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Ponemah pet clinic part of campaign for more Indigenous vets



page 3

Semane Street's Elmo spotted at baby celebration in LL



page 4

Campers attend Grace White & Ben Strong Basketball Camp



page 6

FREE

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FREE

SCOTUS Upholds ICWA, But Allows Discrimination



BY LEE EGERSTROM

Native sovereign rights and families scored a big victory at the U.S. Supreme Court in June with ICWA being upheld, but the celebration was short lived.

A series of court decisions that followed by month's end laid waste college loan financial relief for students and graduates, including about 350,000 Minnesotans; stopped colleges and universities from offering educational opportunities through affirmative action admissions policies, and effectively said that you can discriminate against people if you claim it as a religious right.

The lone victory for Native Americans was the court's defending the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978 (Haaland v. Brackeen) that was designed to keep Native American children within their families and tribal nations.

From then on, the high court's decisions weakened college admissions programs, maintained college costs from a federal debt forgiveness program, and stripped basic civil rights from LGBTQ people. All will add costs and raise future civil rights dangers for Native and other generally marginalized people.

After the affirmative action decision, University of Minnesota law professor and civil rights lawyer Myron Orfield said Minnesota and other like-minded states will need to explore ways around the decision. "I think Minnesota, and at least the other 'Blue states,' will need to find ways to undo the damage," he said.

Harvard University and the University of North Carolina were challenged in the court. But the ruling will impact programs anywhere that are aimed at helping minority race applicants enter college for diversity and equity purposes.

Academia and education groups were horrified by the decision. All 14 Big Ten Conference uni-

versity law school deans, including the University of Minnesota, supported affirmative action in joint filings. The University of St. Thomas and St. Catherine University in St. Paul were among Catholic universities across the nation also standing with Harvard and North Carolina.

"A bad decision," Orfield said. "A real bad decision."

It opens the door to all sorts of litigation he and other legal experts said after the decision was announced. Any effort at seeking diversity on campuses or, for that matter, in workplaces may now be ripe for legal intervention no matter how frivolous.

The Reuters news agency reported the court may have laid groundwork for future challenges to corporate diversity initiatives as well. It specifically mentioned federal programs aimed at giving minority contractors access to federally funded projects and contracts – important sources of work for Native entrepreneurs and tribal business ventures.

What can states do?

Orfield said that instead of using race as part of admissions policies, colleges and universities might consider geographic or other nonracial measurements. That could include family incomes or other measures of "underserved" communities to open the way for more diverse student bodies, he said.

Lower income communities and geographic neighborhoods, for instance, and programs expressly aimed at helping lift people out of poverty regardless of racial identity could be part of carefully crafted plans.

Orfield has experience along those lines, especially with housing programs.

– CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 –

Sioux Chef wins Julia Child Award, opens new Indigenous food lab

BY LEE EGERSTROM

Sean Sherman, the well-known Native American chef, author and culinary entrepreneur active in promoting Indigenous foods, is receiving another prestigious award – the 2023 Julia Child Award for what he is doing to "decolonize" North America's original cuisine.

That's not how the Julia Child Foundation phrased it. But it sums up what Sherman has been doing since launching his "the Sioux Chef" catering business a decade ago and expanding from that over the years.

Around the same time in early June when the foundation announced Sherman as the recipient of this year's Child award, Sherman and colleagues with the Indigenous Food Lab Market in Minneapolis opened a restaurant in the popular food court area of Midtown Commons, 920 E. Lake Street.

Sherman founded the North American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems (NATIFS) nonprofit organization to support production of native foods and traditional Indigenous cuisines. It has been training chefs and others online while waiting out the pandemic, Sherman said. The IFL Market, however, is now serving carryout foods prepared in the lab's kitchen.

The Julia Child Award comes with a \$50,000 grant that NATIFS will use to grow and expand its food lab operations.

Sherman told *The Circle* that he and colleagues hope to take the Minneapolis lab concept to Anchorage, Alaska; Rapid City, S.D.; Bozeman, Mont., "and we are considering Oahu ... definitely Hawaii. Hawaii has Indigenous people, too!"

Eric W. Spivey, chair of the Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and the Culinary

Arts, announced the award.

"Sean Sherman continues to dedicate his career to preserving Native American cuisine and creating a holistic, open-sourced system where others can expand on his work," he said.

"His unwavering commitment to Indigenous food systems has already reshaped the culinary landscape and played a pivotal role in fostering Native food sovereignty. Sean and Julia share a dedication to education and a commitment to inspire change. We are thrilled to honor Sean as this year's Julia Child Award recipient."

Circle readers, especially among the Ojibwe and Cree who have a working knowledge of the French language, have to find the linkage of Sherman with Child enjoyable. The Sioux Chef sounds a lot like sous chef, the 'under-chef' in a kitchen and second in command to the executive chef, or 'chef de cuisine.'

Sherman is Oglala Lakota and was born on the Pine Ridge Reservation in So. Dak. Child was a major promoter of French cuisine. Sherman was among people interested in foods who grew up watching Child's *The French Chef* television show.

He as much as said he played sous chef to Child in the foundation's announcement.

"I saw the impact that food can have on the world through Julia and I'm excited to continue her legacy through my work," he said.

"With the generous grant from the Foundation, I look forward to continuing my efforts to develop educational materials and programs for Native communities and fostering the rich heritage that is an essential part of American culinary history and life."

– CONTINUED ON PAGE 9 –

- 5 – SMSC brings waste management down to earth
- 7 – Lt. Gov. Flanagan: Legislative update
- 10 – Sports: Zach Whitecloud
- 11 – Political Matters

- 12 – Community Calendar
- 14 – Health: Arne Valnio, MD.
- 15 – It Ain't Easy Being Indian



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Ponemah pet clinic part of campaign for more Indigenous veterinarians

BY MATHEW HOLDING EAGLE III
MPR NEWS

In the gymnasium of the Ponemah Elementary School veterinarian Raye Taylor is hard at work. She's visiting with a feline patient through the screen door of a green pop-up tent. Because of cats' nature the clinicians found it easier to work with these patients if the cats are by themselves.

