



NEWS FROM A NATIVE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

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Voice of the People: Oyate Hotanin reimagines justice



A fancy dancer at an event for the Oyate Hotanin. (Photo by Jaida Grey Eagle.)

BY JAIDA GREY EAGLE AND AMY NELSON
PRODUCED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GREENSPRINGS MEDIA

Flowers, art and beauty have a unique way of bringing people together. For Oyate Hotanin, a non-profit Indigenous arts and social justice organization, that truth was evident at its first Flower Power event in 2017.

Laura LaBlanc, Oyate Hotanin's director of operations, describes the connection through a story from the event, which uses public art to honor those who have been impacted by the prison-industrial complex. It was still early in the day and already more than 20 people had gathered in St. Paul's Indian Mounds Regional Park. The park is home to six Native American burial mounds, which Oyate Hotanin recognizes as sacred.

The attendees had just started meeting each other and creating floral art when two St. Paul police officers dressed in casual attire but with guns in holsters started approaching the group with their arms behind their backs. Alarm grew among the attendees, a ripple of concern spread through the group. LaBlanc recognized the officers and knew they were coming – she had invited them – but many of the first-time attendees did not know them. And some in the crowd had painful memories of traumatic interactions with police in the past.

Finally, as the officers topped the hill where the artists were gathered, they offered up their peace tokens from behind their backs. They revealed fistfuls of flowers for the artists to use, and smiles bloomed across many faces. A wave

of relief spread through the group, and a connection was created.

A vision of justice

Flower Power is one arm of Oyate Hotanin's IN Equality program, which uses public art, coalition building and policy advocacy to transform the Ramsey County juvenile justice system. IN Equality's goal is to put youth and families at the center of problem solving and move from a "tough-on-crime" mentality to one that is smart on services.

"We envision a society where the divide and hostility between our communities and representatives of the criminal justice system has been erased," LaBlanc wrote in a grant proposal for the IN Equality program, funded by the Bush Foundation's Community Innovation grant program. In this vision, "rather than fearing encounters with the police, we are true partners in problem solving. We are working towards a future where the system's emphasis has shifted from 'criminal' to 'justice' and the impact of historic trauma is recognized, acknowledged, and addressed, rather than being compounded by new injustices. One where the system views our young adults through the same forgiving lens it often uses for young white adults, and values relationships, community, and healing over punishment and sanctions."

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One woman's mission to turn out the Native vote in MN's midterms

BY MELISSA TOWNSEND
AND SAM STROOZAS/MPR

Voting began Sept. 23 for the midterm elections including more than 200 state races including governor and attorney general. Minnesota has consistently had some of the highest voter turnout in the country.

But in the last big election in 2020, even Minnesota officials were surprised at the turnout of Native voters in northern Minnesota. The number of people voting in the precincts around the Red Lake Nation increased by as much as 45 percent. Will we see the same kind of turnout in this midterm election?

Nancy Beaulieu was instrumental in getting out the Native vote. She is a member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. She is an organizer with the environmental group MN350, and she also cohosts a radio show on Native Roots Radio on AM950.

She spoke with guest host Melissa Townsend about what drove Native voters to the polls in 2020 and the work to get out the vote this year.

Q: Was there something about the 2020 election that really got to you?

A: Quite honestly, politically speaking, I think all candidates should show up with a good heart. And because of the past administration, we've seen a lot of division. And we're here to remind people that we can actually support candidates that align with our values, and that honor treaties. And we can either make or break someone's campaign.

We're excited about building power to voter registration, voting at the polls and work after the election. In the last election there were a lot of candidates out there that said they were going to be our voice. But

then again, they seem to forget. So not to say they're all like that, because there are great candidates out there. I think we're learning through this process how to play this game and maybe play it a little bit better.

Q: When you say play the game, what do you mean?

A: Well, a lot of Native folks don't understand the political process. We're more engaged in our tribal elections and don't understand what the local, state and federal candidates responsibilities are. So part of the Rock the Vote program is that we explain to our relatives what the local politicians responsibilities and obligations are.

Many of our people don't understand how important local elections are. And we see here in Beltrami County, there could be a lot of goodness if we can just remind ourselves that we're here trying to find change in a nonpartisan way. And it gets through the division that's out there.

It's up to us, as people, as constituents, to learn about the political process and how it works and how we can gain leverage with all elected officials, regardless of what party they belong to, that treaties do matter and treaties are here to protect all of us.

So I think in the end, we would hope that the candidates or the elected officials would really align themselves with what really matters and what the future could bring for all of us if we honored and obligated ourselves as the treaties intended us to be in peace and to live as good neighbors. So we're out here, just building that awareness and we're going to continue to show up in a good way.

Q: So have you started getting out the vote already?

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How to steal a state: Enbridge has a pony in Wisc. governor's race

BY WINONA LADUKE

In its boldest move yet, Enbridge the Canadian pipeline company is going to try and take the governorship of Wisconsin. That's to say that Enbridge is hoping Tim Michels, one of their largest contractors, wins a bid for Governor against incumbent Tony Evers. That's their Line 5 short game. Tim Michels has no political experience, but money he does have; that's \$17 million of his own money, much of which he earned by providing contracts to Enbridge. He entered the race late this spring and won the GOP's endorsement with a nod from Donald Trump and a lot of friends at Enbridge. Michels previously lost two bids for Senate in Wisconsin, but with his own hard-earned money, he is putting on a "show of force".

This is not about democracy and governance; this is about Line 5. Michels stands to benefit heartily if Enbridge's Line 5 goes ahead, and the pipeline is facing daunting obstacles.

Here's Enbridge's biggest problem: Bad River Anishinaabe. The caretakers of the legendary Kakagon Sloughs, the wild rice mother lode on Lake Superior, Bad River has been asking Enbridge to remove a 69-year-old Line 5 pipe which crosses thirteen miles of their reservation. Enbridge's right of way, expired in 2013. The pipeline has become exposed during extreme weather and the Anishinaabe life is threatened. In turn, Enbridge has been hiring tribal members, aka "Indian Whisperers" to work through the Bad River community, and

throughout Wisconsin, using the play book which did not work well in Minnesota. Deeply embedded, they recently lost a big court battle over the pipeline.

On September 8, US District Judge William Conley ruled that Enbridge trespassed on Bad River tribal lands and profited at the tribe's expense. The judge stopped short of shutting down the pipeline across the reservation. The judge ruled Enbridge was unjustly enriched by continued operation of its Line 5 pipeline on the Bad River reservation, entitling the tribe to a monetary remedy based on the company's profits. Even so, Conley denied the tribe's request to immediately shut down the pipeline, saying it would have "significant public and foreign policy implications." Trespass fines are expensive and would well amount to far more than any "bonuses" for signing forwarded by Enbridge.

To be clear 69-year-old Line 5 carries up to 23 million gallons of oil and natural gas liquids daily. Line 5 spans 645 miles from Superior through northern Wisconsin and Michigan to Sarnia, Ontario, where Enbridge refines the oil, back in Canada. Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer also has opposed the pipeline, which continues to operate under the Straits of Mackinac without a state permit.

In 2019, the tribe sued the Canadian energy firm in federal court to shut down and remove Line 5 from 12 parcels of tribal lands. In response, Enbridge counter sued, and is now proposing a \$450 million plan to build a

new line that would run 41 miles around the Bad River reservation. That route circles the reservation, literally, and crosses numerous rivers, waterways, all of which, would be significantly impacted by the pipeline and a spill. The new route is basically a noose around the Kakagon Sloughs and the reservation. It's not being well received by Biden's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

This July, the EPA sent strong messages to Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the agency responsible for the proposed Enbridge permits. EPA's Tribal Programs Office supervisor Jen Tyler said the DNR invited the federal agency to weigh in on its draft. "EPA continues to have concerns about potential significant impacts, particularly to waters that are essential to the exercise of tribal treaty rights and continuation of tribal traditional lifeways," Tyler said.

It's the end of the fossil fuels' party and Enbridge wants to have the last "hurrah". They are trying their best to make it hard to stop them. In 2019, Enbridge pushed through some new laws in Wisconsin which makes severe penalties for any opposition to the pipeline. Wisconsin Act 33, echoes "critical infrastructure protection" model bills pushed out by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). That's to say, when 1000 of us were charged in Minnesota, most of us had misdemeanor charges, including myself, with charges in three counties. My charges (trespassing, obstructing) would be felony charges in Wisconsin.

