

AIM co-founder Clyde Bellecourt passes on



Clyde Bellecourt, co-founder of the American Indian Movement, speaking at Minneapolis City Hall in 2018. Bellecourt, a leader in the Native American struggle for civil rights died in January at 85. (Photo by Amy Forliti / AP)

BY LEE EGERSTROM

Native Americans across North America and indigenous people worldwide have been paying tribute and recalling memories of Clyde Howard Bellecourt, 85, who died at his home in Minneapolis on Jan. 11.

As a co-founder of the American Indian Movement (AIM), Bellecourt was a leading influencer of Native American and indigenous people's efforts to overcome discrimination, seek justice, and overturn disrespectful stereotype images and portrayals of Native people.

AIM was organized in Minneapolis in 1968 by Bellecourt, Dennis Banks, Eddie Benton-Banai, George Mitchell and others. For most of the past five decades, it has served as an incubator for starting educational, social justice, legal justice and women's health and safety organizations.

"Uncle Clyde knew seeking civil rights and respect are never completed, never ending tasks for our organizations," said Lisa Bellanger, AIM executive director, using an honorific for Bellecourt that is a common title of respect within the movement.

A case in point was Bellecourt's long effort to replace and eliminate disrespectful images and names for athletic teams. In this case, Bellecourt's Ojibwe name Nee-gon-we-way-we-dun, or "Thunder Before the Storm," was especially fitting.

When this writer was a Washington correspondent for Ridder Publications and Knight Ridder Newspapers in the 1970s, Bellecourt organized a press conference at the National Press Club to stress how hateful and disrespectful the Washington professional football team's name (Redskins) was to Native people.

It may have been the only time a press conference was called for the purpose of educating news media professionals, knowing full well that what was said would not be printed or broadcast anywhere in the country.

"When Washington plays the New York (derogatory religious slur), we always cheer for the (deleted slur). When Washington plays Philadelphia (ethnic slur), we cheer for (the deleted slur)."

Bellecourt shocked reporters by touring around the National Football Conference, coining horrible ethnic, racial and sexual orientation slur names for all the major teams with the exception of the Minnesota Vikings.

A reporter for the Cleveland Plain Dealer sat next to me. He nudged me at one point and said it was a shame none of us would write this story – then in the mid-1970s. Today, social media, mostly immune to common decency, would instantly send that message out across the country.

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 -

Huber Mill, the latest bad idea for the environment and people

BY WINONA LADUKE

Out of the Deep South a lumber company, Huber Manufacturing, is proposing what may be the largest oriented strand board plant in the country. The Frontier plant would be built in Cohasset, just east of Grand Rapids, and on Minnesota Power's land, where the Boswell Energy Facility is located.

The era of coal is ending in a time of climate chaos and major innovations in renewables. Replacing the big polluter, the plant would go up less than a mile from the Leech Lake reservation. No one in the Walz administration thought to call Leech Lake and ask what they thought. Instead, they just started the cannon ball rolling towards the forests of the north.

Huber Manufacturing hopes to build a 750,000 square foot facility, where 150 people would work and make industrial sized construction panels. Sounds simple, right?

Well, the MN Legislature thought it sounded like a really good idea, so they gave \$80 million in subsidies to the North Carolina based company. They told the City of Cohasset that it should be the Responsible Government Unit, and then gave the company an exemption from an environmental impact statement, saying that a simple environmental review (an EAW worksheet as it's called) might be just fine.

Minnesota is hoping the deal will be sweet enough that Huber will pick Cohasset over competitors in other states. Kind of sounds like Minnesota has become a very cheap date. And, for that much in state subsidies, it might be worth some vetting.

to fast building. It's sort of a sticky mess and has some toxic materials to hold the wood together. Since Paul Bunyan logged our massive pine forests we now just mush up little stuff and glue it together with petrochemicals. That's the Minnesota way.

The first oriented strand board was made by Blandin in Grand Rapids. There was also an OSB plant in Deerwood, which made joists, operated initially by MacMillan Bloedel, and then by Weyerhaeuser. Deerwood's Trus Joist had a number of health related concerns before the plant was closed, and the industry is generally pretty toxic to worker health.

It turns out that the chemicals like formaldehyde and others, combined with wood dust, aren't that healthy. Other OSB facilities closed during the financial collapse in 2008. And facing more changes and shrinking forests, the pulp and paper mills have also been facing hard times. Tough sledding in the logging industry.

What About the Trees?

It's about the trees and the forests. A forest is a living ecosystem, or timber resources are inanimate materials. Those are two profoundly different world views which have been facing off in the forests of the north since before the 1855 treaty. What's clear is that Minnesota does not manage the forests sustainably. Even the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) knows that. Twenty eight DNR staff outlined their ecological concerns in a 2019 letter to Commissioner Sarah Strommen. The authors "do not believe it is scientifically honest or transparent to say that the 10-year timber plan is 'beneficial to wildlife'"

Oriented Strand Board
Oriented Strand Board or OSB is some important stuff

- CONTINUED ON PAGE 9 -



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COVID still confusing but help for MN Natives is on the way

BY LEE EGERSTROM

As January was giving way to February, Minnesota health providers and institutions were still under stress, the surge in COVID-19 and its Omicron variant infections was still underway, but new responses to the pandemic signaled help for Minnesota's Native communities was on the way.

No guarantees that February will turn the corner on COVID. Another variant of Omicron is popping up globally and has now been diagnosed in California. That means it is only a matter of time before it will be found in Minnesota – with possible other variants to follow.

At the same time, several public and health-related steps started in Minnesota that can be of great importance to the Native American and other distinct communities in the state. Late January announcements included:

- Gov. Tim Walz announced that more than 200 nurses and respiratory therapists were coming to help Minnesota's short-staffed hospitals cope with the continuing surge in COVID hospitalizations.

In separate late January emergency measures, federal help was bringing a fourth Defense Department medical team to the state to assist Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis. It consists of 23 doctors, nurses and hospital staff who were to be assigned here for 30 days.

Previous federal medical teams shored up work at Hennepin County Medical Center, M Health Fairview Southdale Hospital and St. Cloud Hospital.

- The city of Minneapolis announced Jan. 28 it has received a two-year grant from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for a program aimed at improving health and preventing chronic diseases within Black and Native American residents living in affordable high-rise apartments.

This is part of an ongoing effort to improve health and overcome health disparities for ethnic groups in high-rise public housing and through using culturally appropriate education. Stated goals include providing more access to nutritious, culturally specific foods; more access to preventive health care; more access to breastfeeding support for new mothers; and help managing high blood pressure, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and unhealthy weight.

Sarah McKenzie, Minneapolis media relations coordinator, told *The Circle* the city's primary partners from the Native American community include the Division of Indian Work and the Native American Community Clinic.

Funding comes from the CDC's Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program that assists state and local health departments, tribes, universities and community-based groups with both funds and expert support.

The Minneapolis REACH grant applications were developed with input from the Minneapolis American Indian Center, Dream of Wild Health and the Native American Community Development Institute.

This grant program will help the city and partners continue programs for residents in public housing. These services have already included providing thousands of COVID vaccinations at 39 public housing high rises, partnering with Hennepin Healthcare to provide booster shots for 564 residents, and help them access free COVID tests from the federal government.

- The Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP) launched a nationwide campaign in early January to promote American Indian and Alaska Natives access to COVID and flu vaccination programs.

"I can't think of a better way for AAIP to create and extend resources aimed at

saving lives," said Dr. Mary Owen, the Duluth doctor who is president of the national organization.

"Our elders are especially at risk because of the ongoing pandemic and flu season. Vaccinations help save these special community members and thus preserve the cultures they represent and teach us so much about," she said.

Owen is a Tlingit from Alaska, a University of Minnesota Medical School graduate, and currently serves as director of the Center of American Indian and Minority Health (CAIMH) at the University of Minnesota from the Duluth campus.

With this national campaign, AAIP has prepared and released several public service announcements (PSAs) that promote the importance for tribal members and everyone to get vaccinated.

These promotion pieces counter much of the disinformation that has traveled widespread through the Native American and other community groups that, in turn, leave the public vulnerable to the spread of the virus and the constantly mutating variant forms.

Dr. Owen and Dr. Arne Vanio, a prominent Cloquet doctor and member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, are prominently featured in the public service announcement campaign.

The American Indian physicians group noted in its announcement of the vaccine campaign that American Indian and Alaska Natives are still disproportionately at risk of the virus, its Delta variant and subsequent sub-variants.

"Since September 2021, COVID-19 infection rates between racial groups have narrowed, however, (AIANs) remain the highest risk for COVID-19 related deaths," the doctors stressed.

- Longer term, the University of Minnesota announced at month's end that it is seeking design funds for a new aca-

demical health sciences center linking the UMD campus with Duluth's medical complex. This comes in a University funding request to the Minnesota Legislature.