But there's more than just cat-care going on here.

According to an American Veterinary Medical Association report "the veterinary profession is one of the least ethnically and racially diverse professions in the country." Native Americans make up only about 1 percent of U.S. veterinarians.

However, this week in Ponemah, the numbers are very different. This is the first pet clinic for the organization Natives in Vet Med.

One of its founders, vet tech Mitakamizi Liberty, is an enrolled member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. With so few frameworks to promote diversity in veterinarian medicine he helped create one.

"We're a wonderful organization that's really about getting Natives more in contact with one another so that we can build a community that's supportive of us, especially through this post-secondary schooling," Liberty said. "It's a bit alienating to be coming into a new environment where there's not a whole lot of your folks around, whether it be other 'Shinabs' (Anishinaabe) or other folks who have that kind of academic trauma."

Joining Liberty is co-founder Lecia Mata, a Standing Rock and Red Lake citizen. She's a first-year veterinary student attending Colorado State University. Mata said when they started the organization about a year ago there were only three or four members, today there's approximately 40-plus from around the U.S. and Canada. And they have plans to continue to expand.

"We meet once a month over Zoom. And we invite all Indigenous veterinary positions. It's really cool just to get connected," she said. "I think our last meeting we had like 32 people on. We started Natives in Vet Med, now we're trying to get all over the country."

The joy of rez dogs

Mata says her love for animals began when she was about five. Her eyes light up when asked about rez dogs.

"They come and greet you. They run in the middle of the road and say hi to your car," she said. "They usually have like, their main family. They'll go home too, but I think of it as a nice little community animal. He goes home to his



A Ponemah resident visits veterinarian Rae Taylor in Ponemah as part of a pet clinic held at the elementary school. (All photos by Mathew Holding Eagle III / MPR News.)



Left to right: Pet clinic organizer Awanookwe Kingbird-Bratvold with Natives in Vet Med members, Tanisha McChesney, Mitakamizi Liberty and Lecia Mata. They are holding up a flag McChesney's sister made to honor Awesiinyag co-founder Shirley Nordrum, who recently passed away.

family, but he has jobs to do during the day. They'll come into the building if it's super-hot. They're like "I want some air conditioning."

Tanisha McChesney, another member, came to Ponema from the Navajo Nation in Arizona. She got into vet medicine after seeking care for her six rez dogs which led her to becoming a vet tech. Today she assists other spay and neuter clinics on reservations in the southwest.

"Which rez dog are we saving? Every rez dog. That's the goal," she said.

In McChesney's eyes everything came full circle and now she's the one helping those in need.

"I got in touch with Natives in Vet Med and they said they are doing the same thing on this reservation over here," she recalled. "So I got invited.

This is what I love to do, so of course I came."

Mentoring the project is veterinarian Raye Taylor with Companions and Animals for Reform and Equity, or CARE.

Taylor is a descendant of Red Lake but doesn't have enough blood quantum to be an enrolled member. She encourages more people of color to get into the veterinarian field.

"We're looking at just this astonishing misrepresentation, and inability to serve members because the representation is out there. And that is a huge error in our profession. And it's a huge opportunity," Taylor said. "So, we're really trying to address that from the ground with our hands, bringing Natives who are in veterinary medicine, bringing them together around the country, and then



Nonprofit Awesiinyag (Animals) Are Loved founder Awanookwe Kingbird-Bratvold says on the first day of the pet clinic all available spay and neuter spots filled up within 40 minutes.

bringing them into the community to create that representation and hopefully build a future for our profession from our community."

The founder of Awesiinyag (Animals) Are Loved, Awanookwe Kingbird-Bratvold has created a melting pot of veterinary care. In a field that's predominantly white she was able to bring in no less than four Indigenous professionals for the pet clinic. She was also able to forge a partnership with the Red Lake School District to host the clinic at the elementary school in Ponemah.

As an educator at Bemidji State University, she stressed representation matters. Even at a pet clinic in Ponemah with a population of 724 residents.

"Having these Natives in Vet Med here has been so profound for us because it's an honor for us to create this space and this platform for them to use their voices and to show people that they're here, they did it," Kingbird-Bratvold said. "They're working their butts off for us to make changes within our community because they see that the animals they're a reflection of our communities, and how they're living and what they're going through is a direct reflection of who we are."

Kingbird-Bratvold said on the first day of the pet clinic all spay and neuter appointments filled up within 40 minutes.

One evening at the Red Lake Tribal College, the community celebrated Native Americans in the veterinarian field. The event will also honored one of Awesiinyag Are Loved's cofounders, Shirley Nordrum, who recently passed away.

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

Sesame Street's Elmo spotted at baby celebration at Leech Lake

BY DAN NINHAM

Elmo from Sesame Street joined tribal leaders and elders welcoming the newest members of the Leech Lake Reservation and other Native communities at the "5th Annual Welcome Babies Celebration" held on June 27, at the Veterans Memorial Powwow Grounds in Cass Lake, MN.

First held in 2018, the ceremony welcomed infants and new families into the community and provided resources

related to maternal health and early childhood development. The event was supported by Leech Lake's Family Spirit and Empowerment Program.

The event offered a platform to share Anishinaabe principles, traditions, and stories. A drum group performed a birthday honor song for the babies. This year families met and took photos with Elmo, and had access to Sesame Street books and coloring pages provided at the resource table hosted by the Johns Hopkins Center for Indigenous Health.

