Smallwood, says he believes that one of the major issues in Indian Country is disenfranchisement and being culturally lost.

"Having a language you can call your own helps you connect to who the Anishinabe people are," he said. "Without the language, you don't have a connection to the ceremony and perspective of creation. You have a fragmented existence."

Wesley can read and write Ojibwe, but still feels frustrated that he's not as proficient in the language as he desires.

"I need 20 years or more of 'life Ojibwe,' but I'm becoming empowered by what I know and what I'm learning."

Besides his own desire to know more, he also yearns for others to comprehend and speak the language.

"I wish it was something that more of our young people did," he said. "It's hard trying to fit in and to understand your people and your culture if you don't know the language."

Calendar of Events

March 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
*To Purchase Tickets	<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 kelly@goffpublic.com</i>	Onamia Indian Education Meeting Rolf Olson Center Noon, Contact: David Sam, 320-532-4901 Band Assembly Meeting East Lake Community Center 10 a.m.	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 Band Assembly Meeting Chiminising Community Center 10 a.m.		Oji-Cree Round Dance and Hand Drum Special District I Community Center 10 a.m. & 5 p.m. (See page 10)
6	7	8	District I Community Meeting District I Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: Judy Virnig 320-532-7423	10	11	Roots and Boots* Grand Casino Hinckley 8 p.m. Ojibwe Moccasin Workshop Mille Lacs Indian Museum 12-4 p.m.
13	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	15	District III Community Meeting Lake Lena Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: Katie Draper, 320-384-6240	17	18	Brenda Lee* Grand Casino Mille Lacs 2 & 6 p.m. Maple Sap Harvest Workshop Mille Lacs Indian Museum 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
20	21	22	23	Urban Area Community Meeting 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	All government offices closed for Treaty Day	26
27	28	29	District IIA Community Meeting Chiminising Community Center 5:30 p.m. Contact: Lesley Sam, 320-676-1102 Community Health Fair District I Community Center 11 a.m.-4 p.m.	31	Treaty Rights Celebration Grand Casino Mille Lacs 11 a.m.-2 p.m.	April 1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9

“What’s The Biggest Purchase You’ve Made Lately?”

Molly Judkins



“I went on a 10-day vacation to Texas and Mexico with my husband, Scott.”

Daniel Pawaush



“I bought Jimmy Choo shoes for my fiancé for Christmas.”

Darius Barnes



“I bought a leather coat for my mom.”

Rachel Sam



“A PlayStation 3.”

Rosella Eagle



“I bought a flat screen TV for my bedroom.”

Elizabeth Scott



“A 2008 Buick LaCrosse.”

Maria Knowlen



“I got a Wii.”

Shanice St. John



“I bought clothes and my monroe.”

Photos by Toya Stewart Downey

Emergency Services Available to Band Members

The Emergency Services program provides several services to Band members facing emergencies.

Services

- **Medical and funeral support:** Eligible Band members can receive \$50 per day for medical support and \$100 for funeral support for up to three days.
- **Rent or deposit assistance:** Band members must show a written notice of eviction, prove that the eviction is not caused by a criminal act, and provide a rental or lease agreement signed by the landlord. This service can only be used once every two years.
- **Gas vouchers:** Eligible Band members can receive up to four \$20 gas vouchers per fiscal year.
- **Food vouchers:** Eligible Band members can receive food vouchers if they have been denied assistance through the Food Distribution Program because of income or another disqualifying factor.

Eligibility

Applicants must be enrolled Mille Lacs Band members who are 18 years old or older. Non-enrolled parents and legal guardians of enrolled children are not eligible for this program. A valid Band ID or enrollment number must be presented to obtain services through this program.

Documentation is needed for all loan requests, including those that help pay for utilities, food or

gas; prevent eviction; or recover from a fire or natural disaster.

Once a completed application and supporting documentation have been received, Emergency Services will begin processing the loan request. It may take five to seven business days before checks are issued to the landlord or other vendor. The program makes every effort to process requests in a timely manner and will call vendors at the Band member’s request to ensure payment.

Applications that are incomplete because the applicant did not provide proper documentation will be null and void after 30 days of the original submission.

An applicant must have a balance of zero before a new application can be processed. Medical and funeral requests are exempt from this rule.

Emergency Services provides a maximum of \$750 worth of assistance to each eligible applicant.

Contact

Band members who need help from the Emergency Services program should visit the program office at the Ne-la-Shing Clinic or call 320-532-7880.

Band members can also call a 24-hour emergency number 320-632-2687 during non-business hours to prevent utilities or gas from being disconnected. The on-call staff member is not able to issue food or gas vouchers or process medical or funeral requests. Emergency Services does not compensate Band members for hotel stays.

Treaty Rights Celebration



All Band members are invited to the Treaty Rights Celebration
Thursday, March 24, 2011

11 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Grand Casino Mille Lacs
Events & Convention Center**

- Lunch will be provided •

Interactive booths from GLIFWC, DNR and others • Digital scavenger hunt • Ojibwe language coloring contest •

Games and prizes •