University officials explained in news reports that this expanded medical center would provide a larger healthcare workforce to service "Duluth, Greater Minnesota and the local Indigenous populations."

These steps to combat COVID and encourage healthy living within Minnesota and its ethnic and racial communities come at a statistically confusing time here and across the nation.

Legal challenges are attempting to block state and federal mandates for people to be vaccinated to hold jobs where they are in contact with the general public and may endanger other people's lives. Close to home, several small businesses – mostly bars and restaurants – are trying to keep Minneapolis from imposing its mandate that people going to events, bars and eateries must show they have been vaccinated or had recent negative COVID tests.

St. Paul has a similar mandate in place although it wasn't under legal challenge at the time of this writing. There was disturbing news that the Ramsey County office most out of step with the county mandate for workers being vaccinated was the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office.

As January came to an end, Minnesota was still averaging more than 30 deaths each day, there were 1,543 patients hospitalized with COVID variants, and 320 were in intensive care units. Minnesota Department of Health officials estimated there are 53,500 infected Minnesotans recovering from home.

COVID will be with us well into the new year ... and perhaps longer.

The AAIP website can be accessed at: <https://aaipvax.org>.

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Power and corruption = Disaster Capitalism

BY WINONA LADUKE

Government accountability is a challenge. Say that your tribal government signed a secret contract for \$4.9 million of your tribal money with a newly created entity you’ve never heard of, for a tribal energy plan. Now, honestly, we need one. Tribal members are paying \$800 a month in electric bills they can’t afford. And then of course, there’s the craziness of the fossil fuel industry – from Enbridge to rising propane costs, and power outages. That will get worse.

In 2012, the White Earth Ojibwe tribe put up 30 units of “solar ready” tax credit houses in the villages of White Earth, Rice Lake and Naytahwaush. Those houses never got their solar electric panels on them. Gordon Construction, which had the contracts, never completed the project. So hundreds of thousands of dollars later (money paid by tribal members and tribal government) these houses stand empty and no one is held accountable. Working together we can make a difference. Ten years ago, our tribe did

an energy plan. And with the White Earth Land Recovery Project, our tribe put up the White Earth wind turbine. The reservation has Class Four wind along Highway 59. Last year, with the help of the RREAL (Rural Renewable Energy Alliance), the tribe installed four solar projects. Meanwhile, 8th Fire Solar began manufacturing solar thermal panels to reduce heating bills by 20%, selling these panels nationally, and installing them on tribal houses. Tribal members produce those panels, straight outta Ponsford. In the fall of 2021, the White Earth tribe asked 8th Fire Solar to come up with a proposal to address the 30 solar ready houses, and keep a promise to the residents.

Disaster Capitalism

Enter Disaster Capitalism. That’s when corporations, and corrupt decision makers start allocating disaster funds (ie: Pandemic money) to special projects which benefit the top one percent, not the folks in the housing project. Under the leadership of Secretary Alan Roy, Total Spectrum, a newly created entity received a \$4.9 million contract to create an energy plan for White Earth.

Roy wanted tribal members involved, so he invited a group of tribal members to become a special community Green Team. None had real experience with renewable energy. In turn, Roy was able to pay those tribal members well, and it turns out, some of those tribal members helped Alan Roy with a petition to remove Chairman Mike Fairbanks from office. Chairman Fairbanks reported this to the Minnesota Attorney General, as possible “racketeering.” Classic corruption of power.

According to the Total Spectrum Report, “What has \$4.9 million bought for the Tribe? The contract price was used to bring in access to corporations, utilities, and others; contracts with accountants, lawyers, finance specialists and experts in renewable energy opportunities; and controlled expenses related to travel, meetings, and reports...”

Usually a tribal energy plan would cost \$100,000, and it would have spread sheets, time tables, business plans and legal documents. This has none. That’s to say, in 2019, the Department of Energy allocated \$1 million between eleven tribes for feasibility studies like this. Most of those tribes received less than \$ 100,000. In fact, Leech Lake received funding in 2019 for the feasibility and planning for a tribal electric

utility. Maybe we could just cut and paste from their plan?

The report sounds sort of crazy, frankly. Here’s some questions one might ask: What corporate structure would supply solar power to Bagley, an off reservation city with a municipal utility? How would White Earth participate in a 230 MW solar project and who would be the partners? And are we powering a Bitcoin mining project and installing a hydro electric dam near Roy Lake – proposing a 40 acre reservoir in the Buckboards? Surprise.

There’s no mention of the Class 4 wind in the western portion of the reservation. Nor was there any mention of the small tribal business building solar thermal panels in Ponsford, except to say that the completed proposal for the 30 solar ready homes, solicited by the tribe, now ready for action, should be shelved and put up for a competitive bid. And we should get into hydro power. Dams?

“...the Total Spectrum team has reviewed dozens of existing hydroelectric plants and existing dam sites for potential acquisition and/or development. Many of these hydroelectric plants could be purchased at a fair market price.”

Wait, so the team from White Earth reviewed dozens of hydro electric plants? That sounds rather surprising.

It turns out that Spectrum hired a consultant, Chuck Alsberg, co-owner of North American Hydro Holdings, Inc., which owned and operated 44 hydroelectric projects throughout a five-state region in the Midwestern United States. The company is listed as having one employee. North American Hydro Holdings would profit from Native Nations: “Indigenous tribes are given special consideration and preference for development on federal facilities. This pertains to construction of hydroelectric facilities on Army Corps of Engineer dam sites. This preference could significantly reduce the approval time for tribal development compared to non-tribal development on those sites....”

That’s at the core of this project, a corporate interest using Indians to gain access. It’s an old story. Hydros probably a great idea, but I’d like a full disclosure as to how our \$4.9 million was spent. We could have powered the village of White Earth with the Total Spectrum check. How about we work together to make a good future for our people, and not let corruption waste our power?



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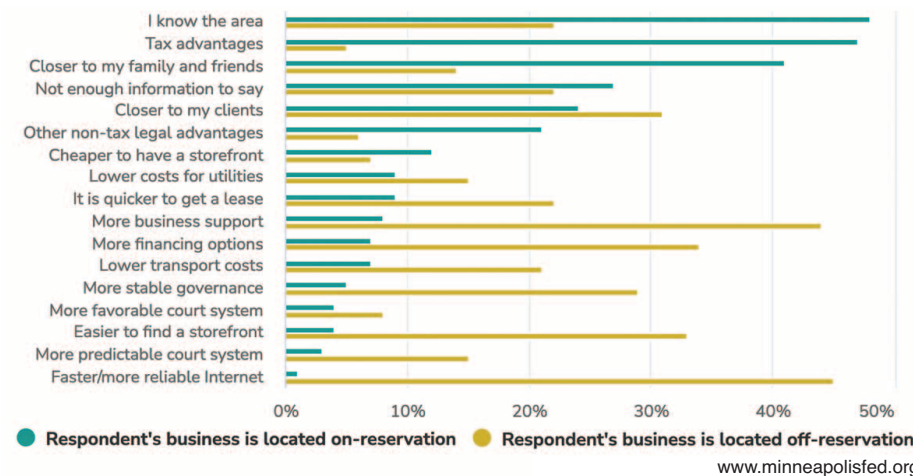
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Data show costs/benefits for private business on reservation lands

What are the main advantages of doing business on- and off- reservation?



BY LEE EGERSTROM

There are both perceived benefits and disadvantages to starting and operating a privately owned business from a base on Indian reservation land, but would-be entrepreneurs will most likely find it takes longer to get a business up and running from a reservation.

Those are findings from a survey of business operators on or near reservations conducted over the past year by researchers at the Center for Indian Country Development (CICD), a research unit at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

Results from the CICD survey were released in a Jan. 10 report from D.L. Feir, a CICD research fellow who is also a labor economist and economic historian at University of Victoria in British Columbia. Among her areas of research are economic impacts of policies on Indigenous economics and people.

Dr. Feir's research project started in 2020 in a collaborative effort of the CICD and the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development. Based in Mesa, Ariz., it is a nonprofit organization assisting tribes with economic development and promoting Native private business ownership.

The survey findings are an effort to learn about key obstacles to economic development in Indian country, CICD said in releasing the report.

A clear advantage to locating a business on a reservation comes from the Native entrepreneur knowing the area, or thus the market to be served. Another expressed advantage is for the entrepreneur to be close to family and friends.

Among disadvantages expressed by respondents were that markets were often smaller on reservations, they had more limited financing options, and infrastructure problems such as speed and reliability of Internet service hinder business activity.

There were not significant differences in the cost of doing business either on

or off the reservation. Respondents generally agreed that sales would be less within the reservation communities.

Such data should help tribal developers and others assess strengths and weaknesses for enterprise development on reservation lands going forward. The Minneapolis Fed and its CICD intends to expand this type of research in the year ahead.

