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Nearly 70 people arrested during Line 3 protest at Gov's Residence



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Advocates hope W.E. wild rice case will boost 'rights of nature'



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Tom Jones' Strong Unrelenting Spirits Exhibit opens



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New Native Theatre is Native-centered theater



From left to right: Raymond Niu, Alicia Garcia, Christina Woods, Yvette Nolan, Lyz Jaakola, Alicia Smith, and Joshua Simpson. (Photo by Rebekah Crisanta de Ybarra.)

BY BRAD HAGEN

For the majority of United States history, narratives involving the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island have been controlled and created by non-Indigenous people, especially those found on stage and the big screen. As a result, there has been a great deal of misrepresentation and a proliferation of stereotypes when it comes to who we are and what is important to us. Think "What Made the Red Man Red" from Peter Pan; Think the "Indian Princess" stereotype from Pocahontas; Think the tear rolling down Iron Eyes Cody's cheek in that anti-littering commercial. This is the legacy we're up against, though luckily there are organizations like New Native Theatre who are providing a platform for Natives to tell their own stories.

New Native Theatre (NNT) was founded in 2009 by playwright Rhiana Yazzie (Navajo) in response to a lack of Native-centered theater in Minneapolis. Having moved to Minneapolis in 2006 on the Jerome Fellowship (a national playwriting award), Yazzie wanted to work with the local Native theatre company. "There's over 100 theatre companies in town [Minneapolis], and it's also one of the most vibrant urban Native communities in the country, but there wasn't one. I thought, 'This is crazy. Just a mile down the road is the Indian Center. How come there are no Native people doing theatre?' So that's why I started the theatre company."

Yazzie cited the theatre system itself as a contributing factor for why there was a lack of Indigenous people participating in theatre. "We have these amazing dancers and singers, and all these folks who could have done theatre, but there just wasn't a mechanism for them to get into theatre that made them feel safe, because I think if theatre was safe and inviting, how come Native people weren't actively involved in those hundreds of theatres? The whole structure of white American theatre is steeped in white supremacy, which you can understand why Native people are kind of like, no thanks.

"Here in the US, if you see something on a predominantly white institution stage, most, if not all the time, that was curated and chosen by that white institution. And it's a really different experience when a white curator is picking Native work, because they're picking it for their white audiences, whereas Native theatre companies have this kind of mission to center Native artists and audiences. The things we do at NNT are always focused on the Native audience first. That's not to say we don't want a non-Native audience, but I've found that great work is created when you don't worry about trying to reach non-Native audiences. At the end of the day, if the play is a good play, it'll be about uncovering the human experience.

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Delta variant is surging in Minnesota. Tribes not immune.

BY LEE EGERSTROM

Infections, hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19 and its more contagious delta variant are surging again in Minnesota even as vaccination rates increase. Health experts warn the state's Native population isn't immune.

Students are returning to schools and a COVID outbreak already has 290 students quarantined from Albert Lea schools. School officials, local government leaders, retailers and others are all wrestling with mask mandates and other precautionary measures as the coronavirus pandemic picked up speed during August.

The University of Minnesota system and the even larger Minnesota State system of universities and community colleges have mask mandates in place for the start of the new school year. Most private colleges and universities do as well, and most large Minnesota school districts had announced plans for masks and other protocols for the start of classes.

Aggressive efforts by Minnesota tribes and Native community organizations to promote vaccinations will help mitigate the impact of the new delta variant in Minnesota, said Dr. Mary Owen, director of the Center of American Indian and Minority Health (CAIMH) for University of Minnesota Medical School at University of Minnesota Duluth.

"This is critical because American Indians have also died at higher rates than any other population in the United States," she said.

Owen, a member of the Tlingit Nation in Alaska, sees an anecdotal story playing out in Minnesota. The state's Native community is more vulnerable to the pandemic in gen-

eral, given long-time health disparities, even though the Native population has the greatest percentage of people getting vaccinated.

Native vulnerability comes in part because no one in Minnesota lives in an isolated vacuum, completely removed from interaction with people who may be infected and spreading the disease.

As August came to a close, riders who had attended the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in South Dakota were heading home along I-90 through Albert Lea and other southern Minnesota cities and counties. The rally was proven to be a major COVID-19 spreader a year ago, and was again suspected to be one this year at the time of this writing.

What's more, an even larger crowd of people attended the just-concluded Minnesota State Fair in the Twin Cities. Television reports showed mask use was scarce. Minnesota Health Department officials may be a week or two away from learning if this became another so-called "super spreader."

Other large groupings of people are gathering for high school, college and professional sports events. These, too, have the potential of spreading COVID and especially the delta variant that World Health Organization (WHO) and National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) scientists know to be especially contagious.

In calling for Minnesotans to keep their guard up, Dr. Mark Steffen warned that the approved vaccinations won't totally prevent people from getting COVID or its variants, but it will prevent serious infections and greatly reduce hospitalizations and deaths.

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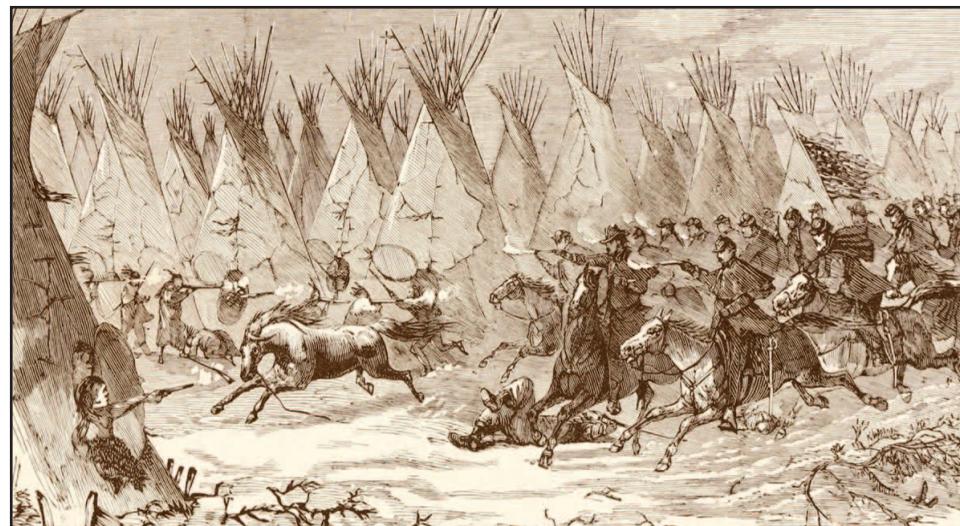
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America's real longest war was against Indigenous Americans