Under the new law, peaceful protestors can now be charged with a felony punishable by up to six years in prison and a \$10,000 fine if they trespass on property owned, leased, or operated by companies engaged in the distribution of oil or petroleum. That's part of a national push by the fossil fuel companies to criminalize Water Protectors. And a push for the oil companies to just flat out own every part of the legal system. The Governorship of Wisconsin, however, is a pretty bold move.

There are a lot of agencies, tribal governments and Water Protectors who are going to do their best for the Fossil Fuel party to end early. With never ending droughts in Africa, the Loire River dry for the first time in written history, and millions of climate refugees, we need solutions, not profits for Canadian corporations.

We need real pipes; like maybe some water pipes as we see the crumbling infrastructure of this country, from Jackson Mississippi to Flint Michigan. It's said that 50% of the water intended for households never gets there because of leaking pipes. How about pipes for people, not Canadian oil?

Decommissioning of Line 5 itself would be a boom for Wisconsin, at least \$2 billion in jobs. In a time of climate chaos good pipes are important and oil is a risk. We will see how Enbridge, the Canadian multinational who controlled the police and regulatory systems of Minnesota, does in Wisconsin. November 8 is coming soon. We are watching.

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Native children and U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland are under legal attack in *Brackeen v. Haaland*. The powerful people behind the lawsuit include both Big Oil and the State of Texas.

If their attempt to have a conservative-majority Supreme Court overturn the Indian Child Welfare Act is successful, the door will be open to the total elimination of tribal sovereignty.

Take action now to stop this horrific attack on Native rights!

<https://action.lakotalaw.org/action/protect-icwa>

Lakota People's
LAW PROJECT

A fall tradition: Bringing in the wild rice harvest

BY DAN GUNDERSON/MPR NEWS

It all starts with building a wood fire early in the morning to create the bed of glowing coals needed to parch rice through the day.

John Hayes and John Beltman are tending the fire. They've brought several large sacks of recently harvested wild rice to be processed in a tin roofed shed in Ball Club, about midway between Cass Lake and Grand Rapids, Minn.

They've been harvesting wild rice in the area for about 30 years.

"We try to end up with at least 300 pounds off the water," said Hayes, who works as an attorney in Cohasset. "On a good day, in a peak year, it's 300 pounds of green rice in a day, but you don't get that every year," adds Beltman, who lives in Suomi and works at the Forest History Center in Grand Rapids.

This year's wild rice crop is hit or miss, depending on the lake.

"This is only our second day processing, it's gonna be a short year," said Frank Bibeau, an attorney who has represented the interests of wild rice in court cases and owns this operation.

"It's good if you can find it, there are spots that you can go pick," he said. "But a lot of the traditional spots that we would go to on a number of lakes around here just didn't have rice."

And the rice varies in size and quality depending on where it's harvested, said Hayes, as he rubbed kernels in his hands to loosen the hulls.

"Some lakes have heavy, long grain, some are real short and fat and football like, and stuff on the river is average to a little bit smaller. So a lot of folks call it sand rice. But it still eats."

Hayes likes to keep about 30 pounds of finished rice for his family, and he sells the rest of the harvest he'll split with Beltman.

The first step in processing rice is drying it, so the hull and the kernel will separate.

Bibeau slides a parcher set on rails over the thick bed of coals. The parcher is made from a large oval fuel tank with the top cut off. An electric motor turns steel paddles slowly inside, keeping the rice from burning as it heats.

This part of the process takes more than an hour, so there's time for conversation and laughter among old friends who've known each other since college days.

Bibeau, a member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe, has come here to process wild rice for about 40 years.

"It's fun. And that's why I used to be here every year. It was easier in a lawn chair with a cold beer," he said with a smile. "But now I'm the guy who has to kind of make it work."

About five years ago, the owner of this operation died and left the setup to Bibeau.



Frank Bibeau tends the fire at the small wild rice processing plant he operates in Ball Club, Minn. Bibeau has been coming here to process rice for decades and took over the operation five years ago. (Photos by Dan Gunderson / MPR News.)

"He probably couldn't think of anybody else who could afford to try to make this deal work," said Bibeau. "And I'm not trying to make a profit out of it, because obviously I make a lot better living as an attorney. But I want to be able to pass this on to someone in the community to keep this alive."

He's not charging Hayes or Beltman to process their rice. They once helped him build a house, and this is part of the payback.

A passion to protect

Bibeau sees this rice processing plant being handed down to him as part of a responsibility he's been given.

"And it makes me think that I've been somehow chosen by the wild rice or the creator in a way because I've been relatively faithful to the wild rice," he said.

The lawsuit against the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources on behalf of wild rice, or manoomin, failed when the White Earth Tribal Court of Appeals ruled the Tribal court didn't have jurisdiction in the case.

But he expects to be back in court in a few months, trying again to protect wild rice which has disappeared in some parts of the region where it once flourished. Habitat destruction, declining water quality and climate change are all factors in the loss of many stands of wild rice.

"That happened in Green Bay, Wisconsin, it happened in a lot of Wisconsin. It happened in parts of Michigan, where the rice is gone," Bibeau said. "It may be that only 50 percent of the natural wild rice that used to exist in Minnesota is still around."

Jigging with the Ford Ranchero

There's a flurry of activity as the rice in the parcher is deemed ready for

threshing. The heat has shrunk the grain and the hulls are loose.

Traditionally, parched rice would be placed in a shallow pit and people would dance on it, moving their moccasin-clad feet to break the hulls from the grain in a process called jigging.

Here, the process involves power and speed. The grain is scooped into a cylinder about three feet long. Rubber paddles spin inside at high speed, causing the thresher to dance on the concrete floor and emit clouds of fine, smoky dust.

The thresher is powered by a shaft attached to a decades-old Ford car engine on a steel frame outside the wall, with the transmission in second gear.

Bibeau explains the engine came from a 1960s Ford Ranchero that once sat next to the building.

"It looked much cooler with the front half of a Ranchero sitting on the other side of the building running it," laughs Bibeau. "I mean, that was traditional. This looks industrial."

The engine does the job it's been doing for decades, shaking the hulls from the rice kernels.

The last step is winnowing, separating the chaff from the kernels.

Hayes and Beltman slowly feed the threshed rice into a fanning mill, a device with a large fan that blows the chaff into a pile behind the building, while the clean grain drops into a wooden box.

The finished rice weighs about half as much as it did at the beginning of this two hour process.

Beltman is satisfied as he weighs the first batch of finished rice, "Fifty percent is a good return," he explains.

Wild rice prices are substantially higher this year according to Bibeau.



Top: John Beltman tends the fire in preparation for a day of processing recently harvested wild rice.

Bottom: Wild rice grains drop into a box after a fan blows away the hulls and dust, leaving a finished product.

Last year he was paying pickers about three dollars a pound for freshly picked rice. Now he's paying six dollars a pound.

The increase is partly because of a smaller crop, he said, and partly because of increased demand. A U.S. Department of Agriculture program to buy wild rice for food assistance programs has tribal governments paying more. Bibeau said he doesn't begrudge ricers the higher pay, but it means the finished product will cost more.

If he pays six dollars a pound and the rice shrinks by half in the processing, he needs at least twelve dollars a pound to break even.

"So rice this year could very well be 20 bucks a pound," he said. "I've been selling it for 15 bucks a pound a long time. I'd be giving it away at 15 bucks a pound this year."

But wild rice is more about tradition and passion than profit, so Bibeau expects to be back here again next season processing another crop.

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650 geographic features with “squaw” in them to be changed

BY DAN NINHAM

In a press release from the U.S. Department of Interior on September 8, it was announced the Board on Geographic Names (BGN) voted on the final replacement names for nearly 650 geographic features with the word “squaw” on them. The final vote completes the last step in the historic efforts to remove a term from federal use that has historically been used as an offensive ethnic, racial and sexist slur, particularly for Indigenous women.

“I feel a deep obligation to use my platform to ensure that our public lands and waters are accessible and welcoming. That starts with removing racist and derogatory names that have graced federal locations for far too long,” said Deb Haaland, the first indigenous Secretary of Department of Interior who is an enrolled member of the Laguna Pueblo Tribe in New Mexico.

A Pine County lake in Minnesota was recently renamed to remove the derogatory term. The lake has been renamed Manidoons Zaaga’igan Zhaawanor, meaning East Bug Lake in the Ojibwe language.