The Family Spirit and Empowerment



Megan McClary and her son, Sam, meet Elmo at the Leech Lake Welcome Babies Ceremony. (Photo by Beth Tennesen.)

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Program "is designed to be delivered by tribal paraprofessionals with a core strategy to support and educate Native American families in daily life skills in an Ojibwe specific manner", according to their website. This program was free to all federally recognized tribal members and their descendants or caretakers of babies and children of federally recognized tribal members and their descendants.

Over 160 communities from 24 states across the country have been trained to use Family Spirit, with training, technical assistance and curriculum materials managed by the Johns Hopkins Center for Indigenous Health.

Birdie Lyons is an LPN and Program Manager and one of six staff members for the Family Spirit and Empowerment Program. "Our program is an Ojibwe culturally-centered Home Visiting Program," said Birdie Lyons. "This is for pregnant women and children up to age three years old or anyone raising our babies. This component uses paraprofessionals from the community as home visitors and is Ojibwe culturally focused by use of strength-based curriculum as a core strategy to support our families and those raising our babies. Families gain knowledge and skills to promote a healthy and positive lifestyle by use of 63 lessons which are instilled with Ojibwe stories, crafts, and life skills such as gathering and harvesting along with learning Ojibwe family language and values."

Lyons said, "A long time ago, the Chief of a Band or community visited with a family who gave birth and always

gave gifts to the new baby and mother to let the baby know how important their arrival to the Tribe was and thanked the mother for being the sacred pathway for the arrival of this new member to the Tribe. The men always started a fire for the coming baby and sang songs of welcome, the men kept the spirit of 'fire' alive in their women and children by keeping them safe and happy. They also built a fire and sang when their people left to journey home back to spirit world we came from."

"So the celebration is to let our babies know we are excited and so happy they came to be with us at Leech Lake and we want to make them feel they belong with us. We want to let our mothers know we greatly appreciate how sacred they are, in fact, let all women know they are sacred. We celebrate baby and mom with gifts and words from our chairman and representatives to encourage a good life for our new babies and their families," said Lyons.

"This year we had the privilege of Sesame Street sending us Elmo to help us celebrate our new babies and their families," said Lyons. "We wanted the children to be happy and to know we are still very thankful they are here in our tribe with us. We hope this will assist our new generations to know they are wanted and loved in hopes of a better future where they will not want to self-medicate or harm each other because they will know a whole tribe celebrated their arrival."

– CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 –

SMSC brings waste management down to earth

BY LEE EGERSTROM

Minnesota’s state and federal leaders joined with the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community in late June to break ground for a new organics recycling plant that will greatly increase Minnesota’s ability to put waste materials to good use.

The new tribal enterprise, named Dakota Prairie Composting, will be built over the next year on 93 acres in nearby Lewisville Township. It will replace SMSC’s existing organics recycling facility in Shakopee, greatly expanding capacity.

The current plant handles on average 70,000 tons of food scraps and organic yard waste annually that would otherwise go into landfills. That represents about 23 percent of all composted organic matter for the Twin Cities metro area.

The new facility will increase that capacity to 172,000 tons, Tribal leaders said that will spare about 21,000 tons of carbon from entering the environment each year.

This project was guided by SMSC’s Dakota values to care for the earth and preserve the environment for future generations, said SMSC Chairman Keith B. Anderson at groundbreaking ceremonies.

“This history-making facility will help our state reduce its reliance on landfills, conserve energy and natural resources, and reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions,” Anderson said in a statement. “We are glad to celebrate this milestone and appreciate the dedication of the agencies and government officials who have supported this project.”

Projects of this magnitude do require coordination and support at multiple government levels. The groundbreaking ceremony reflected that collaboration. Scheduled speakers at the ceremony included Minnesota’s U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith, the area’s U.S. Rep. Angie Craig, Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan (White Earth Ojibwe) and Patina Park (Cheyenne River/ Standing Rock Sioux), executive director of Tribal State Relations for Gov. Tim Walz.

Government funding is being provided for parts of the large project.

The groundbreaking announcement noted the new plant system will use an aerated static pile system and biofilter to allow it to compost materials with minimal odor. It will have an advanced stormwater reclamation system that is funded by a federal Community Project Funding appropriation. This later portion of the project will allow for water reuse and containment, protecting both area surface and groundwater resources. Separately, SMSC is funding road improvements on Trunk Highway 41 in Louisville Township and intersecting with U.S. Route 169. This is to ease congestion and improve road safety, the announcement said. The latter include a highway bypass and turn lanes, and installation of rail crossing safety improvements.

“This is what happens when we work together at all levels of government – we can make real progress and improve people’s lives,” said Congresswoman Craig.

The organics recycling plant fits with a state goal of recycling 75 percent of Minnesota residential and commercial organic wastes by 2030.

The existing facility will close by the end of 2024 when the new plant begins operations. The recycling operation breaks down organic materials that include food scraps, tree and shrub stumps, yard trimmings



Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith, and Congresswoman Angie Craig, with SMSC Chairman Keith Andreson and members of the SMSC Business Council breaking ground. (Photo courtesy of SMSC.)

and related organic matter to make compost products and blends for retail and wholesale purchase.

It is one of many SMSC enterprises that make the tribe and its holdings the largest employer in the metro area’s Scott County. Neighboring cities Prior

Lake, Savage, and Shakopee, and the Prior Lake-Savage school system, use the facility. SMSC also lets the general public use the facility year around and that twice each year it accepts yard waste for free from Scott County residents.