Left: An 1899 chromolithograph of US cavalry pursuing American Indians. (Wikipedia.com)
 Above: U.S. cavalry attacking an Indian village. (Wikipedia.com)

BY MICHAEL MEUERS

From the Left (Lawrence O'Donnell of MSNBC) to Right (Wall Street Journal) Agree Today; The global war on terror isn't ending, nor was it as long as the American Indian Wars.

I take issue with the characterization that the war in Afghanistan is America's longest war. America's real longest war was the conflict against Indigenous Americans, called the American Indian Wars, which most historians characterize as beginning in 1609 and ending in 1924 or 313 years, mainly over land control.

The colonization of America by English, French, Spanish, Dutch, and Swedish was resisted by some Indian tribes and assisted by other tribes.

But European settlers came in conflict with First Nation people from the moment they set foot on the shores of North America. From Columbus in the Caribbean to the conquistadors in Central and South America, European nations and First Nation tribes were at odds from the very beginning. From 1492 to 1924 equals 432 years of conflict.

The newly declared United States of America wasted no time in antagonizing the native population. They came into immediate conflict with the natives starting as early as 1775.

The American Indian Wars are the United States' most protracted conflict to date stretching from 1775, at the beginning of the American Revolution, all the way until 1924. These conflicts occurred alongside and during all of America's largest wars, including the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, and World War I. The conflicts lasted a year shy of 150 years and were almost constant for most of the 19th century. These wars are still the most understudied and underappreciated period of American history.

Pick your starting date, no matter.

Some might be surprised to learn one of the last battles twixt US soldiers and Indigenous Peoples took place right here in Northern Minnesota known as the Battle of Sugar Point on the Leech Lake Reservation on January 9, 1918. The Apache Wars ended in 1924 and brought the American Indian Wars to a close.

The number of Indians dropped from an estimated 10 million, (just in what is

now the US) to below half a million in the 19th century because of infectious diseases, conflict with Europeans, wars between tribes, assimilation, migration to Canada and Mexico, and declining birth rates.

In 1871, Congress ended formal treaty-making with Indians, obliterating a nearly 100-year-old diplomatic tradition in which the United States recognized tribes as nations.

Although Congress agreed to honor the approximately 368 Indian treaties that had been ratified from 1778 to 1868, Congress stated unequivocally that "henceforth, no

Indian nation or tribe . . . shall be acknowledged or recognized as an independent nation, tribe or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty...."

Legal historians have tended to downplay the significance of the 1871 treaty-making prohibition, arguing that prior Indian treaties remained in force, that the treaty-making system was merely replaced by bilateral agreements approved by both houses of Congress, and that the independent political status of tribal nations remained largely unimpaired.

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Nearly 70 people arrested during Line 3 protest at Gov's Residence

MPR NEWS STAFF/MPR NEWS

Several dozen people protesting against the Line 3 oil pipeline project were arrested on August 28 outside the Governor's Residence in St. Paul.

The State Patrol said 69 people were arrested "for several different charges – including disorderly conduct, third degree riot and felony threats of violence."

Authorities said some people were arrested after failing to follow "multiple orders to leave," while others allegedly tried to chain themselves to the fence and gate.

Protest organizers said several hundred people took part in a march from the Minnesota Capitol to the Governor's Residence on Summit Avenue, and said they were there to peacefully protest against the pipeline project in northern Minnesota as well as advocate for treaty rights and Indigenous sovereignty.

The people arrested were taken to the Ramsey County Jail. The State Patrol said no one was injured.

The arrests followed the arrests of four Line 3 protesters outside the Minnesota Capitol on August 27th, and a Line 3 protest that drew hundreds of people to the Capitol on August 25th.

Line 3 opponents have been calling on Gov. Tim Walz and President Joe Biden to pull permits and shut down the project to replace Enbridge Energy's existing, aging Line 3 oil pipeline.

The Minnesota portion of the Line 3 project is approaching 90 percent completion – but those opposing Line 3 say they're not giving up.

At the August 25th rally, Jaike Spotted Wolf – a member of the Three



Above and at right: On August 28th, cops arrested over 60 water protectors who were peacefully protesting outside of the MN Governor Tim Walz's mansion. (Photos by Chris Thao Trinh.)

Affiliated Tribes from North Dakota who now lives in Seattle, and has spent months protesting Line 3 – said the climate crisis unfolding across the country, from fires to flooding and record heat, show that environmental issues impact everyone.

"All these weather events that are definitely not normal, and all that money going into oil that's continual and perpetual could be going into those green energy projects," Spotted Wolf said.



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U.N. Issues Letter Regarding Violations of Anishinaabe Human Rights

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has taken the extraordinary measure to request a response from the United States regarding allegations of human rights violations against the Anishinaabe associated with the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline construction.

On March 29, 2021, Honor the Earth and Giniw Collective submitted a Request for Early Warning Measures to CERD as part of an international strategy to elevate the human rights violations perpetuated by the U.S. and the state of Minnesota as to construction of the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline. This petition requested immediate intervention from CERD and detailed the continuing violations of Indigenous Peoples' rights, including the right to free, prior, and informed consent; the right to health; the right to culture; and the right to security and to be free from violence.