Squaw Lake, MN is a town in Itasca County that is on the northern most area

of the Leech Lake Ojibwe (LLBO) reservation map. It was incorporated as a village in 1940 although there was a post office there in 1923. The Great Northern Railway had a station there and it was also a hub for fur traders and logging interests, and currently has a hunting and fishing economy. There are three churches, one motel, one bed and breakfast, six resorts and 12 privately owned businesses, and none are native owned. The population was 98 in the 2020 census with a racial demographic of 57.55 American Indian, 35.85 White, 6.60 Two or More Races, and no other races.

There is no word in the Ojibwe language that translates to the word “squaw”. Ojibwemowin for the town is translated to Gaa-waawiyegamaag in the Ojibwe Peoples Dictionary but this means Round Lake, on the western side of the town. Nature’s Lake is on the eastern part of the town and was renamed in 1995 from Squaw Lake during the action of the Minnesota Legislature.

In the print edition of the Minnesota Public Radio story “MPR: Squaw Lake Resists Name Change” by Tom Robertson on April 30, 2001, the story addressed how Squaw Lake residents resisted a name change 21 years ago, while other similar place names were



The Fire Department/Community Center named after the town. (Photo by Dan Ninham.)

being replaced. A group of Cass Lake-Bena HS students and staff were instrumental in influencing the Minnesota Legislature to pass a law eliminating the “squaw” word from 19 geographic place names in the state. One of them was the former waterway Squaw Lake, now called Nature’s Lake.

Joan LeCuyer, a white citizen of Squaw Lake, came from Minneapolis to her new home town in 2005. She has been the Mayor since 2016. She said, “That’s the way it has been ... Squaw Lake. I don’t feel uncomfortable with it. There are a lot of town people that don’t feel uncomfortable with it. If there’s advertising, the full name of Squaw Lake should be on it.”

Although the racial demographic of the town is indigenous majority, the city council has never had an indigenous mayor and Vi Bellanger was the only indigenous council person. In the 2001 MPR story, she was outspoken in support of the town name and still stands firm in her thinking. When recently asked if she still believes in what she was quoted in the MPR story, she said “Has not changed, my dear!!”

There are several others in the majority indigenous town folk who think the same. The thought process is multi-generational with the distinct pride mode of being “Squaw Lakers”.

“I was never really offended by it,” said Breanna Mittenen, LLBO member and Squaw Lake resident. “I would respect those who didn’t like it, and would refer to it by S. Lake when in their presence. Otherwise, I would still use Squaw Lake.”

“My grandma used to say that it’s just the name of the town, would you change your name if your last name was Hooker? I also never heard anyone using it in a derogatory way, so that is partially why I was never offended,” added Mittenen.

“The thing with systems of oppression, like settler colonialism, is that they have an insidious way of reproducing and reinventing themselves generation after generation,” said Bonnie McGill, PhD, Carnegie Museum of Natural History. “Normalizing the use of a derogatory word like the ‘S-word’ is woven into the fabric of settler colonialism, which altogether normalizes violence and oppression of Indigenous people, including dispossession of their lands.”

“Many Indigenous cultures use place names as reminders of ancestral knowledge, and names are a way to connect the past, present, and future through place and language. Settler colonizer culture does not work that way,” added McGill.

Gary Charwood, LLBO member and resident of S. Lake, is the chairperson of the Local Indian Council (LIC). He and his immediate family have been non-supportive of the town place name for decades. The extended family had mixed feelings.

“Squaw Lake School is a part of the Grand Rapids School District,” Charwood said. “There was a public forum where the town people met with district officials to talk about the school name. The native people in the town were strongly in support of the name. Our daughter’s great grandmother told her that even though she showed support of the town and school name that she really didn’t support it.”

The school name was changed to Eagle View School in 2003 largely due to the public forum. The school district eventually closed the school in 2007.

“All are entitled to their own opinion,” said Charwood. “It won’t change anytime soon, but it will, when the elders stand up over the elderly and the young ones start understanding who they are.”

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Dennis Staples could be one of the finest writers in the state

REVIEW BY DEBORAH LOCKE

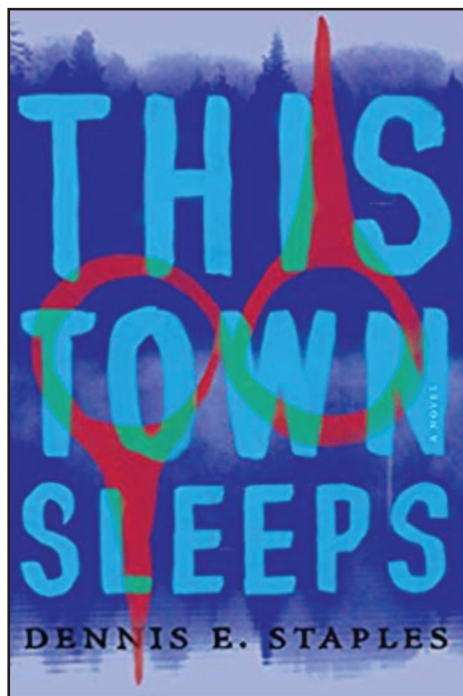
If I could get a message to Dennis E. Staples (Red Lake Nation), it would be this. Keep going. Do more. Understand what was right with “This Town Sleeps” (Counterpoint Publishing, 2020) and build from it the next time. Your story telling is vivid with believable characters in a setting that many of us recognize.

“This Town Sleeps” is the story of Ojibwe living in a small northern Minnesota reservation town, Geshig. The story deals with the coming of age years of several high school boys and their early adult year. Two of the primary male characters are gay. Like so many books set on reservations, a murder simply must take place and that is introduced in the first few pages of the book. Addiction and child neglect also get a lot of notice, as well as ghosts and mysticism. If I had to select an overriding focal point, it would be the need to escape reservation towns before their claws squeeze the life out of you. More on this later.

The plot opens with the voice of Marion Lafournier, a young Ojibwe man who lives on the outskirts of the reservation town and is gay and lonely. He’s a college graduate and works for an accounting firm, owns his own home, and uses apps on his phone to hook up with men for sex at 2 a.m. in isolated, wooded locations. He has no use for traditional Ojibwe ways, scoffs them, and then encounters the spirit of a wolf-like dog at an elementary school playground. The dog leads Marion to the grave of an Ojibwe basketball star who was stabbed to death at age 17. As the secrets behind the stabbing unravel, Marion learns his own family secrets mired in generational trauma. The book’s conclusion presents a slightly more mature, more stable Marion who may have found a stable relationship.

The pages also reveal a host of multi-generational characters, each with tragic flaws and tragic historical circumstances. The names romp across the pages at a dizzying pace at times, creating some confusion. There’s Kayden who was murdered, then his mother’s best friend, then his mother, then a basketball coach, then Marion who was younger than Kayden but knew him, then the girl who Kayden was living with, then... I prefer fewer characters and more exposition on who the characters were, what made them tick, and their relevance to the plot.

A key character of “This Town Sleeps,” in addition to Marion Lafournier, is the town itself. Marion took the first opportunity to leave Geshig by attending college in the Twin Cities. Years passed, and after a few dis-



This Town Sleeps
Author: Dennis Staples
Publisher: Counterpoint, 2020

astrous relationships, he returned to the area “spending a lot of time in my hometown. It pulls me back here like the door at the end of a dream that you don’t want to go through, but you can’t control your feet.”

Later Staples describes the east end of the town as not as slum-like as the north end of town, “but it’s only better in looks. No matter what neighborhood, this town can’t shed its skin.”

Finally, there’s this: “Here’s a truth about this town that many live but few will ever admit. Geshig is the weight that crushes any form of ambition...By the time children reach middle school, they know there is nothing for them beyond the highway.”

Dear reader, indulge me please. Consider this. We know and some of us live with the hopelessness of reservation communities. The meth use. The short life expectancy. The violence. The unemployment. The fear and loathing. However, some reservation families live non-violent, non-addictive, lives. I can’t think of many characters like that in the American Indian fiction I’ve read over the past year.

This is not to say that Staples’ book is rampant with misery. There’s humor there, and lyrical writing in places, and you grow to care about the protagonist, Marion. Marion evolves into a better person with a clearer understanding of where he came from. Yes, too many characters bounce around at times, and the story line can be challenging to follow. But I think that Dennis Staples could be one of the finest writers in the state if not the country. “This Town Sleeps” shows real promise.