ALL MY RELATIONS ARTS PRESENTS: Laura Youngbird Inde Wiisagendam (My Heart Hurts)



Laura Youngbird, *My Heart Hurts*, 2020

Inde Wiisagendam (My Heart Hurts) is a solo exhibition by Laura Youngbird (Minnesota Chippewa, Grand Portage Band). Using the dress as a metaphor, her work addresses a wide range of social issues, injustices and biases. Through mixed media — combining drawing, painting and prints — Laura explores the dress as a consistent and important symbol in her work, as this simple garment contains layer upon layer of meaning. The works in this series examine mixed emotions and themes such as common thread, loose ends, and threadbare.

On View: July 14 - September 9, 2023

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Campers attend Grace White & Ben Strong Basketball Camp

BY DAN NINHAM

Two highly acclaimed former basketball players and Red Lake Band of Ojibwe tribal members came home to lead a summer basketball camp. The dates were June 5-9 and the site was the Red Lake Boys and Girls Club. Over 140 young athletes participated in the weeklong summer day camp. The camp directors were Grace White and Ben Strong. Assisting them were Taryn Frazer and former Valparaiso University teammates of Grace White.

Grace White is the first student athlete from Red Lake HS to be given a basketball scholarship to play at the NCAA DI level when she began at the University of Denver and transferred to Valparaiso University.

Since leaving Valparaiso University, White recently completed a position as a graduate assistant coach at La Salle University in Philadelphia. She is expanding her plan to coach. "I plan on continuing to develop coaching skills, and I am excited to participate in the North American Indigenous Games this year in Canada, where I will be coaching a Team Minnesota girls' team."

"Thanks to basketball, I have had the chance to visit many places and experience new things," said White. "It has opened many doors for me, and I am eager to keep exploring the world while sharing my journey and gaining knowledge along the way."

Ben Strong was named the NCAA DIII national player of the year in 2007 at Guilford College in North Carolina. He played professionally overseas and also



Ben Strong (center) with Grace White (4th from left), Taryn Frazer (2nd from right), and court helpers at the basketball camp. (Photo by Jayda Johnston.)

played in the NBA G League from 2011-16. He eventually began a career as an advanced scout, and assistant coach and player development instructor in the NBA with the Philadelphia 76'ers and Phoenix Suns. Also on the summer camp coaching staff was Taryn

Frazer (Leech Lake Ojibwe), a current college basketball athlete. Her major basketball accomplishments include leading her Cass Lake-Bena HS basketball team to back-to-back state tournament berths. She was also named All State her junior and senior years, was nominated as Miss Basketball, and scored a school record 2592 points. She has gone on to play NCAA DII basketball at the University of Minnesota Crookston.

Frazer has been busy since leaving CLBHS. She said, "I've started my college career at the University of Minnesota Crookston, finished up my freshman year there. Been working with Grace White at these camps for the kids, just trying to give back to the younger generation and help them learn new things when it comes to basketball but not only that, for life itself."

The Red Lake Basketball Camp instructors have a main message they want the campers to take home with them.

White said, "My dream has always been to contribute to the process of helping our people at Red Lake and other reservations discover their gifts and talents, not just in basketball but in all aspects of life. I want them to understand that they have the power to shape themselves into whoever they aspire to be, and I have faith in them."

Strong said, "The main message I wanted to send to campers is that everyone needs a support system. This extends beyond basketball. I had a great support system with basketball, my brother and parents were very supportive and encouraging when I was younger and without them I wouldn't be where I am today. I encouraged campers to either be a support for someone else or to ask for help if they need it. Utilizing a support system is essential to achieving success on any level."

And Frazer commented, "The main message I want the campers to take home with them is to never give up on something you want. No matter how long it takes, or how hard it is to reach your goal, never give up. You can always come back home to the reservation, it's always going to be there. Go out and get what you really want to achieve in life."

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Key legislative victories from this past session



Boozhoo! I hope you all have had a chance to enjoy this beautiful summer weather. Here in Mni Sota Makoce, we are so fortunate to have access to beautiful natural resources, and this season is one of the best times to enjoy them: from abundant agricultural produce to swimmable lakes and streams to our beautiful state parks. But we know the things that we love most about Minnesota are threatened by climate change.

In June, I had the incredible honor to address the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) during their mid-year conference hosted by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Dakota Community. The theme of this conference was our climate future. Tribes have been leaders in climate change work. Tribal governments and Indigenous people are key partners in the state's climate work.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to continue to reflect on some of our key legislative victories from this past session, with NCAI and with all of you.

The environmental omnibus bill makes key investments in our land and natural resources, including beginning the process of transferring the land from Upper Sioux Agency State Park back to the People of the Yellow Medicine (Upper Sioux Community). This bill also established a Tribal Energy Council, which will work in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Commerce on energy issues, and \$4 million to establish a new tribal assistance program at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to help tribal governments when applying for and managing environmental and climate grants. Other key victories include investments to help make state parks more inclusive and accessible, improve community climate resiliency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and enhancing pollinator habitats. Overall, Minnesota Legislature approved more than 40 climate initiatives in energy, environment, agriculture, health,

transportation, and construction, all aligned with the implementation of Minnesota's Climate Action Framework.

The human services omnibus bill helps address some of the biggest crises facing our communities, such as the opioid and addiction epidemic and food insecurity. Our budget allocates over \$200 million to tackle the opioid and addiction crisis, which we know disproportionately impacts Native people in Minnesota. It was critical that these investments include ongoing funding for traditional healing grants to ensure our cultural practices are part of the solution to end this crisis. We included a new seat for a representative of the urban Indian community on the Opioid Epidemic Response Advisory Council, which is also required now to consult with the 11 tribal nations on an annual basis to ensure that our voices are part of the solutions. This bill also included funding to promote food security among Tribal Nations and in American Indian communities and increase access to traditional foods. Tribes are eligible to apply for capital funding to improve or expand food shelf or food program facilities.