They announced on Jan. 20 that the COVID-19 pandemic and related impacts made clear the need for data collection, analysis and policy initiatives for the tribal nations.

CICD will seek to fill data gaps impacting tribes in the next 12 months and work with tribal governments and "data partners" to fill those voids.

"The lack of data in Indian Country limits our understanding of the economy," said Neel Kashkari, Minneapolis Fed president. "Strengthening CICD's capacity for research and data will help tribal leaders and our other partners create meaningful and effective policy."

Casey Lozar, CICD director and a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana) said, "The economic potential in Indian Country is vast and untapped, but structural barriers to economic advancement persist."

"This expansion will allow us to make a larger impact on future economic vitality in tribal communities and ensure the economy works for all, including Indian Country."

The Minneapolis Fed is that regional bank for the Ninth Federal Reserve District that includes the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, northwestern Wisconsin and the states of Minnesota, Montana and North and South Dakota. There are more than 150,000 Native Americans living on or near 45 reservations within the district.

For more information, see: <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2022/doing-business-in-indian-country>.

HOW THE COVID VACCINES WERE MADE



Indian HEALTH BOARD
COMMUNITY TRADITION WELLNESS

Nov. 2002 FIRST SARS CASE
First case of SARS reported in southern China.

March 2003 US SARS AND START OF RESEARCH
SARS cases emerge in the US. Laboratories start developing potential treatment of SARS.

April 2003 SARS GENOME SEQUENCED
First successful sequencing of the coronavirus genome believed to cause SARS was completed.

Sept. 2012 MERS
Emergence of Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) coronavirus.

May 2015 MERS GENOME SEQUENCED
MERS coronavirus complete genome was sequenced and analyzed.

Dec. 2019 COVID-19 EMERGES
Cases pneumonia detected caused by an unknown virus that will later be labeled Covid-19.

March 2020 GLOBAL PANDEMIC & OPERATION WARP SPEED
World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 a pandemic. Operation Warp Speed (OWS) was formed to fund multiple companies to develop the Covid-19 vaccine.

Aug. 2020 PFIZER AND MODERNA
Pfizer and Moderna begin late stage vaccine trials with human volunteers.

Sept. 2020 STAGE 3 AND THE RESULTS
Data from trial showed vaccines had over 90% and 95% efficacy against Covid-19.

Dec. 2020 FDA AND EMERGENCY USE AUTHORIZATION (EUA)
Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were approved for EUA which paved the way for more vaccines.

Jan. 2021 MAKING PROGRESS
Over 20 million doses were made by the end of 2020 due to vaccines being EUA approved

Present 2021 LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL
Covid-19 vaccines are widely distributed and Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine is FDA approved in Fall 2021.



source:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>

<https://www.who.int>

<https://www.cdc.gov>

Hemp the New Green Revolution online course begins in February

BY HANA BROADBENT

Hemp – a strain of cannabis containing less than .3% THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana that produces the feeling of being high) – is what farmers and enthusiasts call “the plant of 50,000 uses”. It can be used to make oil, plastic, carpet, clothing, concrete and the popular CBD (cannabidiol, the second most active ingredient in cannabis does not product a feeling of being high). And Hemp is biodegradable in any form.

Winona LaDuke (White Earth Ojibwe) is not only a Hemp farmer but also a leader and innovator in the industry. “I believe she is a plant to be courted and treated well. If we treat her well, she will help us. She has the ability to transform people and worlds,” LaDuke told *The Circle* in 2020 when discussing her 80-acre farm – 8 acres of it is being used for growing Hemp.

Now, Winona’s Hemp and Heritage Farm, in partnership with Anishinaabeg Agriculture Institute, wants to share this holistic approach to world transformation in its Online Class and Curriculum: Hemp the New Green Revolution course.

This 10-week class will begin on Feb. 15, 2022. The class is for Indigenous farmers, tribal college students and others. The introduction to hemp will provide students with an overview of the plant – from seeds to clothing, food, and housing.

Hemp has a long history in the United States that started in the times of colonial settler villages and ended in the 1950’s when it was outlawed.

LaDuke said the Farm Bureau used to require farms to grow a quarter acre of hemp. “If that would have continued, we would be in a lot better shape today.”

In 2014, President Obama signed a version of the Farm Bill that established the Hemp Pilot Program, allowing certain research institutions to cultivate and study hemp. And in 2018, hemp was officially legalized on the federal level.

In Minnesota, there were 11 Hemp farms in production before WWII. The Hemp industry agrees it was the Industrial boom, combined with misinformation about cannabis and confusion on Hemp’s relation to marijuana, that lead to its criminalization.

For textiles, Cotton uses 5x more water than Hemp. Cotton is 2.4% of the world’s crop land but accounts for 24% agricultural contamination. LaDuke says not only is cotton drinking up all our water, it’s contaminating it too.

Hemp, on the other hand has resorptive properties making it remedial in soil. When integrated into a crop rotation it can help rejuvenate the soil and reduce carbon.

On her farm, located on White Earth Reservation, they are working to learn about different varieties and different ways to grow them – some of that education comes from what grew in Minnesota almost one hundred years ago. She says the farm is a model, a learning place. It’s the place she chooses to start the new world.

“We are going to want a lot of hemp if we are going to change the world. Since we want to build a hemp fiber mill, and eventually move into food products, we are going to want to work with other tribal and non-tribal people in our area who want to grow organic hemp and grow the next economy.”

LaDuke says the “next economy” is not about money. “If we want to survive, we are going to have to work together. It’s not about competition, but cooperation.”

The Hemp class is offered completely online. It will feature instructors from the field, to universities and businesses. The intention is to provide background materials for better decision making.

“The class will inform students, and

allow for dialogue on the opportunity for Cannabis Sativa can transform our materials economy, our textiles economy, return carbon to the soil, be a central material in sustainable housing, provide health and well-being, and be a path to restorative justice,” states the course description.

Classess consist of lectures, discussions and videos. Homework outside of class involves weekly reading, written assignments and discussion posts.

Students will receive a certificate of completion from the Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College, a public, Tribal land-grant community college in New Town, North Dakota. It is chartered by the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation.

“Change is inevitable – it’s the question of who controls the change, so we want to control that.” LaDuke said. “We want to make decisions for our communities that are coherent decisions that are going to work out for us.”

The class will start February 15 and run until April 27. It will be on Tuesday afternoons from 4pm-6pm CST, on Zoom. Cost is \$200.

For more info and to register, see: <https://www.winonahemp.com/shop/online-class-and-curriculum-hemp-the-new-green-revolution>.

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Friends of the Falls to negotiate acquisition of St. Anthony Falls

Minneapolis, MN – The Minneapolis City Council has approved having Friends of the Falls serve as the City's agent in negotiations with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers over the acquisition of federal land surrounding the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock & Dam. The agreement also has the organization paying all costs associated with the transfer of land into municipal ownership, to happen later this year.

"We're moving together as a team with the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board to center Native voices as we envision the future of the riverfront," said Mayor Jacob Frey. "This agreement with the City represents a key benchmark in our work to make the most of this space and enhance community access."

"This is an exciting opportunity to celebrate the spectacular environmental birthplace of Minneapolis and to also work with our Native American community," said Council Member Michael Rainville, whose ward includes St. Anthony Falls. "We need to recognize the importance of this land to the people who've been here long before the city was ever founded."

Friends of the Falls is a non-profit organization focused on building public understanding of the falls and its importance to Indigenous communities. Both the City and Friends of the Falls have been advocating for the transfer of land to municipal control since 2016 in an effort to transform the site into a community asset and restore public access to the riverfront.

The falls and surrounding land are of spiritual significance to the Dakota people and other Native communities. In 2019, Friends of the Falls started working with the Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI) and Dakota Nations on plans for the land's future use.

"The commitment of Friends of the Falls, in partnership with NACDI, to center Native voices – the voices of the

descendants of the First People of this land – is groundbreaking," said Robert Lilligren, president and CEO of NACDI. "We have the opportunity to show the world a pathway toward addressing our country's colonizing history with a more just present and future. And a means to respecting the rights of nature, water, and the river herself."

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board approved the memorandum of understanding at its Jan. 19 meeting. Friends of the Falls will work with City and Park Board staff in ongoing community outreach and future planning.

Community conversations

In addition to authorizing the memorandum of understanding with Friends of the Falls and the Park Board, the City Council also approved a community engagement plan to consider future public uses for the site and to establish long-term ownership and stewardship for acquired land. A series of community conversations are now scheduled.

The first community conversation is Feb. 15. Karen Diver, University of Minnesota Senior Advisor to the President for Native American Affairs and former advisor for Native American Affairs for the Obama administration, will join community leaders Robert Lilligren, Carrie Day Aspinwall, Jewell Arcoren, Juanita Espinosa and Wakinyan LaPointe to discuss how the project can be approached from an Indigenous perspective. The meeting is virtual and open to everyone. For more information and to register, go to thefalls.org.