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In everything they do, IN Equality uses collective leadership through what respected elder John Poupart calls a “bold, old” strategy. Their process involves listening to the community around them and making decisions based on what the collective voice is saying, and they’re always looking for new ways to bring people to the table.

IN Equality uses this community approach to act as a bridge between community members and the criminal justice system. The Flower Power public art event engages the community to show the impact of mass incarceration in a way that raises visibility and builds solidarity, which helps build the foundation for political reform.

As a leadership coalition, IN Equality brings together people with firsthand experience of the criminal justice system to lead the call for change and reckoning, knowing that those most affected by the system are best equipped to offer transformative solutions. As a policy advocate, IN Equality has helped commission and produce several policy briefs – drawing on extensive community engagement – that have led to policy change in Ramsey County.

Successes so far

IN Equality has helped stop the construction of a proposed juvenile correctional center, close Ramsey County’s Boys Totem Town residential reform school, and oppose a data-sharing agreement called the Joint Powers Agreement.

Before the IN Equality program started, 90 to 100 youth were being confined in juvenile detention centers in Ramsey County. Nearly 3,000 children were entangled in the system every year, mostly children of color. Data from the Sentencing Project shows that Minnesota has a significant Black/white disparity, with Black youth’s placement rate at 648 per 100,000, compared with white youth’s placement rate of 75 per 100,000. Youth of color must deal with significant and harmful engagement with the juvenile justice system. While white youth are often escorted home or provided diversion opportunities, youth of color are not.

LaBlanc explains, “You can’t incarcerate that large segment of a community and not have huge impacts on our family wellbeing, their own wellbeing, their future hope and opportunities.”

In 2005, Ramsey County committed itself to addressing the disproportionately high confinement of minorities and implemented the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), led by Toni Carter, Commissioner of Ramsey County. Oyate Hotanin added their voice to the JDAI and established IN Equality in 2015 to embed an innovative partnership model between community members and juvenile justice system leaders in Ramsey County.

A direct result of this partnership is staggering: use of detention has dropped 85% since 2005, and out-of-home displacements have dropped 74% since 2015.

A model nationwide

What started with Oyate Hotanin’s and other key community members’ work with one county has resulted in a model for others across the nation.

“What IN Equality is doing in partnership with the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office and community organizations is groundbreaking,” says Ramla Bile, a grant-making officer with the Bush Foundation. “County-level reforms are a way to bring about lasting change that is being sought out by both sides – those who are a part of the system and people who have been harmed by it. This work has potential to transform the juvenile justice system nationwide.”

Why start on a county level? “The county has power to make a lot of critical decisions that impact the number of young people that are in detention, and who gets a second chance and who doesn’t,” Bile explains. So while criminal justice is a multi-layered, cross-jurisdictional system involving city, county, state, and federal units of government, the county is a major player in the technology of mass incarceration and often functions with a great deal of local discretion. County players include the county attorney, judges, probation officers, detention centers, jails, and more.

The county attorney also has a role in influencing local police, what crimes are prioritized, what neighborhoods are policed more, and how aggressive plea agreements and sentencing can be.

“Reforms at the county level present a unique opportunity to tackle criminal justice transformation in a focused and strategic way,” Bile says.

In 2021, Oyate Hotanin received an additional Bush Foundation grant to support an outgrowth of IN Equality’s work. They will explore alternatives to incarceration by developing a reparative circle method based on Native American thinking and practices, and hope to eventually expand to also work with tribal courts.

“There are big, lasting outcomes with the work we’ve done,” says Crystal Norcross, Oyate Hotanin’s board chair and a member of Ramsey County’s racial and health equity team. “Oyate Hotanin’ means ‘voice of the people,’ and we are trying hard to live by that name.”

Grey Eagle (Oglala Lakota) is a photojournalist, producer, beadwork artist and writer. She is a Report for America Fellow with the Sahan Journal covering communities of color in the Twin Cities and is researching Indigenous photography at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

Amy Nelson is the editor of Minnesota Monthly magazine and an award-winning writer/editor focused on health and wellness, travel and lifestyle

This article is sponsored by the Bush Foundation.

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Nancy Beaulieu stands next to the route of the Line 3 oil pipeline in northern Minnesota. The organizer for environmental group MN350 is heavily involved in midterm election voter drives in Native communities in northern Minnesota. (Photo courtesy Nancy Beaulieu.)

A: Yes, actually. It's probably in my DNA to continue to do this work. I was just fortunate enough to attend a Battle Point Powwow here on Leech Lake and speak to the people there and why voting matters and how we could show up.

We show up as treaty people and we don't really like to identify ourselves to a political party because a lot of our native people don't trust the Republicans or the Democrats. Yes, we show up to vote for the blue ticket, because we feel we have a better chance of being heard within the Democratic Party than we do the Republican Party, but then again, as treaty people we try to take care of everybody, regardless of our differences. We're just trying to find peace.

Q: Do you feel like Line 3 is going to affect the vote this time around?

A: Honestly, after the 2020, voter registration, I felt discouraged. I see who won. And I knew, you know, after line 3 got the green light by our governor. I was like, our words fell on deaf ears. And so moving into 2022, I don't want to do this no more but then I thought, we can't give up, what can we do better?

I'm honored to be able to show up in political spaces on the front line, discussing why voting matters, because again, it's our voice and our people need to understand that politics might not be for us. But again, if we're not at the table, we don't know what's being served. And I think it's important that we figure out how the system works and how to show up and show up in the best way we know how and seek change in a good way.

Q: What do you think worked? What were some of the strategies that you thought really got people out there?

A: Well, from my perspective, in the work I did back in 2020, I realized when the University of Nebraska sent their non-Native people here to collect data, we weren't answering the doors for them. We weren't sure who they were. And the system has been set up to fail us, so at some point, we don't trust non-

Natives knocking at our door.

So what that experience taught me was that if we're going to go out and door knock in Indian country, we need people that look like us and we need people from our own communities. So part of the effort that we made was to create satellite stations in native communities and hire people out of those communities to door knock, they know their communities best.

And before these canvassers went out, we explained why voting is important. And please, relay this message when your door knock and don't just register them to vote. But please be a part of that message that voting matters.

We need to do more to engage people after the election because we see a lot of the voters don't want to vote because our words continue to fall on deaf ears. But that division that was caused by the last administration was a big boost. I'll be honest, that's why people showed up to the polls.

Q: Do you feel like there's going to be as much excitement and turnout this election?

A: Yes. We are making efforts here in Northern Minnesota to explain to our Native people and our BIPOC communities why midterms are important. Some people don't even know there are midterms or know what they are for. So, again, when we're out there, it's a lot of voter education.

Quite honestly, until I started working with Minnesota 350, I never voted in the primary because I didn't even understand because again, you know, we're mostly in tune with tribal elections or we don't vote in the state elections because we're never heard. So I tell people our work is not done when we register people to vote, the work has just begun.

Voting information can be found at <https://sos.state.mn.us>.

Minnesota Public Radio News can be heard on MPR's statewide radio network or online.

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Zetah-Cornelius, versatile athlete for Bemidji HS Lumberjacks

Sage Zetah-Cornelius is from the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin and Bad River Ojibwa tribe. Her native name is Bidwemisekwe. She is a senior at Bemidji High School and competes in varsity soccer and basketball.

Zetah-Cornelius was named the senior captain for soccer and has been a varsity team member since her sophomore year.

The seven grandfathers of the Ojibwe are honesty, humility, truth, wisdom, love, respect, and courage. Zetah-Cornelius said, “This translates into my every day practice by reminding me to stay humble and always work as hard as I can. Becoming a soccer captain has really challenged me to speak up and be courageous. I will always be there to help and support my fellow teammates, whether this means giving tips and wisdom on the soccer field or merely talking about how they are.”

“On the field, although I respect the opposing team, as a defender I try my hardest to prevent them from scoring. Hard work and sportsmanship including honesty and respect are what I value the most when it comes to the field and court and my everyday life,”



Bemidji senior Sage Zetah-Cornelius (22) battles for the ball in the second half against East Grand Forks on Thursday, Sept. 22, 2022, at Chet Anderson Stadium. (Photo by Annalise Braught / Bemidji Pioneer.)

added Zetah-Cornelius.