We know that prohibition doesn't work – which is why we worked with our partners in the legislature to enact a bill legalizing adult-use cannabis. The bill also establishes a new Office of Cannabis Management to regulate the new industry, directs for the expungement or resentencing of cannabis related convictions, and includes a 10% tax on recreational cannabis for non-tribal businesses. I'm particularly excited about several provisions directly related to Tribal governments, including creating a clear legal status for the operation of Tribal medical cannabis programs, authorizing the Governor to enter into compacts with interested Tribes related to adult-use cannabis and medical cannabis, and applying no sales tax or cannabis gross receipts tax for cannabis sales on reservations.

Cannabis use and possession of certain amounts will be decriminalized beginning August 1. The bill allows for non-tribal sales of legal adult-use cannabis in Minnesota to begin in the first quarter of 2025. Adult-use medicinal and recreational cannabis use and sales on tribal lands will be regulated by the Tribes.

No one should have to choose between caring for themselves or a family member and a paycheck. Whether you're welcoming a new baby to your family, healing from an illness or injury, or acting as a caregiver for an aging loved one, you should be able to take the time you need without risking financial instability. This bill creates a state

paid family and medical leave program which will provide partial wage replacement for 12-20 weeks of leave in a 52-week period for medical leave, bonding, or caring for a family member beginning in January 2026.

I want to end with incredible gratitude and relief for the recent Supreme Court decision which upheld the Indian Child Welfare Act as constitutional, recognizing our right to keep our babies, raise our babies and love our babies, securing

the right of our children to be raised in their culture and identity, and safeguarding the future existence of Tribes and their sovereignty. It matters when our voices are heard and listened to in every place and space where decisions are made – when the highest court of the land recognizes that we are still here, and we will continue to be here, as our authentic, full Indigenous selves, long into the future.

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The civil rights attorney and professor has held both state and federal positions and has assisted state level reforms in Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, California, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Washington, Oregon and Maryland.

In an interview with *The Circle*, Orfield suggested the “Blue,” or more liberal and Democratic states that generally support civil rights and social development efforts, might well consider adopting a good program from the “oh-so ‘Red’ (conservative) state of Texas.”

After courts struck down Texas public universities’ admissions policies that encouraged diverse student enrollment in 1996, Texas developed what came to be known as the Texas 10 Percent Rule. It allows the top 10 percent of academic achievers at high schools to have automatic admission at state colleges and universities.

That 10 Percent Rule applies for all Texas high school graduates no matter how wealthy the community or how well supported a local school district’s academic program might be. It has survived legal attacks since while helping achieve the diversity the state universities sought.

Minnesota, it should be noted, achieved what appeared to be a similar strategy. The past session of the Minnesota Legislature passed state laws protecting Native tribal adoption rights if the Supreme Court struck down ICWA.

The new Minnesota law would protect

tribal and family rights even if they ceased to be federally protected. Only one member of the Legislature voted against that law. It was not needed. By a 7-2 vote on June 15, the Supreme Court upheld ICWA.

Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan (White Earth Ojibwe) noted that the cause was helped by people telling of painful experiences when children were removed from their families. “I’m grateful for all the people who have told stories over the decades to get us to this place, a decision that recognizes and protects our right to raise our babies,” she said in a statement.

Law professor Angelique EagleWoman, director of the Native American Law and Sovereignty Institute at Mitchell Hamline School of Law in St. Paul, said the ICWA decision was consistent with past rulings giving congressional authority for laws involving tribal relations.

She told Minnesota media, “It should signal that these kinds of litigation tactics and arguments are frivolous and a waste of time, money and judicial research.”

While it should, other legal scholars worry that it won’t. The mishmash of decisions that followed the ICWA ruling tossed out protections and programs designed to help minority and economically disadvantaged people, and overturned previously court supported civil rights for the gay community.

Minnesota political leaders, for the most part, were not impressed.

Following the affirmative action decision, for instance, Gov. Tim Walz issued this statement: “In Minnesota we know that diversity in our schools and businesses reflects a strong and diverse state. One thing is very clear: Minnesota is strong – and we’ll continue working to ensure that everyone has a fair shot to succeed here.”

Fourth District Congresswoman Betty McCollum called the decision “deeply disappointing.”

“This decision rolls back the progress we’ve made and the judicial precedent that’s been established to promote inclusivity and equity in higher education – undermining opportunities to make the higher ed system process work for everyone,” she said.

U.S. Sen. Tina Smith said the “radical ruling undermines critical efforts to redress historic mistreatment of people of color and will do real harm to students.”

Private schools and the University of Minnesota system told Minnesota media they are exploring how they might be affected by the affirmative action ruling. At first glance, the Minnesota State system of 33 colleges and universities sprawled over 54 campuses may be the least impacted since they have open enrollment policies for all Minnesotans.

But they weren’t spared from the reach of the court. At least their students weren’t.

In striking down President Biden’s student-loan debt relief plan, the court ruled

the president didn’t have emergency power authority to reduce college debts. The plan he initiated as part of the pandemic relief efforts would forgive \$10,000 in federal student loan debt to borrowers from families with under \$125,000 in annual income, and up to \$20,000 from federal Pell grant debt for people under that annual income level.

This decision affects 43 million Americans, including 767,000 Minnesotans. The Minnesota Office of Higher Education estimated that as many as 730,000 Minnesotans would have qualified for the \$20,000 Pell grant relief.

“It would have been life-changing for millions of Americans and their families,” the president said after the ruling. And saying he will now seek other routes to lessen that college debt burden, he said the court rejected program “would have been good for economic growth, both in the short- and long-term.”

But there was one more shot at marginalized people still to come from the court. On June 30, it ruled a Colorado website company could discriminate against the LGBTQ community by using First Amendment religious rights to discriminate against same-sex marriages.