Indigenous lifeways include prevention and risk-reduction activities

Minneapolis, MN – Many Indigenous communities acknowledge the circular, nonlinear nature of life. They center their life on the creator, community, and loved ones. This Indigenous paradigm represents the anatomy of the body. The heart is at the center of our circulatory system and responsible for pumping blood throughout the body. Similarly, our circulatory system mirrors the waterways of

the world, which act as veins, carrying the earth's most precious resource, water. We are alive because this central organ circulates our life force.

In Minnesota, Indigenous people are nearly four times more likely to die from heart disease, with adults between ages 35-54 years old at the highest risk, compared to the non-Hispanic white population. In addition, many Indigenous relatives have a higher risk of developing high blood pressure than other races. Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death and cancer is the second leading cause. The intersections between these top leading causes of death are opportunities to address health among our relatives, especially because cancer patients have a higher risk of dying from CVD than those without a diagnosis.

Indigenous lifeways often include prevention and risk-reduction activities for many diseases which includes heart disease and cancer. Eating traditional foods and participating in cultural activities like lacrosse have supported overall well-being. Our ancestors lived very active lives that kept them moving, like ricing, tanning hides, hunting, and cultivating the land. Returning to these lifeways is an act of reclaiming our health and honoring the ancestors that endured tremendous hardships. Today, we are the living ancestors of future generations. We have the opportunity to expand Indigenous

lifeways and broaden the definition of wellbeing care, through education which includes preventive screenings for heart health and cancer.

To address these intersections, the American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF) and the Minnesota Department of Health SagePlus Heart Health Screening Program have partnered to develop culturally tailored resources and educational materials on heart health for community members and health care providers. The SagePlus Heart Health Screening Program also helps to address CVD risk among women in Minnesota.

Chief Executive Officer of AICAF Melissa Buffalo (Meskwaki/Dakota) states, "The American Indian Cancer Foundation works in partnership with tribal communities to engage, empower and educate our relatives to implement healthy lifestyle changes. To heal with culture and reclaim indigenous health is something we strive for, not just to eliminate the cancer burdens but to improve the overall wellbeing of our relatives, which includes a healthy heart, because unfortunately, heart disease is also a burden. Our next-generation deserves to connect with their elders."

For info, contact Cancer Programs Project Manager Misha LaPlante at: mlaplante@aicaf.org. Or see website: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/cancer/sage/about/sageplus.html>.

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A little later as Bellecourt continued to drive home his points about disrespectful athletic imagery, my friend from Cleveland nudged me again. "Chief Wahoo has got to go," he said.

That latter cartoon caricature was the Cleveland Indians baseball team mascot, not for football, and was another target of AIM and related Native organizations' image cleansing efforts.

It has been more than a four-decade struggle, but here is what has happened:

When Cleveland's professional baseball team takes the field to start the 2022 season this spring, it will be known as the Cleveland Guardians. The name Cleveland Indians is gone. The racist caricature Chief Wahoo was phased out three years ago. In recent years, baseball uniforms have substituted a stylish "C" for Cleveland in place of the mascot.

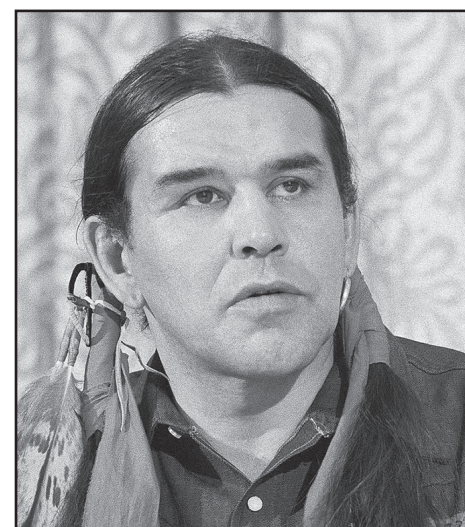
Meanwhile, on Feb. 2, the Washington Football Team is scheduled to reveal a new team name to replace Redskins – the offensive, scalp-inspired name that was finally shelved the past two seasons.

The team spent 18 months on research since retiring the name in July 2020. Fan surveys, focus groups and related legal investigations came up with a list of possible finalists that include Armada, Presidents, Brigade, Red Hogs, Commanders, Red Wolves, Defenders and continued use of Washington Football Team.

The team has told Washington media



Left: Clyde Bellecourt, left, shakes hands with Nelson Mandela and gets a smile from Sheila Sisulu, South African Ambassador to the United States at a news conference on Nov. 21, 2000. ((Photo by Mike Zerby/Star-Tribune.)



Right: Clyde Bellecourt speaks at a press conference in New York in 1973. Bellecourt and two physicians, Alan Berkman and Barbara Zeller, had just returned from Wounded Knee, S.D., where AIM led a 50-day takeover. (Photo by Jim Wells / Associated Press.)

that a name chosen will not reference Native Americans or the Red Wolves name, and that the team colors will retain the long standing burgundy and gold.

This follows decades of protesting teams using Indian mascots and even schools named after people who are historically offensive to Native communities. While much has been accomplished, this work continues, said AIM's Bellanger.

Bellecourt was front and center at highly visible protests that included the

1991 World Series between the Atlanta Braves and Minnesota Twins, and Washington's Super Bowl game in Minneapolis when it play the Buffalo Bills.

Tied in with those actions, AIM and groups formed the National Coalition on Racism in Sports and Media in 1991 at a conference at Augsburg College.

This all fits the educational objectives of AIM and Native American leaders, Bellanger said. That reflects how such efforts spill over to form new, clearly focused groups to work on public aware-

ness and public policy.

Bellecourt and AIM leaders, including brother Vernon Bellecourt (1936-2007), were instrumental in starting "survival schools" in the Twin Cities that was replicated in other urban communities nationwide. These schools have linked with urban school districts, become part of the system and continue to provide various tribal and cultural educations in the schools.

– CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 –

ALL MY RELATIONS ARTS

Steven Premo

Avenues of Creation

February - April 16, 2022



Through his lifelong artistic career, multi-disciplinary artist and designer, Steven Premo (Mille Lacs Band of the Ojibwe), learned that there are many different avenues for creation, and each requires a particular medium. In his Twin Cities solo exhibition debut, Steve reflects his pride in his Ojibwe heritage through a variety of retrospective works highlighting narratives of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe people and the evolution of Ojibwe art forms.

"My own art is a reminder of our history and the continuation of our existence and expresses our cultural influence across the community and beyond.." -Steven Premo



1414 E. Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404

ALLMYRELATIONSARTS.COM

Nett Lake Superintendent/Principal

Position: Superintendent/Principal

School Website: www.nettlakeschool.org

Certifications: Hold a valid MN Superintendent and Elementary Principal Licensure/or in process of obtaining licensure/s.

Qualifications:

- Experience in all aspects of school finance
- Experience in educational priorities and is familiar with state and federal mandates
- Effective communicator and works well with others
- Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with everyone
- Has a record of visibility in the School District and is accessible to the School Board, staff, and community
- Is a problem solver and able to think on his/her feet
- Has knowledge of and experience with diverse populations understands the effect of learning and achievement, and is familiar with special education requirements
- Is willing to help in all operations of the school when needed

Compensation: Determined by qualifications/work experience.

Search Time Line:

- Application Deadline 3:00 PM Friday, March 4, 2022
- Interviews begin March 7, 2022 / Approve Contract March 14.
- Superintendent/Principal Begins July 1, 2022

Application Process: Send 1) Letter of Interest, 2) Resume, 3) District Application, three signed letters of reference, which can be included with the District Application.

Submit to: Peter Hardy, Superintendent, Nett Lake Elementary, 13090 Westley Dr., Nett Lake, MN 55772.

Applications can be found at:

<https://www.nettlakeschool.org/Job-Postings>

Please contact Peter Hardy at **218-757-3102 Ext. 104** if you have questions.

Minnesota's forests are managed for aspen and deer. That's not a diverse forest, that's a monocrop. Loss of old growth and clearcutting destroys habitat for larger animals, and destroys ecosystems. The DNR wildlife scientists thought that the proposed 8.75 percent increase in harvest from state managed lands would cut out biodiversity and habitat. There is just not enough forest left to support mega projects.

That was before the Huber Plant proposal, which will be fed by these same forests. The Frontier OSB plant needs an estimated 400,000 cords of wood annually to sustain a 24-hour assembly. Huber wants to get that within a 100 mile radius from the project. In comparison, the Minnesota DNR in 2019 offered 875,000 cords from all state land. That logging impact circle includes the entire Leech Lake reservation, the Chippewa National Forest, and a good portion of the White Earth and Red Lake reservations.