“A highlight of my athletic career is becoming a soccer captain,” said

Zetah-Cornelius. “I take it very serious and love helping my teammates and taking that leadership role. I take pride in the playing time that I earned and work hard every day for it. I have played every position possible on the soccer field from forward to goalie and found my home at center defense.”

“Last year during sections we were the seventh seed playing second seed Brainerd after just moving up to a higher class,” said Zetah-Cornelius. “As underdogs, we were expected to lose but as a team we wanted the win.”

“I started left center defense that game. We all played our absolute hardest and it paid off. We celebrated our upset win and all embraced each other in an outburst of cheering! We went home that day elated and proud to be advancing in sections,” added Zetah-Cornelius.

Zetah-Cornelius showed her versatility in a recent game when she asked her coaches if she could play offense. When approved she went in and scored two goals.

“Scoring today was merely due to how determined I was to get on the stats sheet,” said Zetah-Cornelius. “As a center defender you don’t get the glory of scoring and the credit for hard work in games. I talked my coach into letting me try it and when they told me to move up, I knew I was scoring!”

Logan Larsen, Bemidji HS head girls soccer coach, said, “Sage has played a massive role on the successes within our 2022 season by being an outstanding center defender, and by being an extremely influential captain.”

“We have conceded very few goals this season, and Sage has played a key role in that,” said Larsen. “We played 10 games so far this season, and with the exception of one game she’s played every single minute of every single game, and often times in a system that only employs three defenders. Our last two games were against bitter rivals Brainerd and East Grand Forks, and both were 1-0 wins; a testament to the strength of our defenders.”

“Sage is also our defensive leader. She’s vocal in a way that both gives guidance to her fellow defenders as well as uplifts them. She creates structure, and celebrates the successes that occur at defense. Those celebrations are absolutely vital, since despite their impact at resulting in wins, they’re never as celebrated in newspapers and in the stands as scored goals are.”

“Sage provides amazing leadership on our back defensive line,” said Kristina Vanwilgen Hammitt, Bemidji HS Girls Soccer Coach. “As our starting center back, she is the core of communication, decision making, and sets the tone for the team’s conscious on the field at game time.”

“She plays with everything on the table: solid emotion, competitiveness, and heart.

“She does this with true respect for the opponent,” added Vanwilgen Hammitt.

“I can honestly say that she is a big reason for our successes this season in close wins,” said Vanwilgen Hammitt.

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

editor@ajwnews.com

Semi-fascists on the ballot

This might well be the last installment of “Political Matters” available to readers of *The Circle* prior to the Nov. 8 midterm elections. The Republican Party of late has established a new take on elections: If a GOP candidate wins, that’s fine; if they lose, the election was “rigged and stolen,” to quote former Pres. Dumbass.

Heads I win, tails you lose.

We are living through a divisive time in the United States. This situation was lucidly explained by authors Steven Simon and Jonathan Stevenson, in the Sept. 22, 2022, issue of *The New York Review of Books*. Their article, “These Disunited States,” follows several global and domestic events, including Trump’s baseless assertion of widespread fraud in the 2020 presidential election, which provided the impetus for the Jan. 6, 2021, MAGA mob siege of the U.S. Capitol as Congress was in the processing of certifying the Electoral College votes.

(Someone on social media termed the Jan. 6 brawl the “Shitstain Revolution”; and the colorful phrase gets at the reality of the insurrectionary event, which didn’t rise to the level of an attempted coup d’état. In any case, we’re left wondering when criminal charges will be brought against Trump and his co-conspirators for inciting the riot.)

“America is already virtually a binational state, with two sharply opposed national communities comparable in size and political strength that effectively operate as confederations under a single federal government,” Simon and Stevenson wrote. “The Republican Party is mostly white and marginally increasing its Latino membership, the Democratic Party an ethnic and racial mix. Although Democrats occasionally reveal impulses toward reconciliation, Republicans largely do not. Most have put up implacable resistance to Biden’s efforts to bolster the middle class and combat climate change, and, reaching back at least a decade, to Democratic nominations of eminently qualified federal district and appeals court judges as well as Supreme Court justices.”

The red-blue split in the U.S. has resulted in acts of political violence, such as the 2017 “Unite the Right” gathering in Charlottesville, Virginia, “vigilante actions against largely nonviolent Black Lives Matter demonstrations and the January 6 insurrection.”

I would add that there have been a number of mass shootings – Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh (2018), Walmart in El Paso, Texas (2019), Tops supermarket in Buffalo, N.Y. (2022), etc. – perpetrated by right-wing individuals with explicitly racist and bigoted motives.

Simon and Stevenson noted that a “far-right effort is underway to introduce violent intimidation into conventional politics, not unlike the fascist campaign to undermine the Weimar Republic [in Germany] a century ago. According to the FBI, most domestic terrorist attacks are carried out by antigovernment and white supremacist militants on the right.”

And the mainstream press has been reporting lately about Trump’s embrace of the QAnon movement, which advances a number of insane conspiracy theories based on message board “drops” by a mysterious insider called “Q” – e.g., John F. Kennedy, Jr. is alive and will run as Trump’s vice presidential contender in 2024. QAnon proponents generally sees the Democrats as a cabal of satan-worshipping pedophiles that soon will face some sort of rough justice – large-scale public executions. I’ve seen a lot of crazy QAnon memes on Truth Social, the Twitter alternative created by Trump and financed by a shell company based in China.

If you’d like to know more about QAnon, I suggest reading the 2021 book by Mike Rothschild, “The Storm Is Upon Us: How QAnon Became a Movement, Cult, and Conspiracy Theory of Everything.”

In short, the GOP, the Republicans, has morphed into the GQP – and in Minnesota, the party has nominated a remarkable assortment of right-wing cranks for state constitutional offices, including Dr. Scott Jensen for governor and Kim Crockett for secretary of state.

Jensen has been in the news for his benighted comparison of public health measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of the Nazi regime in the run-up to the Shoah, the destruction of the Jews in Europe. As I mentioned in my column last month, my wife and I visited Berlin in July. I recently realized that in Germany today, where Nazi symbols and the Hitler salute are proscribed by law, Jensen could be prosecuted and imprisoned for his comments equating COVID-19 health measures to the Holocaust.

The Christian fundamentalists are determined to impose their religious ideology on everybody. They have to be stopped, at least in the interest of minimizing harm to marginalized groups in society. DFL elected officials are the blunt instrument we have to use against the MAGA faction. Their policies might not be adequate to deal with the myriad, serious social and environmental problems facing us; but there’s really no other choice, as far as the upcoming elections in November.

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Thru Oct 27

Four Sisters Farmers Market

The Four Sisters Farmers Market is an Indigenous-focused farmers market centered on providing increased access to affordable, healthy, culturally appropriate local foods within the American Indian Cultural Corridor. The Four Sisters Farmers Market accepts SNAP/EBT benefits, Market Bucks, and Four Sisters Farmers Market Vouchers. The Market is open on Thursdays through October 27th, from 11am - 3pm. The market will be held at 1414 E. Franklin Ave, Minneapolis. For info, contact Darek Delille at ddelille@nacdi.org or 218-721-7442. Or Elizabeth Day at: eday@nacdi.org or 612-235-4971.

Thru Oct

Dakota Play Project Language Classes

Language and theatre classes will be held from 6:30 -8:30pm on Zoom. These classes will take place each Tuesday through October online and are open to Dakota community members who are interested in helping create our Dakota language play with Lower Phalen Creek Project. If you are interested in taking the language class or getting involved in other ways with Dakota Play Project, please contact sara@newnativetheatre.org. <https://whiteearth.com/home>

Thru Nov 27

Alexandra Buffalohead: Shifting the Perspective

How do museum narratives obscure some histories in preference of telling others? In her installation, guest curator Alexandra Buffalohead (Bdewakantowan Dakhóta/Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate) examines this dynamic through the prism of Indigenous history and knowledge. Placing the James J. Hill presentation tray (Tiffany and Co., 1884) in dialogue with Native artworks, Buffalohead offers a more complex and accurate framing of the history of St. Anthony Falls and Wita Wanagi (Spirit Island), a spiritual site for Dakhóta people; the island, which remained even as the Falls became a hub for logging, milling, and transportation, was removed in 1960 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' creation of the lock and dam. In doing so, she provides a corrective lens that transcends and enriches Mia's presentation of the past. Minneapolis Institute of Art, 2400 Third Avenue S, Minneapolis. For info contact: 888-642-2787 or visit@artsmia.org.