Simply put, people can put into action their now constitutionally protected religious right to discriminate.

American Indian Family Empowerment Program

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The foundation announcement said watching Child on TV built a desire to explore Indigenous culinary heritage that has taken him around the U.S. and to Indigenous communities in Mexico.

“Throughout his journey, Sherman has dedicated himself to developing approachable Native recipes for home cooks, akin to Julia’s efforts to popularize French cuisine in America,” the announcement said.

The Twin Cities metro area has benefited from that journey.

He created The Sioux Chef, now a partnership business, in 2014 to cater food, and in 2015 he helped design the Tatanka Truck, a food truck in partnership with the Little Earth Community of United Tribes in south Minneapolis.

He has done a lot of educating along the way with groups, mass communications, speeches and demonstrations – here and across the continent. He has performed dinners in New York and in Italy, among other places, and has presented lectures at Yale University, to United Nations groups, and at the Culinary Institute of America. The latter is known, tongue-in-cheek, as “the other CIA” and would have students who could enjoy “the Sioux Chef.”

In his biographical listings, Sherman said he has studied on his own the foundations of Indigenous food systems. That includes “the knowledge of Native American farming techniques, wild food



The Indigenous Food Lab Market has opened for business at Midtown Global Market in Minneapolis. A promotion sign reminds customers where they are at. (Photo by Lee Egerstrom.)

usage and harvesting, land stewardship, salt and sugar making, hunting and fishing, food preservation, Native American migrational histories, elemental cooking techniques, and Native culture and history in general to gain a full understanding of bringing back a sense of Native American cuisine to today’s world.”

Sharing that knowledge with people and sometimes customers didn’t go unnoticed.

Sherman received fellowship support in 2015 from the First Peoples Fund, in 2018 from the Bush Foundation, received the 2018 James Beard Award for Best American Cookbook (The Sioux Chef’s Indigenous Kitchen), and received the James Beard Leadership Award in 2019.

Then, in 2021, Sherman co-founded Owamni by The Sioux Chef, an

Indigenous restaurant in downtown Minneapolis. Given its uniqueness, it opened with great fanfare that continues to this day.

The next year *The New Yorker* magazine declared: “Nearly overnight, it became the most prominent example of Indigenous American cuisine in the United States.”

Up popped the James Beard Foundation again. It named Owamni the Best New Restaurant in America in 2022.

Time Magazine had noticed. It recently named Sherman among its 100 Most Influential People of 2023.

The Julia Child Foundation said it will formally present Sherman’s new award at ceremonies in Minneapolis on Oct. 24. Proceeds from the event will support care and preservation of Julia Child’s kitchen and the Smithsonian Food History Project at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

The Sioux Chef and its NATIFS operations can be found at sioux-chef.com and natifs.org websites.

Information about the Indigenous Food Lab Market, now open for customers, can be found at <https://natifs.org/ifl-market>.

Information about the award and the work of the Julia Child Foundation can be found at juliachildfoundation.org and juliachildaward.com websites.

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Vegas Golden Knights Stanley Cup champion Whitecloud has MN fans

Recent Stanley Cup champion Vegas Golden Knights defenseman Zach Whitecloud played two seasons at NCAA DI Bemidji State University. He left a lasting positive impression not only in the university community but also with an expansive regional fan base, and notably among native people.

Whitecloud has more than a few distinctions that makes him being followed by an ever increasing fan base. He is one of two former BSU hockey players to win the Stanley Cup. The other was Joel Otto who was a member of the undefeated 31-0 1983-84 NCAA DII National Champion BSU Beavers. Otto also played with the Calgary Flames and Philadelphia Flyers.

Whitecloud also has the distinction of being indigenous as a member of the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation of Canada. He shares this distinction as a BSU Beaver with Gary Sargent (Red Lake Ojibwe), who played one year at BSU in the 1972-73 season, was an NCAA DII national champion and national player of the year and played in the NHL for the Los Angeles Kings and Minnesota North Stars.

Whitecloud had an extensive fan base of community people and most notably, native people in Bemidji. Petra Neadeau (Red Lake Ojibwe) and her sons Aiden and Daniel got to know Zach and continue to stay in contact. “When I met the Indigenous defenseman Zach Whitecloud from the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation playing for my alma mater, I immediately appointed myself as his ‘Bemidji Hockey Mom,’” said

Petra Neadeau. “I wanted Zach to feel connected to an indigenous community while far from his family, home, and people. Interconnection is fundamental for Indigenous people; we thrive when we feel connected to the community. Along with my extended family, we were delighted to welcome him in as one of our own and we shared many family meals, holidays, and birthday celebrations with Zach during his time at Bemidji State University.”

“The distance and his student/athlete schedule made it challenging for Zach to travel home as often as he would have liked. Throughout the school year, when he appreciated mini-breaks from campus life and campus food, he came over and enjoyed home-cooked meals, no lines for laundry, and uninterrupted study space. We also had the honor of celebrating his 20th birthday with a family dinner. Zach’s family traveled to Bemidji often and it was wonderful to form great friendships with the Whitecloud family,” added Neadeau.

“Zach is deeply compassionate and he is inherently kind,” said Neadeau. “He was an amazing role model for my son Aiden, who at that time was a pre-teen bantam hockey player. Zach was always happy to share advice and tips to help Aiden grow as an athlete and a teammate. He would spend time with him skating at the neighborhood outdoor rink across the street from our house or playing NHL on the Xbox.”

“We will always treasure the time that Zach volunteered to join Aiden’s bantam practice one evening and assist the coaches. He was like the older brother



Zach Whitecloud with cousins Peyton (on left) and Aiden Neadeau during his BSU Hockey days. The Neadeau cousins will be seniors next school year at Bemidji HS. (Photo by Petra Neadeau.)

my son never had and he will always be considered family,” added Neadeau.