On August 31, CERD published a letter to the U.S. Government dated August 25, requesting that the U.S. respond to these allegations. The letter notes, among other things, that these rights violations would amount to a violation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which the U.S. has signed and ratified.

The letter requests that the U.S. Government provide information on how it guarantees the right to free, prior, and informed consent; prevents adverse impacts of the pipeline on the Anishinaabe and their culture, health, and environment; guarantees the right to an effective remedy to these rights violations; and prevents violence against Indigenous women and excessive force against protestors.

Giving focus to treaty rights violations – a first for CERD in engagements with the U.S. – the Committee also requested that the U.S. “provide details on the status of the treaties concluded between the Anishinaabe indigenous peoples and the Government of the United States of America and on measures adopted to guarantee the respect of the rights of the Anishinaabe under such treaties,” specifically usufructuary rights upheld by the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Minnesota v. Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians*. CERD asked that the U.S. respond to its query by October 15, 2021.

“We are grateful that the United Nations has responded to our request and recognized the incalculable harms from the Line 3 expansion to the Anishinaabe people, treaty territory and the manoomin wild rice,” said Winona LaDuke, Executive Director of Honor the Earth. “We hope that the United

States takes the CERD inquiry seriously and meets the deadline for the response. Support for Line 3 from the Biden Administration and the State of Minnesota has led to a worsening situation for people, water, land and our sacred wild rice.”

Since the petition was submitted in March, over 600 arrests and citations have been made to those peacefully protesting the expansion (with some reporting as many as 800), there have been increased reports of human rights violations and violence against Indigenous women around Line 3 construction, and a preliminary report from Enbridge shows at least 28 spills during construction, affecting 12 river crossings with leaks of up to 9,000 gallons.

Following a meeting in August with the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, Tara Houska, founder of Giniw Collective, stated, “Enbridge threatens Anishinaabe cultural survival, the drinking water of millions, and the public’s trust. Since the U.S. government is yet again failing Indigenous people and future generations, we turn to the international community. The world is watching.”

“When U.S. policy inadequately considers the rights of Indigenous Peoples, international mechanisms such as the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination are crucial to pre-

vent the devastating impacts that cannot be undone once they occur,” said Kate Finn, Executive Director of First Peoples Worldwide, which filed the petition on behalf of Honor the Earth and Giniw Collective. “The letter from the Committee plainly articulates the allegations of rights violations attendant to Line 3 and the ways in which the actions of the U.S. Government fail to respect those rights and, in turn, perpetuate racial discrimination.”

Despite support of the Line 3 project by the Administration and recent affirmation of permits from Minnesota courts, the White Earth Band of Ojibwe is moving forward a rights of nature lawsuit to protect the sacred manoomin wild rice.

“The construction of these pipelines is threatening to burn our wild rice and to destroy our delicate wetlands as we speak. This is our land. We have no place to move,” wrote LaDuke in *The Hill*. “The new Line 3 pipeline... is going to carry three times more oil than its predecessor. While called a replacement, it’s really a new line, torn through the heart of the Anishinaabe territory that was designated in the 1855 treaty, lands protected by the Supreme Court and by U.S. government agreements with our ancestors. Despite this protection, our rivers and rice face a potential threat by the construction of Enbridge Line 3.”

Minnesota Supreme Court delivers blow to Line 3 opponents

AP – In August, the Minnesota Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal by opponents of Enbridge Energy’s Line 3 oil pipeline, letting stand a key decision by independent regulators to allow construction on the project to proceed.

Without comment, the state’s highest court declined to take the case, issuing a one-page order that effectively affirmed a decision in June by the Minnesota Court of Appeals. And it left the Native American and environmental groups that have been protesting at construction sites across northern Minnesota with a dwindling number of legal options.

The Court of Appeals declared that the state’s Public Utilities Commission correctly granted Calgary, Alberta-based Enbridge a certificate of need and route permit for the 337-mile Minnesota segment of what’s a larger project to replace an aging crude oil pipeline built in the 1960s that can run at only half capacity. The court also backed the commission’s approval of the environmental review for the project.

The Supreme Court’s decision dismayed the opponents, who cited the impacts of climate change being felt around the world and the drought in Minnesota. They have long argued that the replacement Line 3 violates treaties and threatens waters where wild rice grows, and that the oil it carries will aggravate global warming.

“The rights of a Canadian corporation continue to prevail over the laws of nature and the human rights of Anishinaabe people,” Winona LaDuke, executive director of the Indigenous based environmental group Honor the Earth, said in a statement. “It’s a sad day.”

Colorado governor voids 1864 order to kill Native Americans

By Patty Nieberg/AP – Colorado Gov. Jared Polis on August 17th rescinded a 19th century proclamation that called for citizens to kill Native Americans and take their property, in what he hopes can begin to make amends for “sins of the past.”

The 1864 order by Colorado’s second territorial governor, John Evans, would eventually lead to the Sand Creek massacre, one of Colorado’s

darkest and most fraught historic moments. The brutal assault left more than 200 Arapaho and Cheyenne people – mostly women, children and elderly – dead.

Evans’ proclamation was never lawful because it established treaty rights and federal Indian law, Polis said at the signing of his executive order on the Capitol steps.

“It also directly contradicted the Colorado Constitution, the United States Constitution and Colorado criminal codes at the time,” the Democratic governor said.

Polis stood alongside citizens of the Southern Ute, Ute Mountain, Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes, many dressed in traditional regalia. Some held signs reading “Recognize Indigenous knowledge, people, land” and “Decolonize to survive.”

The Washington Football Team has banned Native American headdresses

Josie Fischels/MPR News – The Washington Football Team will no longer allow fans to wear “Native American inspired” dress inside its home stadium, including headdresses and face paint.