There are already two separate lumber plants on either side of the Leech lake reservation, and the Leech Lake Nation has concerns about the lack of information provided in the EAW, noting in their initial comments, "most of the wood for this project will necessarily be harvested from the Leech Lake reservation or the 1855 treaty territory.... the failure to analyze the woodshed based on feedstock quantities necessary sets the State upon a dangerous trajectory for forest health."

"We find our medicines in mature

forests, not early in the succession," said Ben Benoit, Environmental program for Leech Lake. "Protecting and restoring forest diversity is critical to preserving Anishinaabe lifeways in an ever-changing climate and world. Tribal citizens rely on the forest as our teachings and culture is tied to natural cycles and diversity that is disrupted with timber industry focused management..." In other words, you can't make maple syrup in a clearcut.

Then there's the little guys, like the Long Eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). They are endangered. There's a Long Eared Bat nesting site by Cohasset that is going to get destroyed during construction. Bapakwaanaajinh, the bat, is an epic character in Anishinaabe mythology, illustrating that mysterious and small creatures can change the world. This specific bat species also was impacted by the Line 3 project. It was one of the primary endangered species the pipeline rolled over. There's only so many times you can knock out an endangered species and expect it to live. And despite the fact that this bat is just a little critter, bats are important. After all, the coronavirus we are all dealing with came from a bat.

In fact, the coronavirus was traced to a bat whose habitat was squashed in China. I'd like to learn from one of the lessons on leaving the wild things alone. The United Nations has reiterated that biodiversity matters not only to planetary health, but also human health. The reality

is that mega projects are fragmenting forests and creating ecological havoc. Clearcut damage makes the forest more at risk in windstorms, which increase with climate change. Protecting the integrity of the forest protects us all.

Paul Bunyan was already here. There were once 75 million acres of contiguous forest in the region, most of them have been cut to build railroads, St. Paul, Duluth and more. The northern forests built empires – the Congdon to the Pillsbury, Weyerhaeuser and more – all those empires were born from these forests. Those companies are the actual names of the fictional Paul Bunyan.

In the least, Bunyan needs do something epic to reverse his legacy. There is no sustainable harvest in the north woods. There's a lot of aspen monocultures being cultivated by the DNR, that's what the DNR Wildlife concerns are. That's not a forest. The Leech Lake tribal government has been working for decades on forest restoration outlining "desired vegetative conditions" and facing all of these logging interests, as well as a Chippewa National Forest (which was carved out of the reservation), all impacting Indigenous land knowledge and care.

In short, there's already a good deal of pressure on the forests up north. Leech Lake reservation sits between two large mills in Bemidji and Grand Rapids and is the focus of heavy logging pressure. These resources are extracted from the

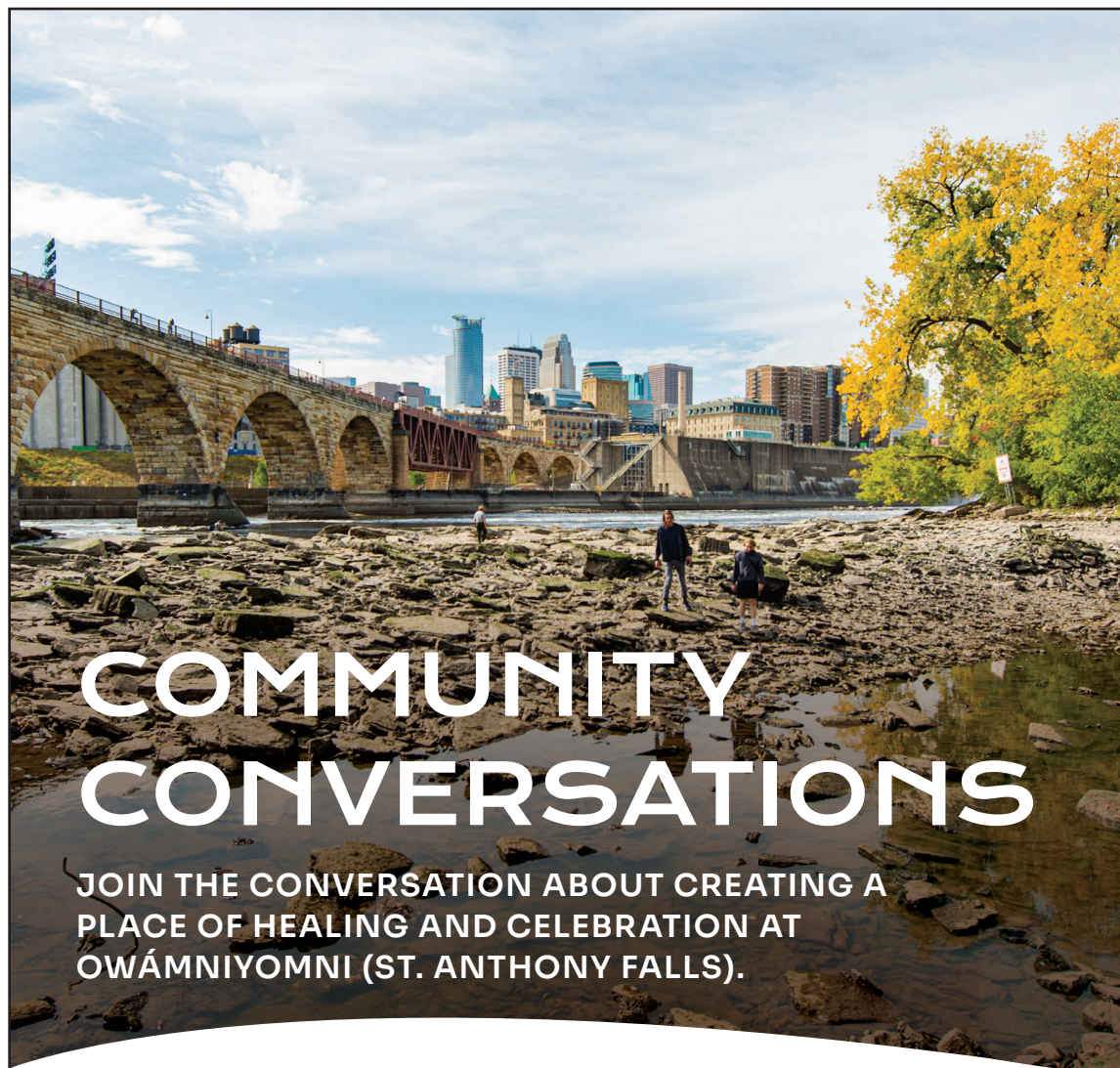
Reservation. However, the wealth derived from the harvest remains outside the Reservation and impacts tribal resources.

The 1855 Treaty Territory area used to be full of white pine forests and lush maple groves. These forests have been obliterated by the logging industry and today the turnover in forestry plants is rapid. Most of the mills in the north are struggling, or have turned over ownership, more than once in the last decade. That's because the big trees are all gone. The time of Paul Bunyan is over.

Tribal Consultation

No one bothered to tell Leech Lake about the Frontier project. The Leech Lake Tribal government learned about the project from a press release. That's not the way it's supposed to be in Minnesota. To be clear, Governor Walz signed the 2019 Executive Order 19-24 affirming government to government relationship between Minnesota and Minnesota tribal nations, providing for consultation, coordination and cooperation." The Executive order is intended "to establish mutually respectful and beneficial relationships between the state and Minnesota tribal nations.." Well, throw that one out the window. What's amazingly clear is that Governor Walz did not conduct any consultation as required by his own executive order.

– CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 –



FEBRUARY 15, 5-7 PM

A STORY DISRUPTED: INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES



ROBERT LILLIGREN



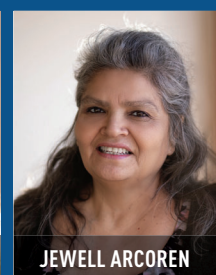
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James Jourdain: Rising Star with Red Lake Nation College Basketball

The Red Lake Nation College Migizi started a men’s basketball program last fall of 2021. A women’s basketball program will be starting next fall. There is an 11 game schedule in January and February with plans to compete at the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) post season tournament in New Town, ND the first weekend in March.

One of the rising stars is James Jourdain, 25, and a member of the Red Lake Band of Ojibwe. He is averaging 26 points per game.

“I graduated from Red Lake High School in 2015,” said Jourdain. “I’m in my freshman year at the Red Lake Nation College. My goals for college are to finish my two year degree at Red Lake and then transfer to Bemidji State University. I am currently unsure of what I want to major in at this time.”

“For my main athletic accomplishments I focused a lot on basketball but also I enjoyed playing baseball,” said Jourdain. “During my four years of high school our team, the Red Lake Warriors, made it to the Minnesota State High School tournament two times, both times coming up short in the first game.”