Ogema Neadeau, Petra’s older brother, and his family also befriended Whitecloud during his tenure at Bemidji State University. Ogema recalled: “My family spent a little time with Zach. He was a great young man. He was always kind and respectful. My nephew and son were Pee-Wee hockey players when Zach was a BSU Beaver. Zach helped out with practice a couple times. We all thought it would be cool for the boys to have a Beaver at practice; we didn’t know at the time he would be in the NHL and now on the Stanley Cup which makes that experience even cooler.”

“What impressed me the most about Zach was his understanding that he was a role model for Native people and always took that responsibility seriously,” added Ogema.

The Garbow family of Duluth, MN are fans of Zach Whitecloud. “We started watching Zach Whitecloud when he was a player for BSU,” said Jennifer Garbow, (Bois Forte Ojibwe). “Our youngest son started playing hockey when he was five and was just a little guy when Whitecloud was playing. It was such an inspiration to our family to see a young native man be a successful hockey player. It made a positive impression on our son, knowing that he could play college level hockey. And fast forward to this year with Whitecloud winning the Stanley Cup was like a moment in time when, as an Indigenous person you feel pride.”



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

editor@ajwnews.com

Army Corps blocks NorthMet mine

In early June, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers revoked a permit for the NorthMet copper-nickel mine in north-eastern Minnesota.

The Corps said in a statement that it revoked the Clean Water Act permit, which it had previously suspended, “because the permit does not ensure compliance with water quality requirements of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa,” according to an Associated Press report published in the Pioneer Press (St. Paul).

Minnesota Public Radio noted that the decision “does not deal a fatal blow to the project. NewRange Copper Nickel, a new joint venture between PolyMet and Teck [Resources] that now controls the deposit, can submit a new application for a wetlands permit. The company could also challenge the decision in federal court.”

MPR’s report added that the Army Corps’ decision is “a significant setback for NewRange, which is seeking to build the \$1 billion project in northeastern Minnesota.”

The decision by the Army Corps was a great victory for the Fond du Lac Band, which filed its lawsuit in 2019.

“The victory really is theirs,” said Paula Maccabee, regarding the band’s participation in the environmental review of the PolyMet project. Maccabee is the advocacy director and counsel for WaterLegacy, a nonprofit 501c3 organization that formed in 2009 to counter the threat from sulfide mining in Minnesota.

“I think we need to be very clear that this process of the Army Corps review wouldn’t have happened at all but for the Fond du Lac Band,” Maccabee told me during a telephone interview.

I’ve been writing about sulfide mining schemes in Minnesota’s Arrowhead region for more than a dozen years, warning about the potential environmental destruction posed by acid runoff from sulfide mine debris.

The Fond du Lac Band, along with other Minnesota Indian bands, has expressed concern from the get-go about the threat posed by copper-nickel mining pollution to wild rice beds, water and

wildlife (including the two-leggeds), in land that was ceded in 19th-century treaties between the Ojibwe and the U.S. government. In the treaty-making process, the Indian bands reserved subsistence rights – to hunt, fish and gather – within the vast ceded territory.

Minnesota’s North Country has been the site of iron ore and taconite mining dating to the late 19th century. However, copper-nickel mining is a different animal. Sulfide mining has never been done in the state; but the history of “hard rock mining” in the American West is a catalog of gross environmental despoliation. Communities have been left holding the bag, so to speak, after mining companies destroy the natural environment and then go bust. In Minnesota, there’s a push for mining jobs attendant to these mining projects; and the tourism industry has pushed back on extractive projects that will degrade the integrity of the north woods.

A new wrinkle with these copper-nickel projects is the rubric of “alternative energy” development, which in many cases depends on raw materials for storage batteries – copper, nickel and lithium. As with past struggles over energy development and mineral extraction, Native communities often bear the brunt of the downside effects of these projects.

While Fond du Lac celebrated its victory vis-à-vis the PolyMet project, the Mille Lacs Band is raising an alarm about another sulfide mining venture. In late June, Talon Metals LLC filed a proposal with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for its Tamarack Nickel Mine Project. The mine, which would have an 80-acre footprint, as per the DNR, would be built near Tamarack, about 50 miles west of Duluth.

PolyMet, or NewRange, is owned by global mining giant Glencore; and Talon has a participation agreement with Rio Tinto, a multinational mining corporation that has compiled an atrocious record of labor and environmental abuses around the world.

Paula Maccabee mentioned that Talon began the environmental review process for a “tiny fragment of the 30,000 acres

of surface land and resources that they control.” The mining project poses pollution threats for both the Mississippi River and St. Croix River watersheds, according to Maccabee. She recommended the St. Croix 360 website (bit.ly/talon-mine) for its maps and resources about the Tamarack Nickel Mine.

A St. Croix 360 article quotes Kelly Applegate, Mille Lacs Band commissioner of natural resources: “The Mille

Lacs Band of Ojibwe believes that advancements in green technology are critical to protecting our planet from the effects of climate change. At the same time, we must ensure that these advancements do not endanger our natural environment or indigenous communities.”

Stay tuned for further developments in the PolyMet and Talon sagas, and the popular resistance to these extractive schemes.



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ONGOING

American Indian Group Prenatal

Expecting American Indian moms, come join us for a culturally focused prenatal care and education group at the Indian Health Board Administrative Office (2020 Minnehaha Ave S.) every Tuesday from 3 to 5pm. Refreshments will be provided, as well as, a gift card for every class attended. Choose from 3 sessions: April 18 - June 27; July 18 - Sept 26; or Oct 17 - Dec 28. Enrollment is open. Contact Amy at: 612-644-9726 or amyarndbuz-zard@yahoo.com.