The new guideline was announced in a stadium policy and protocol update ahead of the 2021 season, which also included new rules on mask-wearing, tailgating and cashless payments.

The team, which has undergone several changes since last year to rid itself of its controversial and offensive Native American stereotypes, including a name drop and logo change, said the changes are to provide “a safe and enjoyable gameday experience, and the best possible fan experience, for all guests at FedExField.”

“We are excited to welcome everyone back wearing their Burgundy & Gold,” the policy stated, adding that Native American-inspired attire would not be allowed.

The team is still in search of a new identity after dropping its former controversial name. In a statement on July 12, team President Jason Wright nixed the name Warriors and said the team’s new name would have “no ties to Native American imagery,” following conversations with Native American leaders.

The Washington Football Team’s pre-season began in August.



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Yazzie continued, “I mean, there’ll be cultural nuances for sure, and yeah, non-Natives will have to catch up some with some of the lingo and colloquialisms, but for the most part, we’ve all had to do that when stepping into a white museum, right? Most of us don’t know what cubism and surrealism is when stepping into those spaces, so we look it up. I don’t think it’s too much to ask that of people.”

NNT’s upcoming production is *The Unplugging* by respected playwright Yvette Nolan (Algonquin). This post-apocalyptic play is set in a world where electricity has stopped flowing, rendering modern technology useless, and follows two women who have been exiled from their community because they are no longer of child-bearing age. It’s a story of returning to traditional ways and remembering ancestral knowledge.

Yazzie stated that this play, like most of the work they produce, has a healing component to it. “Native people never get to see other Native people on stage. We never get to see our stories reflected back. And usually, Native stories are always centering characters that mainstream America doesn’t like, like for instance, two older women.”

The play will be performed on the old Migizi communications grounds, which burned down during the George Floyd protests last summer, an intentional choice that Yazzie says also fosters a sense of healing. “Producing the play in



Left: Christina Woods, Alicia Garcia, and Raymond Niu. (Photo by Rebekah Crisanta de Ybarra.)

Above: New Native Theatre founder Rhianna Yazzie. (Photo courtesy the NNT website.)

that space is going to be a healing and celebratory act. It’s been a year and a half since we’ve been able to get together and do theatre, so it’ll be a time to finally come back and be in community.”

Leading up to the production, NNT has been hosting a summer workshop series focused on food sovereignty and indigenous cultural lifeways such as wild rice harvesting, fish skin tanning, and

indigenous gardening practices, and even auntie life-hacks.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, NNT is taking measures to ensure the safety of everyone present at the performance. As such, the play will be held outdoors and attendance will be capped at thirty people per showing. Tickets prices are “pay what you can” with a suggested price of \$30. “We do that to ensure that

Native audiences always have access and can see the show,” Yazzie stated.

Tickets are pay-what-you-can with the suggested price of \$35. Audiences can buy tickets at <https://unplugging.brownpapertickets.com>.

For questions and ticket info, email boxoffice@newnativetheatre.org. The *Unplugging* will run everyday from September 9th to September 19th at 2:00pm. For more information on NNT, *The Unplugging*, and tickets, visit: <https://newnativetheatre.org>.



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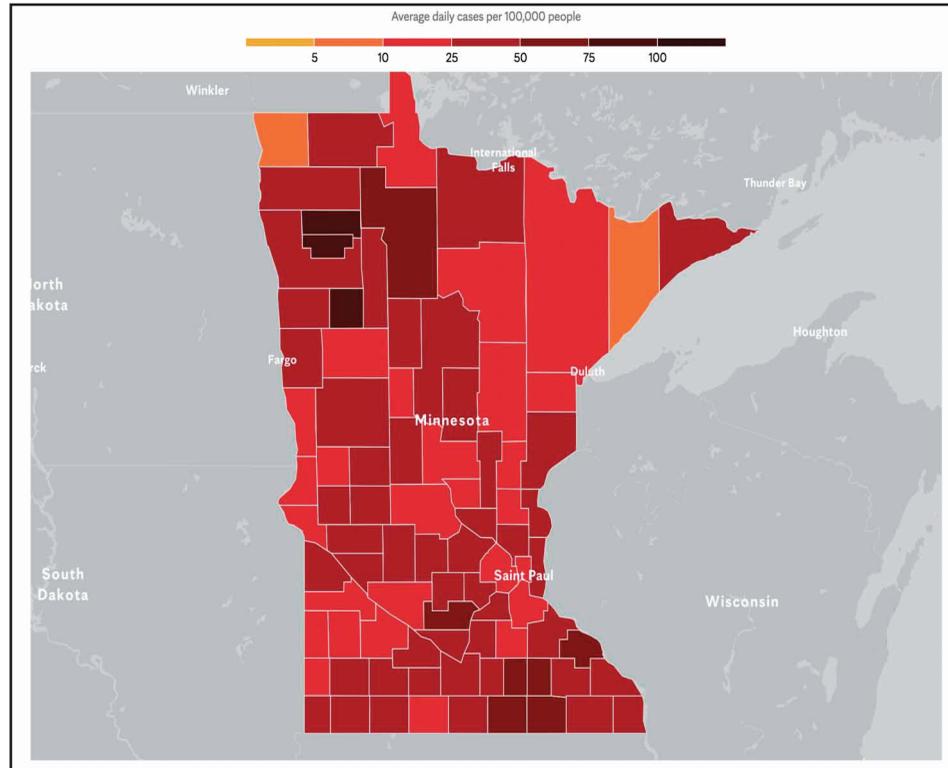
"While breakthrough cases of COVID-19 are rare (currently less than 1 percent) there is legitimate concern that those who are vaccinated and still become infected with COVID-19 may spread the virus, even if they don't become seriously ill," he said in a message to policy holders.