“My indigenous core value from the Seven Grandfather Teachings is courage, because being an athlete takes a lot of it,” said Jourdain. “There will be times during your life where you want to quit and that’s where you have to find the courage to just keep going and finish what you started. It took courage to get me to decide to go to college at my age. I also decided to attend college when the Red Lake Nation College reintroduced a men’s basketball program.”

“One of my first mentors to introduce me to basket-



James Jourdain, a member of the Red Lake Band of Ojibwe, is one of the rising stars of the Red Lake Nation College Migizi men’s basketball program. He is averaging 26 points per game. (Photo courtesy of Mikah Whitecloud.)

ball was Chris Jourdain,” said Jourdain. “Chris was my basketball coach from second to eighth grade starting with the basics in elementary and coaching me in junior high. In that time span he helped me achieve being a student athlete and to value the game of basketball. I played basketball for Chris during the school year and also in various tournaments.”

“Jimmy started with me in my very first year of coaching, he was in third grade,” said Red Lake youth basketball coach Chris Jourdain. “We practiced hard for a couple of years, and I told them they could get really good as players in the future if they worked hard at it.”

“He came from a home with his grandparents who offered lots of support for this team, they’d host sleepovers before the tournament and sometimes even after. They started providing healthy snacks for the boys, and these boys did really well for some youngsters and enjoyed much success from an early age,” added Jourdain.

The young Warriors basketball teams played throughout the state and Coach Chris Jourdain would often be the leader with the travel teams.

“I recall in their sixth grade we played in over 60 games that year,” said Jourdain. “They were fun to watch, we played good defense and could really shoot well. Jimmy wasn’t afraid to get on the floor and was a very good defender.”

“I recall this time in a championship game where he could’ve won the game for his team at the line at the very end of the game but he didn’t connect on both. I told him that he could either go on to become a great free throw shooter if he worked on them, or get stuck on that moment, he was only in sixth grade. He went on to be a pretty good free throw shooter,” added Jourdain.

Coach Chris enjoyed coaching that group up until 8th grade, and then watching that group as they moved on up the ranks of the program into high school.

“They got to accomplish what they set out to do as youngsters in the kindergarten gym and make it to the state tournament,” added Jourdain.

“My second mentor that helped me be a student athlete is Roger White. Roger coached me during my four years of high school basketball and during those years he always told us that we are students first then athletes second.”

“That is something that has stuck with me to this day as I am now a student athlete for the Red Lake Nation College,” added Jourdain.

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For developmentally disabled individuals.						
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Elliot Park Apartments	Minneapolis	612-338-3106	open	X		2, 3
Franklin Lane Apartments	Anoka	763-427-7650	open		X	1, 2
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Hanover Townhomes	St. Paul	651-292-8497	closed	X		1, 2, 3
Haralson	Apple Valley	952-431-5216	N/A	X		1
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Trinity on Lake	Minneapolis	612-721-2252	N/A	X		1, 2
Unity Place	Brooklyn Center	763-560-8808	closed	X		2, 3
Vadnais Highland Townhomes	Vadnais Heights	651-653-0640	closed	X		2, 3
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POLITICAL MATTERS: Native Issues in the Halls of Government – by Mordecai Specktor

editor@ajwnews.com

Remembering Thunder Before the Storm

Clyde Bellecourt, a co-founder of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and a committed defender of Native communities and treaty rights, has walked on.

“He loved the Native people,” his wife, Peggy Bellecourt, told the *Star Tribune*. “He loved being out there, trying to help improve conditions.”

More than 50 years before Minneapolis became the epicenter of the global movement for racial justice, after the police murder of George Floyd, May 25, 2020, Clyde Bellecourt was a key figure in organizing the first AIM Patrol to monitor police behavior on Franklin Avenue. Vulnerable Indians were being arrested and brutalized by the cops, and AIM’s first project was to intervene to stop such behavior.

Bellecourt – his Ojibwe name was Neegon-we-wandon-iban (Thunder Before the Storm) – died of cancer Jan. 11, at his home in Minneapolis. He was 85.

I remember Clyde as a loyal, open-hearted friend over the more than 40 years that I knew him. Behind his gruff, bellicose public persona, he was a kind, loyal and gracious man. And he was an inspiring leader to a couple generations of Native activists that followed in his footsteps.

“What a courageous man,” Winona LaDuke, one of my colleagues at *The Circle*, commented to the *Star Tribune*’s Randy Furst. “A lot of people don’t realize the depth and length of Clyde’s commitment to civil rights, human rights, environmental justice.”

I knew that my February column would be a remembrance of Clyde, which posed a problem in that most of his associates from the early days of AIM are also now gone. However, I remembered meeting Clyde one afternoon in a café on East Franklin and talking for a couple hours for a story on AIM’s 20th anniversary, in 1988. I also talked with several of Clyde’s associates from back in the day.

AIM really was born in Minnesota’s Stillwater Prison, when Bellecourt arrived as an inmate in 1962. Eddie Benton-Banai, an Anishinaabe inmate working as a tinsmith in the prison, started stopping by Clyde’s cell and engaging him in talks about their shared culture and the evolving struggle for Indian treaty rights.

“I sensed and saw something there that needed nurturing,” Benton-Banai told me. “I saw something there that could become really valuable, first unto himself, but then onto the Indian community.”

“It was a turning point in my life, I started learning more about my culture,” Clyde said, about meeting his mentor inside the walls. Bellecourt and Benton-Banai organized a pathbreaking Indian

studies program at Stillwater, the Indian American Folklore Group.

“An idea was born there,” Benton-Banai commented during a 1988 telephone interview. “An idea that, instead of railing against our situation, our conditions, we could actually do something about it.” Benton-Banai died in 2020.

After getting out of Stillwater, Clyde, who came from the White Earth Nation, got a job as an operating engineer for Northern States Power Co. (now Xcel Energy). In October 1968, he was elected as AIM’s first director.

Women have always been the backbone of AIM and Pat Bellanger, a co-founder of the group, told me back in 1988: “The media did paint a really terrible picture [of AIM].” She mentioned that some of the early funders of the movement were afraid to sit in the same room as the Indians. A man from the United Way “got two other people [to meet with the AIM leaders] because he was deathly afraid of us.” Bellanger died in 2015.

Bellecourt and the AIMsters were gaining a name on the streets of Minneapolis. Clyde was continually harassed by the cops, arrested “25 to 30 times” on traffic offenses according to Doug Hall. “I think he was found guilty on one or two.” Hall was the founding executive director of the Legal Rights Center, an initiative of AIM, The Way community center in North Minneapolis, and Peter Dorsey of the Dorsey & Whitney law firm. Hall died in 2004.

“Clyde became a focal point for the police,” recalled Dennis Banks, another AIM co-founder. “It was Clyde who was speaking about police brutality all along, up and down the avenue. Clyde became the most vocal against police brutality; as a result he became subject to arrest more times than the rest of us.” Banks died in 2017.

In addition to the Legal Rights Center, Bellecourt was involved in the creation of numerous agencies to serve the Indian community, including Heart of the Earth Survival School, MIGIZI Communications and the Native American Community Clinic.

Bellecourt and his AIM comrades brought Native issues to global attention through confrontational tactics like the 1972 takeover of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Washington, D.C., and the 1973 Wounded Knee occupation, which resulted in a 71-day siege of the tiny hamlet on the Pine Ridge reservation (So. Dakota) by U.S. government forces.

In addition to his wife, Peggy, Clyde is survived by his children, Susie, Tanya, Crow and Wolf; sister, Judy; nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Clyde Bellecourt was a great warrior for Native people. May his memory always be a blessing for his loved ones.



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I see spirits all around me now



BY ARNIE VAINIO, MD

He was nearing death. This moment was inevitable and he hadn't eaten anything in the past ten days. Three days ago he started refusing water and he was intermittently awake at any time of the night or day. He had fought his cancer for as long as he could and decided to stop chemotherapy when it was making him too sick to be present for his family.

I went to visit him before that time and he was thin and weak and his voice was soft. I had to sit close to him and wasn't sure if he was always aware of my presence. He reached for my hand and held it and it seemed like he was back asleep. He opened his eyes and

he smiled at me. "I see spirits all around me now. They come and they talk to me and they tell me things. You keep doing what you're doing and thank you for coming to see me."

I wanted to see him again and it was weeks before my wife Ivy and I could make that long drive. He died before we could get there and the funeral home had already come to get him. We sat with his wife and his family and she told us, "He was talking when he was asleep and when he would wake up he would tell me who he was talking to. Some were people he knew when he was a young man. One of them had your last name and he killed himself a long time ago and he wasn't very old."

My father committed suicide when I was four years old. He was forty-two when he died.