Ongoing: Mondays Men's Support and Smudge

Men's Support and Smudge: Join American Indian Family Center's Father & Men's Outreach Specialist, Rich Antell, for a virtual men's

group Mondays from 6pm - 8pm. Don't miss this chance to gather with other American Indian men to explore your identity, participate in culture, and support each other. Register: <https://bit.ly/MenSmudge>. American Indian Family Center, 579 Wells St, St Paul. For info, contact: info@aifcmn.org.

Ongoing: Mon-Thurs MIGIZI's CLAW for youth

Inviting all 8th-12th grade students to join us at our temporary location every Monday - Thursday from 4pm to 6pm for MIGIZI's CLAW After School Program. The CLAW (Culture, Leadership, Academics, Well-being) program integrates cultural practices with academic studies to provide Native youth with a relatable and engaging time of learning. We provide a safe space where students can enjoy a meal, focus on culture, learn about educational and career opportunities, and get their homework/projects done! Our fall program will feature moccasin making, Tutoring Tuesdays, field trips to Severs Corn Maze and the UMN, financial wellness and more. All after school activities are free. MIGIZI, 2610 E 32nd St, #200, Mpls. Register at <https://form.jotform.com/203485829759069>. For info, see: <https://www.migizi.org>.

Ongoing: Tuesdays

Khunsi Onikan Well-Anon (Native American Al-Anon)

The AIFC's Khunsi Onikan Program will be held on Tuesdays at 7pm for a Native American culturally-based, one-hour meeting to help build healthier boundaries and relationships with your loved ones suffering from addiction. American Indian Family Center, 579 Wells St, St Paul. For info, contact: info@aifcmn.org.

Ongoing: Thursdays

Wellbriety/Medicine Wheel 12 Steps Meeting

Khunsi Onikan Wellbriety/Medicine Wheel 12-step virtual meetings are every Thursday at 7pm. These meetings are designed to help you find safe, confidential healing, and support in your recovery journey and are open to anyone wanting to work on recovery from any addictions. Sponsored by the AIFC Khunsi Onikan program. American Indian Family Center, 579 Wells St, St Paul. For info, contact: info@aifcmn.org. Or see: <https://bit.ly/KOWellbriety>.

Ongoing

Buy used and swap goods on Choose to Reuse

Almost every weekend, there are special events held throughout Hennepin County to buy used goods and swap out stuff you no longer need. Hennepin County's Choose to Reuse has made these events easy to find. See a listing of upcoming events on the Choose to Reuse website, including occasional markets, clothing and goods swaps, citywide garage sales, retail store special events, community fundraising sales, and lending library events. Or sign up for Choose to Reuse news and events to get notification delivered right to your inbox. For info, see: <https://www.hennepin.us/choose-to-reuse#events>.

Thru Nov 18

Leonard Peltier's Walk to Justice

Leonard Peltier's Walk to Justice is a spiritual walk to seek Leonard Peltier's release from the U.S. Prison System. Started on September 1, the AIMGGC lead a prayerful walk from Minneapolis, MN to

Washington, D.C. to advocate and meet with government officials to see the release of Leonard Peltier from the U.S. Federal Prison System. All relatives, supporters, and allies are invited to help carry this prayer for Elder Leonard Peltier to the system who continues to imprison a piece of all American Indian peoples and demand accountability from an unjust justice system. We are seeking support along the route of the walk. There are many ways to support the walk including sharing posts to raise awareness, volunteering at events, hosting feasts for the walkers, offering safe places to stay along the route, committing to walking any distance or time, donating supplies, and monetary donations. For info, see Facebook page "Leonard Peltier's Walk to Justice" or email the organizers at leonard-peltierwalktojustice@gmail.com.

Oct 6 - Dec 15

Rosy Simas Danse

The Native American Community Development Institute and All My Relations Arts are pleased to premiere Rosy Simas Danse's "she who lives on the road to war", an immersive installation and performance on global loss, grief and community healing. The project includes a new installation and in-gallery performances throughout the fall of 2022. This new work takes its title from the Haudenosaunee historical figure Jigonhsasee, who encouraged war between tribes before becoming an instrument of peace. Jigonhsasee's wisdom and vision helped Hiawatha and the Peacemaker bring the Nations together as the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. It will premiere at WAM and at All My Relations Arts. After its performance run in Minneapolis, the work will tour to Gibney in New York City, Maui Arts & Cultural Center, and other cities. Rosy Simas, Haudenosaunee (Seneca, Heron Clan), is a choreographer and film/visual artist based in Minneapolis. Opening Reception: Oct 6, 6-8pm; Performance at 7pm. Closing Reception: December 15 from 6 - 8pm. For info, see: <https://allmyrelationsarts.com/rosy-simas-danse-she-who-lives-on-the-road-to-war-october-6th-2022>.

Oct 8

Event by Owámní: Falling Water Festival

Owámní is what the Dakota called the area at St. Anthony Falls. It means, "whirling or falling water" in the Dakota language, making it an appropriate name for this festival along the Mississippi River. This free, family-friendly event, is co-presented by the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the St Anthony Falls Heritage Board to celebrate indigenous Minnesota culture with music, art, food, and more! Owámní: Falling Water Festival will be held Oct 8, from 1-5pm at the NEW Water Works Park, 333 1st St S, Minneapolis. For info, see: https://www.minneapolis-parks.org/activities-events/events/owamni_falling_water_festival.

Oct 8

Cooking Class with Kelly Shay

Cooking Class with Kelly Shay hosted by Four Sisters Farm. Sign-up for the online and in-person class. Learning how to make an Autumn Harvest Salad. If you can't attend in person and want to prepare the salad with us at home via Zoom, just pick up your groceries before the class. The grocery list for those cooking at home is at: <https://bit.ly/3UT6yky>. We ask that you bring a favorite outdoor chair or blanket to sit on, and a full water bottle so you're hydrated since the gardens don't have access to drinking water. Cost: The cooking classes are free. Register whether you're attending in person or via Zoom at: <https://bit.ly/3B55DIF>. 2839 17th Ave. S, Minneapolis.

Oct 10

Saint Paul Indigenous People's Day Celebration

Indigenous People's Day honors Native Americans, their rich, diverse cultures, and brings attention to the injustices perpetrated against them. The parade route begins at Margaret Park and ends at Indian Mounds Park where we will continue the celebration. 11 am. Margaret Park, 1106 Margaret St, St Paul.

Full time Staff Attorney

BACKGROUND: Anishinabe Legal Services is a Legal Services Corporation funded 501(c)(3) organization providing free legal assistance and court representation to low-income individuals living on or near Leech Lake, White Earth, and Red Lake Reservations in Northern Minnesota. Looking for two attorneys to provide civil legal assistance/court representation to clients before area Tribal and State Courts.

QUALIFICATIONS: Qualified applicants must have the ability to handle a large caseload of client matters throughout a wide geographic service area. Applicants must also be able to work as part of a team and be able to write detailed notes on the Case Management System. 0+ years of experience are welcome to apply. Knowledge regarding Indian Country/Native Americans is preferred, but not required. Native American attorneys are highly encouraged to apply. All applicants must have a valid driver's license, insurance, and automobile. EEO, M/F/H.

COMPENSATION: \$62,000/yr. + D.O.E. and benefits. Flex schedule. Hybrid WAH/Office. Please email a cover letter, resume, and 3 references to Valerie Field, at vfield@alslegal.org. See more info at: <http://alslegal.blogspot.com>.

Deadline for applications is **Oct. 25**. Open until filled.

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Oct 10

Indigenous People's Day

Join Tiwahe Foundation's Circle of Generosity to celebrate and support Indigenous leadership and our sustained years of community impact in the urban Native Community in the TC and across Minnesota. 5pm to 8pm. Minnesota Historical Society, 345 W Kellogg Blvd, St. Paul. For info, see <https://www.facebook.com/tiwahefoundation>.