"At this time, with the dramatic rise in cases we are seeing, a multipronged approach is needed. Whether vaccinated or not, if you become infected with the delta variant, you may have a lot of virus in your body – particularly in your nose and throat – and studies show that due to the sheer amount of virus, it's easily passed on to others."

This has health officials all calling for getting vaccinated, wearing masks in public settings, and practicing social distancing going forward – the same prevention efforts encouraged for the past year and a half.

Hospitals reported in late August that beds and healthcare providers are under stress. This isn't just from increased cases of COVID; delayed health care for other needs during the past year of the pandemic is bringing an upsurge in people needing hospital attention.

Struggling with the various issues at



Hot spots for Covid in Minnesota as of August 28th, 2021. Graph is from the Mayo Clinic website: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/coronavirus-covid-19/map/minnesota>.

play isn't easy.

School boards and school officials have faced serious opposition to masking policies as they prepared for the new school years – from kindergarten on up through graduate schools. Local government leaders face similar resistance to safety measures.

For some opponents of prevention

measures, it is a political statement for freedom although not expressed as a God-given or constitutional right to infect others. For others, it is simply an indifferent inconvenience. And still others are influenced by misinformation about the vaccines and the disease widely spread in social media venues.

Dr. Owen, at the University of

Minnesota Medical School, sees all this as a threat to Native health in Minnesota despite success with vaccination rates.

The delta variant is showing up American Indian children, she said. Vaccines are slowly coming on line for especially young children. Health officials project that vaccines for children under age 12 may begin by mid-winter.

Also now just coming on line are booster shots for people with compromised immune systems. This, too, will be a big help in holding delta at bay, Owen said.

"We know the effectiveness of any vaccine decreases with time and that the booster will increase the vaccine effectiveness by increasing COVID antibodies in our bodies by 9-10 fold," she said.

No one in the state or at the federal level is flat-out predicting where this is leading us in the months ahead, or if there is another COVID variant around the corner and ready to pounce.

This, too, has Dr. Owen concerned as she sees opposition to masks and precautions.

"Unfortunately, a basic public health measure has been politicized and the end result is greater spreads of a disease that has killed hundreds of thousands people, with the impact highest among American Indians, African Americans, Latinx, impoverished and all underserved populations," she said.



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Robert McClain Jr.: Red Lake's first NCAA D1 male basketball player

Robert McClain Jr., 22, is an enrolled member of the Muscogee Creek Nation and descendant of the Red Lake Ojibwe. He is a former student-athlete of University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) and recently graduated with his degree in Multi-disciplinary Studies.

"When COVID started I was at school getting ready to play in my first D1 conference tourney," said Robert. "Sadly due to the outbreak it was cancelled. I was back home on the rez from March to August until they had plans in place for us to return safely back to campus."

"I'm proud to say I made it through and graduated from the school that gave me a chance to live out my dream as a D1 basketball player," said Robert.

"Rob played for us the past two years at UTRGV," said Jai Steadman, former assistant and interim head coach at UTRGV. "I went to watch Rob play at United Tribes Community College where he became a Junior College All-American."

"I met with his coach and family and then recruited Rob to play for UTRGV," said Jai. "Rob is competitive, driven, hard playing, and an athletic-type player that would fit into UTRGV and former head coach Lew Hill style of play. Coach Hill and I wanted tough aggressive, defensively-minded student athletes."

UTGRV head coach Lew Hill passed away tragically on Feb. 7, 2021 at the age of 55.

"Rob was such a leader both on and off the court the team often looked up to him," said Jai. "Sometimes I would be down and Rob would pick me back up and talk to me and keep things positive,

often talking about our faith and keep telling me to coach hard and keep my head up."

"Rob and his family decided that since he earned his Associate Degree and now his Bachelor's degree that it was time to move on from basketball and start working," said Jai. "I know Rob will be a successful leader of young people. He has shown the abilities to handle school, sports, adversity and continue to shine," added Jai.

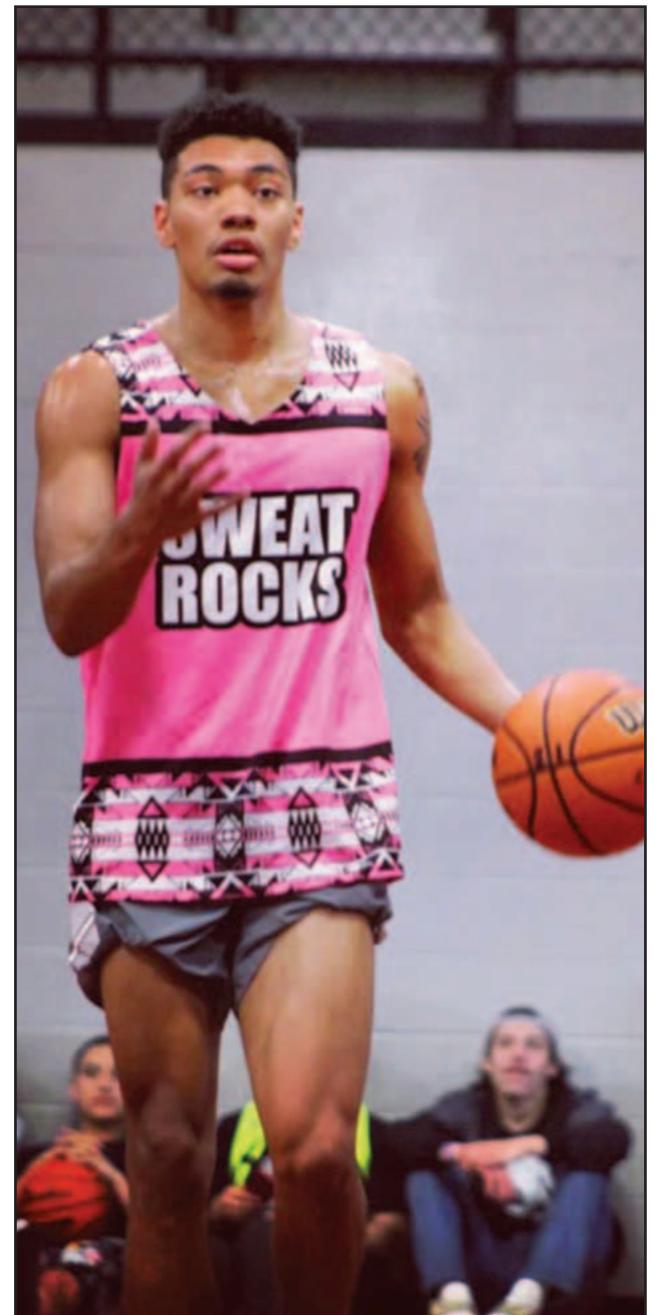
"I would hire Robert McClain Jr. to my coaching staff," said Jai. "Rob will make a great teacher, leader and/or coach going forward. I am truly proud and honored to have recruited and coached Robert McClain Jr."