I don't need reminders to think about my father and his suicide and I've been thinking about him often since then. George Earth and his mother and father were living in a shack in the summer of 1957. His mother mostly stayed in the shack and cooked and picked berries and gathered what she could. George and his father ran chainsaws and cut and limbed trees all day. The summers

were hot and the mosquitos were vicious and the dust from the skidders dragging trees out of the woods hung thick in the air. They didn't have ear protection or safety glasses or insect spray and the chain saw smoke kept them in an acrid, choking cloud. In the winter they froze as they cut and they ran for the shack when they got too cold. They didn't get paid by the hour, they were paid "by the stick" and the trees they cut were counted and kept track of and they each earned less than forty dollars a week.

George introduced my parents to each other. My father was running a tavern called the Good Luck and he was good to George and his family. Sometime after my parents were married, George's mom was walking along the side of the road and someone ran over her and killed her. Her death wasn't investigated because she was Ojibwe. No one offered to look into it and George and his father knew better than to ask. The bar business wasn't good and my father committed suicide that same summer.

George and his father left after that and I didn't see him again until almost forty years later. As soon as we met we were family again. George came to stay with us as often as he could and we talked on the phone all the time. Sometimes I would call him when I was looking at the stars and listening to the wind and the sounds of the night. Every time I traveled to the ocean, I would call him when my feet were in the water and I would hold my phone out so he could listen to the ocean birds and hear the crashing of the waves and we would put asemaa out together at those times.

I wanted George to travel with me to conferences so he could be with professionals to learn from them, but more importantly, to teach them. He had a gift for humor and a gift for humility, but he was also a vast wealth of traditional knowledge and he could see right to the heart of most matters. He started to get short of breath and he was diagnosed with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. This is a condition with no cure and no known cause and it causes progressive scarring of the lungs and he eventually had a hard time breathing at all. He passed his dance regalia to me at a traditional powwow and I danced as he sat at one of the drums. The last time I saw him he brought me a guitar he used to play in his youth. He was so short of breath he didn't even get out of the passenger

side of the van. He had me take the guitar case from the back seat and open it on the ground next to him. I flipped the rusty metal buckles on the cardboard case and inside was an old guitar with strings that didn't match. It was clear it hadn't been played in a very long time. "I played everything from Merle Haggard to Johnny Cash on that guitar back when I was drinking and it sure made a lot of people happy."

Our phone conversations changed and I think George was seeing spirits in his final days. I had collected spring water at sunrise on Easter Sunday and my mother used to do that when I was growing up. We drank it as regular water and she cooked with it, but she saved some to use when we were sick. I told George how I collected that water and he said, "I want you to spill some of that water on the ground at my funeral. Will you do that for me?"

I didn't want to talk about that and I didn't want him talking like that, but he made me promise and I did that when he died.

Every morning I go outside and I offer my asemaa to the four directions, to the water and to the earth and to the sky. I thank the spirits who watch over us and protect us. I bring my coffee with me and I offer the first drink of coffee to them and I spill some on the ground.

I think of George and I say good morning to him. I think of Leonard and my brother Kelly and my aunt Emma and my mother and my grandparents and my sister Shelly and all of my teachers who have gone before me. We come into this world through a doorway and travel this circle and hopefully make it through all four stages of life before we cross that threshold again. We are told the very young and the very old hold hands across that doorway. No one spends more time closer to it than doctors and nurses and all those who care for those most vulnerable. We see birth and we see death and we see everything in between.

Someday we will all make that journey and what we give of ourselves will be what remains.

I do not see spirits.
Someday, I will.

Arne Vainio, M.D. is an enrolled member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and is a family practice physician on the Fond du Lac reservation in Cloquet, Minnesota. He can be contacted at a-vainio@hotmail.com.

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If you want stark clarity and unbridled truth, read these essays

REVIEW BY DEBORAH LOCKE

“We Are Meant to Rise,” edited by David Mura and Carolyn Holbrook, consists of essays by American Indians and people of color recounting the 2020 murder of George Floyd, the effects of the pandemic in 2020, and much more.

The book arrived in the mail, and then sat on my nightstand, staring out, subtly requesting attention. I stared back at the book, wondering about the personal impact of essays that recounted the national nightmares emanating from murder in real time, and COVID. Hadn't I read enough, felt enough, cried enough about all of that? How much more could I take?

The book stared back. I opened it, started to read and could not put it down. Dear reader, if you like hearing the words of language masters, if you seek hope, or want to walk in the shoes of another, if you want stark clarity and unbridled truth, read these essays.

The book, published by University of Minnesota Press, is the first in the Making Minnesota series that will explore the state's untold stories and experiences of immigrants, American Indians, African Americans and Hmong. The project started with a partnership between the Ramsey County Historical Society and the East Side Freedom Library. The nearly three dozen essays and works of poetry includes bylines by writers known nationally as well as those who are emerging. The many voices blend to create a powerful statement about justice in America, the way history noisily frames today's events, and hope.

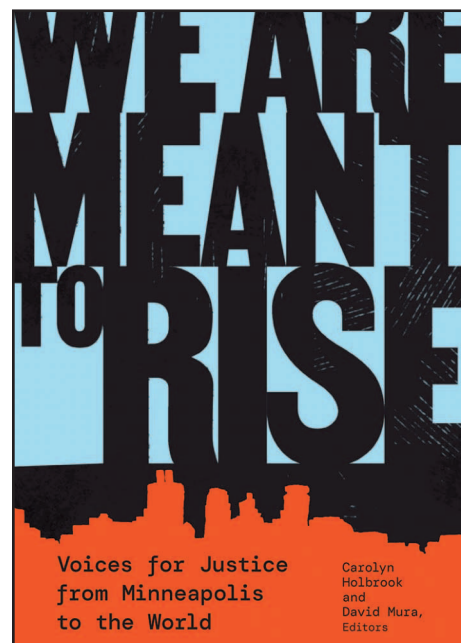
One of my favorite essays by Kevin Yang, “Speaking Into Existence,” tells his story which includes the escape of his parents from Laos and Thailand. They eventually settled in South Minneapolis. Kevin grew up ashamed of his Hmong heritage, writing that he avoided all things associated with being

Hmong. His own racism was internalized, until he found his way into a creative writing class that he said, saved his life. Kevin's writing assignments that now highlighted his Hmong experience in Minnesota were well-received by teachers and students alike.

Novelist Louise Erdrich's essay “Humility, Sincerity, Banana Oil” tells the story of her grandfather, Pat Gournneau, who embarked on a one-man campaign to prevent the federal government from dissolving the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa located in North Dakota. Mr. Gournneau convinced other Band members to understand the Termination Bill and its impact on their lives. A group of Turtle Mountain members flew to Washington, D.C. where they went through grueling days of convincing a hostile Congress to drop the legislation. Whole tribes were terminated as a result of that campaign, but Turtle Mountain was spared.

Before that happened, the small committee of Band members were scolded by bill author Arthur Watkins of Utah, who said it was time for Indians to “stand on their own two feet and become a white and delight some people as the Book of Mormon prophesied they would become.” The quote gets much worse. What I took away from the essay is the way a small grossly underfunded but focused and determined group of Indians can turn aside injustice and governmental incompetence. That's a lot to take from a very short essay.

Another writer, Ricardo Levins Morales in “Four Genies,” points out that during the early COVID months, working people, cooks, drivers, nurses, fast food workers, were praised as heroes. These, the “...very people whose supposed insignificance has long been the justification for low wages and shoddy treatment. Their demands for safety protocols, paid sick leave, health coverage and corporate closings have resonated widely



We Are Meant to Rise: Voices for Justice from Minneapolis to the World by Carolyn Holbrook (Editor) and David Mura (Editor)
University Of Minnesota Press
November 23, 2021
224 pages

and have won significant concessions. CEOs and billionaires, on the other hand, could all disappear and no one would notice.”

Then he adds that that's not exactly true, since the wealthy have made loud smacking noises as they gorge themselves from the public treasury while simultaneously crying for roll-backs of pollution, labor and food safety protections while demanding that their workers return immediately to the sacred task of producing profit.

One of the more unique essays is entitled “A Tangent to a Story About the Smith & Wesson .38, or, Attempts to be Fully Assimilated Into the White American Project Have Failed Miserably in the Form of a Self-Questionnaire” The writer, Sun Yung Shin, conducts an interview with himself that tells almost nothing about his experience of being adopted from Korea. Sometimes a writer doesn't care to share.

Mostly, these writers do share. It stings to read first-hand accounts of Minneapolis burning through those summer nights. They're there. It stings to read about the death of a family member and a funeral where everyone wears white. Other topics: fatherless children. Children who raise themselves because their parents are gone, working. Children like Kevin Yang who abandon shame and push their talents as far as they will go.

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Bellanger herself is a teacher and an Indian Education Program specialist for St. Paul Public Schools.

A spillover on this education front was creation of the American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center (AIOIC) alternative school and career training program in Minneapolis. It dates back to 1979. Bellecourt is considered a founder and served on AIOIC's board of directors until his death.