Oct 11, Dec 13

Buffalo Show

Buffalo Show is a regular, creative adventure featuring Buffalo Weavers' Dakota elder poet and storyteller Strong Buffalo and musical bike-riding singer-songwriter Ben Weaver. The duo takes over the Bryant Lake Bowl Theater to weave guest artists with live musical performances and storytelling by Change Narrative, to awaken the world to climate change and its impact, and celebrate our ability to move to solutions (and have fun along the way!). Additional events and details will be announced in the coming weeks. Doors open at 6pm, show starts at 7pm. Bryant Lake Bowl & Theater. Tickets will be available at bryantlakebowl.com. For more information, visit oyatehotanin.org.

Oct 12 (online)

Listen to Native Youth

Protect ICWA! Native youth are ICWA defenders. The NCAI Youth Commission will be joined by Native leaders, including Representative Sharice Davids and Chairwoman Frances Charles of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, to share their perspectives on ICWA. 4pm PT/7pm ET (virtual). RSVP at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/youth-defending-youth-protect-the-indian-child-welfare-act-tickets-428751185337>.

Oct 19

Joy Harjo and Layli Long Soldier: Poems in Conversation

Former US Poet Laureate Joy Harjo and National Book Critics Circle Award-winning poet Layli Long Soldier will be reading from and discussing their poetry. AIS Associate Professor Christopher Pexa will moderate a conversation about contemporary Native American poetry. A book signing will immediately follow the event. Joy Harjo is a performer and writer of the Muscogee Nation. In 2019, she was appointed the 23rd United States Poet Laureate, the first Native American to hold the position and only the second person to serve three terms in the role (2019-2022). Layli Long Soldier is the author of the chapbook Chromosomy (Q Ave Press, 2010) and the full-length collection Whereas (Graywolf, 2017), which won the National Books Critics Circle Award and the PEN/Jean Stein Book Award and was a finalist for the National Book Award. This is a free, ticketed event. Limited space availability, early registration is suggested. 7:30pm. Northrup, Carlson Family Stage, 84 Church St SE, Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://www.northrop.umn.edu/events/joy-harjo-and-layli-long-soldier-poems-conversation-2022>.

Oct. 19 (online) Bring Her Home Documentary

Twin Cities PBS (TPT) announces the inclusion of the "Bring Her Home" documentary in the ImagineNATIVE

Film + Media Arts Festival. "Bring Her Home" is a documentary and community engagement initiative sharing the untold story of three Indigenous women - an artist, an activist and a politician - who are fighting to vindicate and honor their missing and murdered relatives. The documentary is co-produced with Vision Maker Media, a public media organization that encourages and empowers Native people to tell their stories. The documentary is screening on Oct 19 at 7pm ET in Toronto and online through ImagineNATIVE's watch platform from October 24-30. To learn more about the ImagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, visit: imaginenative.org.

Oct 19 (online)

Listen to Adoptee Allies

Protect ICWA! The Network of Politicized Adoptees (NPA) is gathering adoptees, community members, and allies around ICWA. Hear from the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), Protect ICWA organizers, and Dr. Kim Park Nelson who will speak to the history and connections transracial adoptees have to ICWA. 5pm PT/8pm ET (virtual). RSVP at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/youth-defending-youth-protect-the-indian-child-welfare-act-tickets-428751185337>.

Oct 20

Indigenous Pink Day

Indigenous Pink Day is a national breast cancer awareness campaign for Native people. Our team invites Indigenous people of all ages to join us by wearing pink and sharing photos on social media using the hashtag #IndigenousPink to raise awareness of breast cancer in Indian Country. Breast cancer is the most

common cancer among Native women, and is the second leading cause of cancer death. However, all bodies have breast tissue and are at risk for developing breast cancer. Because this national campaign happens on a digital platform, community members are able to participate from anywhere! <https://americanindiancancer.org/aicaf-project/indigenous-pink-day/>

Oct 21

NDN Changemaker Fellowship

The NDN Changemaker Fellowship is a 12-month opportunity for Indigenous leaders to articulate their vision for social change, to identify the support they will need to get there and to invest in their own personal development and wellbeing. This Fellowship is designed to amplify, deepen, and catalyze the power of Indigenous leaders ready to create movements in their communities, building a world that is just and equitable for all people and the planet. Grants of up to \$75,000 are offered to 21 Indigenous Changemakers across the continental U.S., Canada, Mexico, Islands of Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Boriken (Puerto Rico), and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Applications are due by 5pm CST on Oct 21. Be sure to register by 3pm US CST on **October 19th** to ensure a timely submission. Changemaker Fellows selections will be made in February

2023. For info, see:

<https://grants.ndncollective.org/the-ndn-changemaker-fellowship>.

Oct 24

MAICC TOPGOLF Event

Join us for the Minnesota American Indian Chamber of Commerce's TOPGOLF Event. You don't have to be a great golfer to win and have fun! Last year was a blast and we hope you can attend to connect with friends! There will be golf, food and fun. 1pm. (Remember to save the date for the 34th Annual Dinner on Dec 2. Registration opening soon.) For info on the Golf event see, <https://maicc-topgolf.perfectgolfevent.com>, or see maicc.org.

Thru Nov 8

Voting Schedule MN

Minnesota allows any voter to request a ballot by mail. You can also vote in person. Minnesota offers early voting. For info, see: <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/election-administration-campaigns/elections-calendar>. Key deadlines for the November 2022 election:

- **In person during early voting:** Sep 23 - Nov 7.
- **In-person at voting location on Election Day:** Nov 8
- **Online:** Oct 18 by 11:59pm.
- **By mail:** Oct 18 by 5:00pm.
- **Absentee ballot deadlines:** Request ballot: Nov 7
- **Return ballot by mail:** Nov 8 by

8:00pm.

- **Return ballot in person:** Nov 8 by 3:00pm.
- **Voting deadlines: Early voting:** Sep 23 - Nov 7
- **In-person:** Nov 8

Nov 9 (online)

ICWA ORAL ARGUMENTS

Protect ICWA! Oral arguments in Haaland v. Brackeen will be accessible via live streamed audio from the courtroom. 7am PT/10am ET. Bookmark this website to listen, at: https://www.supremecourt.gov/oral_arguments/live.aspx.

Nov 15 (deadline)

Family Empowerment Program

The Family Empowerment Program is a grant-making project of the Tiwahe Foundation, which awards grants to individuals working to be of service to their community, connected to their culture, and to have their potential realized. Applicant must be able to trace tribal lineage to a federal or state-recognized tribe and provide proof of tribal lineage, must reside in the seven-county metropolitan area of Minnesota: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Scott, Ramsey, and Washington counties, and be 18 years of age. This grant round will be open from Oct 1 through Nov 15. See more, at: <https://tiwahefoundation.org/family-empowerment-program>.



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CALL FOR Artists

The Tiwahe Foundation is a place for giving — and giving back — that benefits the well-being of American Indian people and communities in Minnesota. Our **American Indian Family Empowerment Program** is a program invested in human capital — in the skills, resources, and cultural strengths that American Indian families and individuals possess that allow them to contribute to the cultural and social wellbeing of their community.

The Tiwahe Foundation has partnered with **The Mnisota Native Artists Alliance** to assist us in our efforts to commission a local Native Artist to provide us with a graphic art piece that would be used as a gift that we will print and will be given as a framed piece of artwork to our 2023 American Indian Family Empowerment Program grant recipients. We will distribute about 100 prints of the selected work.

FOR THE ARTISTS

We will offer \$1,000 in commission for the selected artist, who will also be honored on our website as our 2023 Tiwahe artist. The final prints will include a short artist bio, and information about the artwork on the back of the prints. The Tiwahe Foundation will retain the rights to this artwork. However, this artwork will be used solely for the purpose of honoring our AIFEP grant recipients.

The honored artist will also be invited to speak about their work at our Grantee Honoring, but it is not required.

REQUIREMENTS

Submitted artwork must be in a PDF file format, 300 dpi at 11x17 inches. Artist will be picked by February 28th and the final artwork must be completed by May 1st, 2023.



TIWAHE FOUNDATION

SUBMISSIONS OPEN
OCTOBER 17 – DECEMBER 16 2022

tiwahefoundation.submittable.com/submit



mnaa
MNISOTA NATIVE ARTISTS ALLIANCE

Homecoming

BY ARNE VAINIO, MD

(This article was written in 2015.)

My wife Ivy and I traveled south in the middle of these troubled times. She has family she found about 16 years ago when she wanted to know our family histories after our son was born. She knew little about her father except that he was a respected member of the African American community. I think when people start looking for their heritage, there's always a secret hope it involves a Scottish castle that's just a little bit haunted, but instead she found poverty in central Florida.