"Being with Rob for two years made me feel good that the future of this world is in good hands," said Luke McKay, former assistant coach at UTRGV and current head coach, Neosho County Community College. "Beyond his athletic ability and mental toughness on the court he consistently demonstrated an empathy and compassion for others beyond his years."

"While he was an intense competitor on the court and a player that would put his body on the line to help his team, it was clear that his true passion and calling was helping other young people who come from a similar background to him," added Luke.

"He is definitely going to change the world for the better," added Luke.

Robert is back home on the Red Lake Reservation helping out where he can. He was involved with teaching and coaching multiple sports this past summer and enjoyed it very much.



Robert McClain Jr. with basketball on the court. (Photo by Dale Pine Jr.)

"Working with youth is something I've always wanted to do," said Robert.

"This past summer was great to reconnect with him," said Chris Jourdain, longtime Red Lake youth sports coach. "I was happy to hear what he experienced down in Texas and proud of his accomplishment of getting his degree."

"He's very intelligent, with a good head on his shoulders, a sense of direction with where he wants his life to go and the idea of giving back to his community," said Chris.

"I often remind the athletes I work with as a middle school and elementary coach about the work ethic he had. He wasn't just gifted his athleticism and skills. He earned them through the same drills that they're doing," added Chris.

United Tribes head coach Pete Conway and Juco Advocate recruit exposure owner Brandon Goble were significant to Robert's growth. "Without those two believing in me and giving me opportunities to showcase my talent I would not be where I am today," said Robert.

"I hope one day I can be as great as they are as helping young athletes reach their dreams and goals," added Robert.

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POLITICAL MATTERS: Native Issues in the Halls of Government – by Mordecai Spektor

editor@ajwnews.com

'Reservation Dogs'

We've been enjoying the new comedy series "Reservation Dogs," which is streaming on Hulu. Created by Sterlin Harjo (Seminole Nation of Oklahoma) and Taika Waititi (né Cohen), a popular filmmaker ("Thor: Ragnarok," "Jojo Rabbit") who is Te Whanau-a-Apanui (New Zealand), on his father's side and Jewish on his mother's side.

The show focuses on Native teenagers on an Oklahoma reservation; and it was filmed entirely in Oklahoma. The irrepressible young Native actors are wonderful. And the humor derives from mundane life on the rez and the quirky personalities of the characters.

It occurs to me that most people in this country have no personal acquaintance with American Indians, actual living and breathing people, so this show will be a revelation to those who know Natives only from secondhand sources that convey an ideologically filtered, or romanticized, overlay.

I'm looking forward to upcoming episodes of this critically acclaimed TV series.

In the museum

I was traveling again in August. Not to Europe, but to Cincinnati for a family wedding (twice postponed last year due to COVID). Among the Queen City's attractions is the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (freedomcenter.org), a monumental museum that tells the story of the Atlantic Slave Trade, which brought 11 million Africans in chains to these shores; the Underground Railroad, which brought some of those suffering in slavery to freedom in the northern states and Canada; the abolitionist movement; and related historical events, including exhibits on the situation of Native nations in the early years of the United States and in the era of Manifest Destiny, as the settlers moved westward.

Of course, we know something about the Trail of Tears, the dispossession of East Coast tribes to Indian Territory, which is now known as Oklahoma. However, the Freedom Center offers insights into the historical cross-currents and rivalries among European powers that the tribes had to navigate in the 18th and 19th centuries. Many prominent Native leaders are profiled in the exhibits, which promote a nuanced view of this land's development.

Amid the kerfuffle over the teaching of Critical Race Theory (CRT), it's important that students, and all of us, know the real history of the U.S.A., which is bound up in chattel slavery, and the dispossession of Native peoples, who are dealing with continuing depredations from the dominant society.

Resistance to Line 3

On Aug. 25, I drove down I-94 to the Minnesota Capitol for the Treaties Not Tar Sands rally. Among the 2,000 folks in attendance were the Treaty Walkers from Camp Firelight, near the headwaters of the Mississippi River. They walked the 256 miles from Up North, joined on their walk by many supporters in the Twin Cities.

Calgary-based Enbridge, Inc. is completing its \$2.9 billion U.S. portion of the Line 3 Replacement Program, which will swap out an aging 34-inch pipe with a new 36-inch pipe to shoot oil from the Alberta tar sands to a facility in Superior, Wisc. Most of the Line 3 replacement, 337 miles, is in Minnesota.

The water protectors and others protesting the Line 3 replacement say that the new route of the pipeline despoils and endangers lakes, streams, rivers and groundwater. The group from Camp Firelight point to six "frac outs," spills of a drilling mud compound used in boring under waterways.

And there is also an existential argument against Line 3: the climate crisis, which will be exacerbated by more burning of fossil fuel.