Another derivative of this educational focus is MIGIZI, founded in 1977 as MIGIZI Communications in the large Native neighborhood area of south Minneapolis. It is a nonprofit that encourages that encourages Native student academic achievement and Native profiles and narratives in media presentations.

Its first president and co-founder was Laura Waterman Wittstock who was also an AIM historian.

From protest to protest, and project to project, Bellecourt and AIM did trigger the Native community and its allies to take action that includes starting groups to continue work on Indian legal rights, sovereignty issues, health care and safety, and issues specific to women, Bellanger said. It also included working with Black and other groups with shared concerns, such as starting the Legal Rights Center as a community owned law firm in Minneapolis

"We know our work will never be done," she said.

That was stressed in comments from Gov. Tim Walz and Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan issued after Bellecourt's death was announced. While AIM works nationally and, with others, internation-

ally, much of what Bellecourt and AIM started began and continues on in Minneapolis and Minnesota.

Flanagan, also a White Earth Nation member, noted that. "Minneapolis has one of the most robust and vibrant networks of organizations serving the urban Indian community, and that is because of Clyde and his work," Flanagan said.

Family and friends said their goodbyes within a traditional time frame, with fire, Bellanger said. A community memorial is also being planned for later, possibly on or around Bellecourt's birthday.

Clyde Howard Bellecourt (May 8, 1936 – Jan. 11, 2022) was born at the White Earth Nation but primarily lived in Minneapolis over the years. He is survived by his wife, Peggy; sons Wolf and Little Crow, of Minneapolis; daughters Susan, of Redwood Falls, and Tanya, of

Minneapolis; plus nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Published obituaries focusing on much of Bellecourt's life and works include:

<https://www.npr.org/2022/01/12/1072435745/clyde-bellecourt-american-indian-movement-dies-obituary>, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2022/01/11/longtime-native-activist-leader-clyde-bellecourt-dies-at-85>, and <https://www.startribune.com/clyde-bellecourt-aim-co-founder-and-longtime-civil-rights-leader-dies/600134813>.

A concise history of AIM (A Brief History of the American Indian Movement, by Laura Waterman Wittstock and Elaine J. Salinas), is at <https://www.aimovement.org/ggc/history.html>.

Tim's Bad Gambles

"Very few opportunities come along where someone is looking to build a new plant," Representative Tom Bakk said, as he went to bat for \$28.5 million in subsidies for Huber. That may be because it's a bad idea. But that didn't stop them.

"You have a company coming into Minnesota looking at our environmental laws and telling everyone, telling Minnesota Power, telling the Legislature,

'we'll come in as long as you get rid of this one law for us,'" said Evan Muholland, Senior Staff Attorney for the environmental policy group MCEA. "And that just doesn't sit right with us."

As the Glasgow Climate conference came to an end in November, there was a greater than ever call to keep forests intact and cut carbon emissions. The Walz administration talked about the new plans for cars, but neglected to mention the big tar sands pipeline, and the new plans to clearcut the north for an out of state corporation. This fall, Walz

talked about the clean car initiative, his new council on climate change, and then proposed to give away the northern forests with \$80 million in subsidies from the state.

The Walz administration could do a lot better, in fact, they could change the future. Our prophecies as Anishinaabe people speak of this time and the choice of paths. Time for a real green path in Minnesota, not a scorched path. It's time to grow back full forests, a wild rice economy and restore the north, not tear it further apart. That's long term sustainability, and the Walz Administration could learn from the Leech Lake Environmental program, and other tribes like Red Lake, about their world class work to restore ecosystems and cre-

ate green economies.

It may be time for Hempwood, that's all sorts of wood made from compressed hemp, stuck together with, well soybeans. Can't eat it, but you can make a lot out of it, including joists and something like OSB, made with hemp and soybeans. Besides that, hemp sequesters carbon faster than a forest and has great adaptability. It takes about 4 months for hemp stalks to reach maturity, while it takes trees at least twenty years. Let's take a break from the southern charm of Huber and look across the forests. That's where the wild things are and that's where the bats live. And the Anishinaabe. This is the only place we have, Huber can go find another forest.

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If I had been me, I would have thought that years ago I could expect some wilted, dead flowers and last year's stale Valentine candy from a tubby Hubs by now, to prove his undying love for me. But nooo!!!!

Well, I'm still single and happy that I don't have to chew any dudes' moose-hide and then cook up the meat, even though I can chef it up, just gotta get a new wok, yo. I've had a lot of things stolen from me including my mind but who steals woks? That is just another puzzlement I can't comprehend.

For sure I do not begrudge any of yooz solid hook-ups and I do wish you a very gratifying colonialist capitalistic

holiday. I remember getting a dandelion bouquet from my cousin and it was sweet. Turns out I like butter. Anyhoo...

If I could or wanted to go outside, which I do not, the 15th is when the colonial candies are on sale, at least fifty percent off. Yum! I'm good though, I'll get by. I still have Godiva from Christmas from my beautiful sister Debbie. I guard them from my dog Mitzi Rose who is a chocolate goblin.

One time The Mitz ate a few of my extra-special loaded chocolate treats. I realized they were missing, smelled her breath, and after that I laughed and laughed while she was nodding. Good times...Good times....Then we were both nodding and sharing stories we can't remember now.

So back to the red, pink and sugar soaked colonist holiday that no worker gets time off for. Say, have any of yooz ever questioned why Valentine's Day exists? I'm not against it but it is, like so many other made-up holidays, a capitalistic tool. Which makes us all a fool. I love people every day and prove it.

I may seem bitter, but it's only cuz of the colonists' cultural conditioning that we follow their calendar of merchandising. That's why I used to get 50% off the next day so I could prove to myself I love myself. I like clearances.

Agh! I cannot have men friends, just friends whom I have no interest in other than being a friend. I have many beloved gay men who are special to me. In that I am blessed and grateful. See now, the thing is when I reach out to a hetero man they automatically think I'm hitting on them even when I specifically say "I am not hitting on you." This has been the case my entire life, when in fact my heart belongs to my cousin. IKR?

Because I am a Singleton it has been speculated that I am a lez-be-friends. I am not but if I could snag Sade that would change. Any rate, I can't smile or say Boozhoo to any dude without some clucking. Still, I am not responsible for men falling in lust or love with me. So there. I thought I was done with this malarkey years ago, but noo!!!

So I am resolving to stop being so delicious and am donning my Hag garments. Oh! And putting an "Out of Order" sign on it, too. I will still be kind and empathetic, that is my life's purpose. I am un-snaggable and no, that is not a challenge. I love me for me all by myself.

Freedom.

Whatever gender you are, go with that and get you some 50% off candy for love of yourself.

In grade school we were forced to

give all the other kids a valentine card whether we liked them or not. I remember blushing at the cards I gave my crushes (I've always been that way), gagging over the kids I despised, and crushed that certain ones did not give me a cheap card. Message received.

I was one of three Indian kids in my grade and I had plans for He Whose Name I Cannot Remember (James?) to be my husband. Then we moved to Minneapolis and so...Hai! Single again. LOL! Ya, I am a reader so imagine my astonishment when I found out there are at least two massacres with that name; First in France and then in 1929 Chicago.

Well, if a dude (no I'm not looking) came to me with a bouquet of sweet-grass, cedar and sage I would swoon and maybe let him hug me. Anywayz, I'm letting loose on squatters fake holidays so they can profit from them. I'm not immune to the pressure, no, I want to make people feel loved.

Ya see, love and kindness are expressed in everyday actions not just one day a year.

If I sound bitter it is not for the reason you may think. I have my own. If I want flowers, candy and a card? I got me.

Love to all Yooz!

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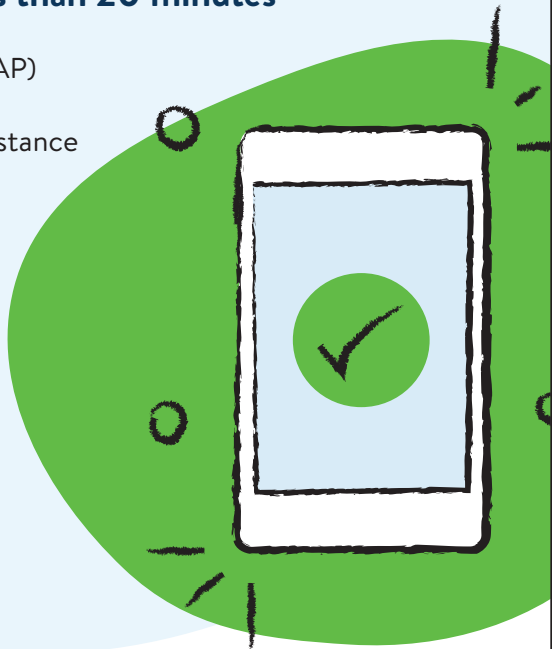
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