She found her brother first and he was happy when Ivy first told him she was his sister, and he took us to meet their sister right away. Her sister is revered in this impoverished community in the heart of the city. She is about to turn 83-years-old and she has dedicated her life to the church and to her community. She has taken the homeless and the lost into her home over the years and has taught countless students to play the piano. The last time we were visiting I took a photo of her hand next to the keyboard of her old upright piano. That piano has been played hard over the decades and the keyboard is broken and beaten and the veneer is peeling off in sheets, but it's been with her too long for her to simply discard it.

She and her husband started a small church on a corner and they dedicated their lives to that church and the surrounding community. He died long before we met her and she has been carrying on the work they started all those years ago.

The night we arrived was her birthday celebration at the church and Ivy and I

were brought into the front row to sit with her and their brother and their great niece. This was a powerful evening and I have never seen deeper faith anywhere. The singers were in the front of the church, but the congregation also sang and the songs came from all around us. Afterward we all shared a meal together and we were welcomed into the community with open arms and open hearts.

I would live to be that generous.

The next morning we were invited back to the church service and it started with Sunday school. The Preacher's wife led the women's session and Ivy and her sister went with them. Stormy and I went to the men's session and the Preacher was leading that session. We walked in as he was telling them when he counsels couples, he has to be careful not to put himself above anyone else.

"The last thing I want is to have someone respecting me instead of the other person in this relationship. When somebody is meant to be saved, it has always been someone imperfect sent to do that work and I realize my own imperfections. All of you can do the same thing in your day to day lives. If you see someone hungry, don't just give them a couple of dollars or even just buy them some food. You need to sit with them and eat with them and listen to them. In helping someone else lies your own salvation."

In listening to him, I was reminded of a night I was on call and an elder was reaching the end of her life at three o'clock in the morning. Her entire family had gathered and many of them could not accept the fact there was nothing further we could do for her. She was Catholic and a priest had been called. Some of the gathered family were angry at death coming, but you can't really be angry at death.

Death doesn't respond to that anger.

But you can lash out at the people involved. That includes the hospital staff and it included me as the doctor in the room that night. The priest was young, but he able to see this and he invited me to stand with him as he gave her last rites. I stood next to him smug in the knowledge that my religious beliefs were somehow better and more true than his.

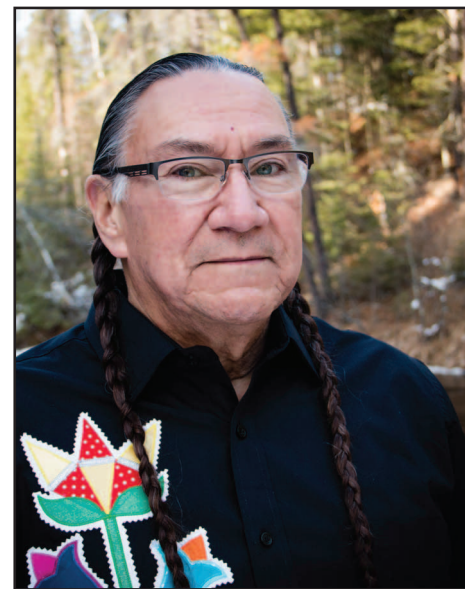
I have never been so happy to be wrong. I watched a roomful of people go from angry and hurt to accepting to loving and forgiving and I could feel it as he was performing the ceremony. Her last breaths came easier and she died peacefully with her entire family surrounding her.

I watched the sunrise from the atrium in the hospital as I was leaving to go home to get ready for clinic. The hospital is on the hillside overlooking Lake Superior and the sky went from starry darkness to hazy purple and then orange as the sun melted the night and as it rose over the lake, a streak of brilliant red light crossed the water directly toward me.

I told this story to the Preacher and I did not want to hide the fact that our beliefs are different. I expected resistance and I expected condescending and I received none of that. Instead, I was again surprised with the beneficence and understanding of a truly good man.

"I know we're different, Dr. Vainio. I know we have different concerns for the people we serve. I know we have different faiths. I also know that only in working together can we make a difference for those around us, those who believe us and those who look to us for answers. I am so grateful our paths have brought us together and I want you to know I will always respect and pray for you in your work."

We stood and shook hands, then we hugged. I could hear the congregation



singing in the sanctuary and I knew he had to put the finishing touches on his sermon.

"Dr. Vainio, you should go in and sit with your wife. The congregation and the singers have been waiting for this day."

I walked into the sanctuary and the singers were in full song and the congregation was standing and singing with them. I walked to the front and I sat between Ivy and Mother Shaw.

Ivy leaned over and smiled at me. Mother Shaw had her bible in her lap and she reached over and took my hand and we sat together as family as the congregation sang around us.

This was love and devotion and goodness in its purest form and I'm grateful this is the family Ivy found when she started looking all those years ago.

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 Ojibwe reservation in Cloquet, Minnesota. He can be contacted at avainio@hotmail.com.

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receive SNAP benefits, but oh well. Until recently I didn't cook or eat much being alone, so I swigged protein shakes. Good stuff!

Ya well, we all have our trials and tribulations, ennit? I used to be homeless but not on the streets; I was lucky in that I have family and good friends who took me in. I pray for everyone who needs a hand up or offers one. My friend Mike F. in Minneapolis posted about tiny houses that will go up in the Southside, and being prone to be weepy, I wept. For the first time since before colonization some of the ghosted, ignored and dismissed indigenous people will have a home.

Home. For over three years now I have struggled mightily and did it alone because of the pandemic. I was further isolated after shattering my left ankle, and then rolling around in a wheelchair. I know that if you are a regular reader of this column, you've read all the above before. I don't like whiners but this is relevant to the point. It began with me being unable to go outside, and then I became an emotionally anxious, mentally sniveling caricature of my former self. It's difficult to share this with yooz, for real, but I am somehow compelled to right now.

Fo sho', I ain't the only person on this beautiful and bountiful blue orb but we

all experienced the COVID pandemic differently, which btw has not yet been eliminated. Be careful, be safe, be responsible as my Son says.

Today I made it outside after months, after years now, of canceling medical appointments because of severe anxiety. I am very fearful of falling and breaking more bones and then facing surgery and hospital time. Oh ya, I know this sounds silly but for the record, I just ain't right. Going outside is in itself is progress. Fer real. I've been alone for so long now all I do is think, and I try not to do that with all the idiocy and threats of nuclear war - which will end all of us.

Not that that's a bad thing. My concerns are for the animals and all sentient life who did not contribute to toxic flatulence; I mean the ones who have no part of climate change except cattle. Science, people! We could just declare a global Beef BBQ and eat them all up! Pass the 'Hut Sauce'. And the tortillas, cornbread and especially fry bread. Cheap white grocery label bread too, but you didn't get that from me. I'm classy.

So anyhoo, I made it to my clinic appointment. NOT fake news, yo. I was literally shaking in me Granny Pannys at just the thought of leaving my home. I was tryna to remember when I was actually outside the last time and the

only thing I could come up with was this yellow cryptic logo that appears to have a Mc and Dees, chunks of chicken parts, and it's confusing.

Except for orange Hi-C I would not deign to consume their cheap, tacky, greezy menu. That I can do at home. My menu is much better. Just go get something out of the freezer and I will microwave to perfection.

The whole point around this raving rambling column is that I now have help to put my home back together, back into a warm, loving space for all of us. The entire house had to accommodate me rolling around and that meant chaos ensued. There were too many times I was unable to access necessities until everything was outta the way.

It is my beloved Son and his fiance who are visiting and have been working hard to help me. Well, I am finally getting the people I need. To the others in the past? Chii miigwech. Yooz are good people. And y'all are also welcome for my help.

I have never disputed the "circle of life", take that however you interpret it, and skip or gallup with the reality of temporary existence.

I'm loving on y'all! The hot wheezy breath on yer neck? C'est moi.

The end of each month is when I start shivering with anxiety that I won't have enough essentials till I get paid again. Good thing is my Fuzz-Butts have everything they need, except this past late September they ran out of treats! So much drama. Purrince tore open a bag of dog treats while I was searching for the large container of cat treats I misplaced. I will make it up to him and the others.

Reminds me of Bone Thugs-n-Harmony's song "First of the Month" speaks to me, but we usually make it work somehow and for that I am grateful. Here I am, living on disability and am only a few bucks above the limit to

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