In his talk at the Aug. 25 rally, Sam Strong, secretary of the Red Lake Nation, raised the concern about Line 3 and climate change, noting that smoke drifting down from forest fires raging in Canada (and now in northern Minnesota) forced his children to shelter inside their house for a week: "My children were not allowed to go outside and play. This is a direct result of the actions of humanity."

And Strong called on everyone to carry an urgent message to their friends and family, "to carry the message that we need to change the way we interact with the nature around us."

As I've mentioned previously, the Enbridge Line 3 pipeline protesters have been met by police repression, which is funded in part by Enbridge, Inc.

Investigative journalist Alleen Brown has written articles over recent months for The Intercept (theintercept.com) about the strong ties between Enbridge and law enforcement agencies.

In a must-read article published Aug. 27 (bit.ly/Line3-repression), Brown wrote: "Line 3 opponents have long raised concerns about payments made to law enforcement by Enbridge to cover pipeline-related policing. A special account set up by the state of Minnesota has distributed \$2.3 million in Enbridge funds to public safety agencies so far. The records shed new light on the level of close coordination between law enforcement agencies and the Canadian oil company to police the Indigenous-led movement to stop Line 3."



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Advocates hope White Earth wild rice case will boost 'rights of nature'

BY DAN GUNDERSON/ MPR NEWS

Dale Greene grew up in north-central Minnesota, surrounded by wild rice, called manoomin in the Ojibwe language. The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe member says wild rice is an important part of Anishinaabe history and culture.

“One of the things that I think is really important in understanding manoomin, and its importance to us today, is understanding that there's a creation story,” said Greene.

The story recounts how Ojibwe people migrated to Minnesota from the East Coast to fulfill a prophecy that they would find food growing on the water. That food was manoomin, or the “good berry,” and it sustained generations of Ojibwe.

“It's the the reason that we're still here. It's much more than just a plant,” said Greene.

In 2018, the White Earth Band of Ojibwe formally recognized the rights of wild rice, setting the stage for the current lawsuit against the DNR.

The suit in tribal court against the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources contends a water use permit for the Enbridge Energy Line 3 pipeline puts wild rice at risk.

The White Earth case is thought to be the first to be brought before a tribal court. The DNR responded by challenging the tribal court's jurisdiction in a federal court filing. There's a hearing in that case in September.

The DNR said it is “committed to ensuring the complaints are addressed in the appropriate legal venue” but would not comment on the specifics of the case.

The 1855 Treaty Authority, consisting of several Ojibwe



His canoe almost completely hidden in wild rice, Bruce Martineau poles to the shore of Deadfish Lake on the Fond du Lac reservation in northeast Minn. on Sept. 5, 2017. Dan Kraker | MPR News 2017

Bands, also recognized the rights of wild rice. Greene is a member of the Treaty Authority Board. He's also listed as an expert witness in the White Earth lawsuit.

It's logical to give rights to plants, animals and the natural world, said Greene, because the Ojibwe world view holds that everything in nature is a spiritual being, and there is an acknowledged relationship with humans.

“I sometimes call it a covenant,” he said. “They're

providing life to us. It just makes perfect sense that it's a living, providing, spiritual being, in the form of water or food.”

In 2016, the Ho-Chunk Nation in Wisconsin adopted a resolution that said ecosystems have inherent rights including the “right to exist and thrive.”

In 2018, the Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma approved a law granting broad rights to nature, including the right “to a climate that is habitable, supports life, sustains culture, and is not disrupted by humans.”

At least three other tribal nations have since adopted some form of rights of nature laws.

A few communities across the country from Florida to California to Colorado have also given rights to waterways and ecosystems.

Recognizing the rights of nature is a relatively new movement. In South America, Ecuador ratified a rights of nature constitutional amendment in 2008.

Bolivia and Uganda passed laws defining the rights of nature.

But the movement has gained traction more slowly in the United States.

“The movement really is pretty young compared to other rights-based movements, so I imagine in the coming years we'll see more enforcement in the courts,” said Grant Wilson executive director with the Colorado-based Earth Law Center. “In the United States we're starting to see this in a few cases, including in this current case involving wild rice.”

Wilson has worked on a number of rights of nature cases. He said the idea represents a significant shift for traditional U.S. law under which nature is considered property, without rights afforded to people.

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Aaron Thompson and Will Gagnon pull their way across Hole-in-the-Day Lake north of Brainerd, to harvest wild rice on Aug. 28, 2015. (Photo by Vickie Kettlewell/MPR News 2015.)

“The grassroots effort towards the rights of nature is changing paradigms, is changing people’s understanding of our relationship to nature, and I hope will soon result in some very powerful legal victories in the courts,” said Wilson.

Those victories might be difficult to achieve since federal and state laws often preempt local rights of nature laws.

Wilson is hopeful tribal nations will have more success enforcing those laws because they are sovereign nations, and less subject to state or federal preemption.

He said many in the movement are closely watching the White Earth case.

“I think a success there would also

empower other tribes and communities and governments to advance rights of nature cases in other court systems as well, which would really be a boon to the movement.”

The courts aren’t the only avenue for recognizing the rights of nature, said Wilson who sees a nascent movement in several states to enshrine the rights of nature in the state constitution.

He predicts that in 10 years the rights of nature will become a mainstream idea, both socially and legally.

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Tom Jones' Strong Unrelenting Spirits Exhibit opens at Bockley Gallery



Left: Raymond Goodbear, 2019, 40 x 60 inches, digital photograph with beadwork, by Tom Jones.

Above: Robin King, 2020, 50 x 40 inches, digital photograph with beadwork, by Tom Jones.

Bockley Gallery will have an exhibition of Native artist Tom Jones' work from his recent portrait series Strong Unrelenting Spirits, shown earlier this year at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, NM.

Each of the nine digital photographs on view is a vivid exploration of Jones' Ho-Chunk identity. His subjects look directly into the camera lens with a steady gaze, or just slightly away, thus implicating the viewer in their lives. Jones has embellished the black ground of each portrait with designs made from beads, thus animating and deepening the cultural texture of his work.

"I extend the boundaries of photography by incorporating beadwork directly onto the photograph. The use of Ho-Chunk floral and geometric designs is a metaphor for the spirits of our ancestors who are constantly looking over us," states Jones.

Jones further explains the inspiration for incorporating beadwork into his portraits. "As a child, I went with my mother to see a Sioux medicine man on the Rosebud reservation. We sat on the floor along the walls with many other people, when the lights were turned off the women started to sing. They were asking for the spirits to come in, it was at this time that small orbs of light began to float around the room. I have visually incorporated this experience through beadwork, in order to give a symbolic representation of our ancestors and to present the pride, strength and beauty of my people."

In Strong Unrelenting Spirits, Jones, who is a Professor of Photography at the University of Wisconsin, Madison,

effortlessly weds past cultural modes of representation with present ones to explore identity and geographic place. His subjects wear a mix of contemporary and traditional dress, and range in age and identity from an infant to an elder, a Marine Corps veteran to a young male drum dancer in full regalia, a little girl grasping feathers to a handsome tattooed man wearing overalls. Viewed collectively, Jones' portraits create a narrative of Ho-Chunk identity that reveals its beauty and complexity.

Jones, 57, has been teaching at the U of Wisconsin since 2005 and is now a full professor in the art department. He has a Master of Fine Arts in both Photography and Museum Studies from Columbia College, Chicago, IL. He has received numerous awards and residencies, and his work has been featured in dozens of solo and group exhibitions, and has been the subject of numerous published reviews.

Jones' work is found in corporate, private and public

collections, including those of Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA; the Minneapolis Institute of Arts; the Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe; the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; the Nerman Museum, Kansas City, MO; Polaroid Corporation, Waltham, MA; Tamarind Institute, Albuquerque; and, the Tweed Museum of Art, University of Minnesota-Duluth.

Bockley Gallery represents artists from across Minnesota and North America, including Native American Artists Andrea Carlson, Jim Denomie, and the estate of George Morrison.

The gallery is located in Minneapolis's Kenwood neighborhood. Exhibit will run from September 1 through October 16. Gallery Hours are Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5 pm.

For more info, see <http://www.bockleygallery.com>.

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where did that come from?" I sez to me. Then I looked about for the offending matter, and here it turns out it came off the floor! I was appalled! My helper had not come by for two weeks and stuff here got a bit sticky.

It was not her fault, someone was supposed to call me and let me know. Someone left a ghost voice mail on my non-existent voice mail. Sigh. However, I gave up after a nurse visit and the next day I made an appointment with my provider because I cannot go on the way I am now. Oh, I still have my sass and silly cynicism, but my body? Naw.

I do try to not complain about my physical limitations but I still do, to whomever I can capture with my woes. Turns out I'm not the only person suffering such pains, oh no! When I talk about my trials and tribulations, then they tell me about theirs! *eye roll*. Well, then I'm not such bad company at all. Sorry that I can't relate anything funny; it's just not there.

Truth is I am watching the fall of an empire in which I reside. That is a given. My heart does go out to the Water Protectors and Warriors for healthy lands to support good people, meaning us, not the U.S. The

American Experiment had no good years at all. It took genocide and slavery to build up a white man's fantasy globe, wherein they are the masters of all.

Like, all of what? Ya mean that toilet paper with numbers on them? When everything good is extinct will they chew money with hoarded red wine vinegar? Just wondering. I want them to stay in their little stank holes and just maybe...regret their capitalistic religions. (hahahhaahhahaaaa!!!) I hope they like SPAM. As for myself, I had wanted to be cremated but now I want to die on an ice flo for polar bears to eat. Cycle of life, ennit?

Speaking of the cycle of life my granddaughter Dani had her 6th birthday and is excited about going back to school. Her voice is a delight to me, her presence is a gift to all who know her. Ya, I am well aware of yooz adorable, amazing grand babies but this one is mine. I can't wait to hold her in my arms again. She is the One.

It is for her and her sister that I fight on for when nothing else could make me think otherwise. Both are beautiful Indigenous girls who will grow into their powers. When I was about seven years old I was in a parade in Duluth, MN, wearing a borrowed tanned dress and mocs. I did

not want to take it off; I remember clearly standing on the hill we lived on and looking at Lake Superior, my ancestral land. I knew the ancestors were there with me in the moment.

They are why I am, and have wicked plans to decimate white supremacy as it is and will pass on with a smug smile on my face. Because, y'all didn't win: WE ARE STILL HERE.

Big talk? Sure. But look what the Taliban have done to three so-called super powers. I laugh. In fact, while I don't share their ideals I applaud their resistance to western so-called democracy. Think of me what you will, empirical aspirations and domination don't last.

I apologize, this is in my head right now as I listen to crickets on the Rez. It is a beautiful, calm August night and I am blessed to be on my Rezberry. I am gonna try and focus on the good that is still left us. Ya, but there are humans out there who wanna mess with that. Let them.

You know who you are ennit? That is what we need right now, people speaking up, some of whom were too timid to do so before. I have a lot of friends who are doing that right now just by having gardens. BTW-I love zucchini.

So I'm sitting here and wondering; How did we get here? Kinda like a rock that hit shore and ended up in someones' pocket for nostalgia. Sort of. I remember reading that actions have reactions (dah!), so here I sit watching the world's reactions to the collective damage we have done. I can blame myself until the raccoons come home but I prefer to eviscerate all corrupt governments, which they all are.

So anyways, I was rolling about my house and my walker was making weird sounds. If it was a car, I would have checked the Injun light. Mildly puzzled, I saw that the front wheels were all choked up with gunk. "Now

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