**July 4, 11, 18, 25
Drum & Dance group**

Culture Language Arts Network (CLAN) Drum & Dance classes. Taught by Opie Day of the Midnite Express drum group. Other instructors include: Hoop dancer Luhme Sampson, Head Female Dancer Miiskoghimiwan, and Head Male Dancer Zach Red Bear. Tuesday from 6 - 8pm. MIWRC, 2300 15th Ave, Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://aifcmn.org/event/culture-language-arts-network-klan-drum-dance/2023-07-04>.

July 6, 13, 20, 27

Four Sisters Farmers Market

Four Sisters Farmers Market is an Indigenous-centered food market, focused on both Indigenous and hyper-local foods from Phillips and surrounding neighborhoods. Working with native-run farms and food producers, we help develop a healthy, Indigenous food system

that is accessible and welcoming to people in the American Indian Cultural Corridor. Open weekly on Thursdays from 11am - 3pm. All My Relations Gallery, 1414 E Franklin Ave #1, Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://msp.kidsoutandabout.com/content/four-sisters-farmers-market-2023>.

July 7 - 9

Prairie Island Indian Powwow

Join us at the largest celebration of the year. Embrace a bit of Heritage at the Prairie Island Indian Powwow. Packed with ceremonial presentations and learning experiences. Treasure Island Resort & Casino, 5734 Sturgeon Lake Rd, Welch, MN. For info, see: <https://prairieisland.org>.

July 8 - March 24

The Lyrical Artwork of Jim Denomie

The Minneapolis Institute of Art will survey Jim Denomie's expansive artistic career in The Lyrical Artwork of Jim Denomie. This exhibition surveys the artist's singular vision and signature style over the second half of the artist's career, from 2007 to 2022. Jim Denomie (Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe, 1955-2022) drew inspiration from lived experiences, pop culture, Anishinaabe traditions, and American histories to tell compelling narratives that depict his experiences of being Native in America. Despite the emotional weight of his subject matter, the artist's dry wit opened space for necessary conversations about the legacies of colonization and the nature of humanity. The exhibition

examines Denomie's creative process, tracing his ability to transform inspiration into monumental artworks. Free. MIA, 2400 3rd Ave S, Minneapolis. For more info, see: <https://new.artsmia.org/exhibition/the-lyrical-artwork-of-jim-denomie>.

July 10

St. Paul - Critical Conversation: Indigenous/Emphasis on Place

What connects us to this place? How does the history of this place inform who we are and how we connect with each other? Join Indigenous leaders Kate Beane (Flandreau Santee Sioux), Executive Director of the Minnesota Museum of American Art, and Christina Woods (Boise Forte Ojibwe), Executive Director of the Duluth Art Institute, who will engage participants in deep dialogue about Indigenous issues related to place and land. Learn from Dakota and Ojibwe community members, through stories and histories, and how art helps us create deeper meaning and connections. Refreshments and a light meal will be served. This event is part of a series of Critical Conversations, created in partnership with Public Art Saint Paul's 2023 Wakpa Triennial Art Festival. 6 - 8:30pm. For info, email: registrations@mnhum.org or see: <https://www.mnhum.org/event/critical-conversation-starting-with-the-indigenous-emphasis-on-place>.

July 10, 17, 24

Super Beginner Anishinaabemowin Series

Be introduced to the language basics and the terms used for explaining word classes and how the word classes interact with each other. This series is for those new to the language or those seeking a super basic refresher. Anishinaabemowin and Culture Instructor Michael Zimmerman Jr. is an enrolled member of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians of Michigan and Indiana. He is a teacher at the Ojibwe Language and Culture Instructor at the Indian Community School of Milwaukee, consultant of the Potawatomi language for his band and Forest County as well as a language instructor at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. Noon-1pm. Cook County Higher Education, 300 W 3rd St, Grand Marais, MN. For info: <https://www.boreal.org/events/264155/super-beginner-anishinaabemowin-series>.

**July 10, 17, 26 +
2023 Wakpa Triennial Art Festival: Critical Conversations**

The Minnesota Humanities Center is partnering with Public Art Saint Paul to host a series of Critical Conversations. This series will deeply consider and reflect upon questions related to the festival theme "network of mutuality," such as: How are we related? How do we overcome divisions? How can art help us to consider our mutuality with each other so that everyone thrives? Who is included in our networks of mutuality? How can art help us to envision new futures? Locations around the Twin Cities will be gathering spaces for creative activity and

transformative connections as part of the 2023 Wakpa Triennial Art Festival, which runs June 24-September 16 and will feature public space projects, gallery-based installations, and live programming, all of which will respond to the theme "Network of Mutuality." Each Critical Conversation will feature different facilitators, discussion topics, and activities. Free. For info, see: <https://www.mnhum.org/program/critical-conversations>.

• **July 10:** Starting with the Indigenous: An Emphasis on Place. 6 - 8:30pm, St. Paul.

• **July 17:** "Stories I Didn't Know" Film and Discussion. 6 - 8:30pm, St. Paul.

• **July 26:** The Art and Response to Castile and Floyd, 6 - 8:30pm, St. Paul.

• **Aug 8:** Healing Through Equitable Recovery and Redevelopment, 6 - 8:30pm, Mpls.

**July 11 (deadline)
NDN Collective Abundance Fund**

The NDN Collective Abundance Fund will support Indigenous individuals and families residing within the tri-state region of Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota in the rebuilding of Indigenous and generational wealth. NDN Collective's mission is to build the collective power of Indigenous Peoples, communities, and Nations to exercise our inherent right to self-determination while fostering a world that is built on a foundation of justice and equity for all Indigenous People and Mother Earth. NDN works to transform systems through three core strategies:

Defend - Indigenous Peoples, communities, and Nations. Defend and protect our land, air, water, and natural resources from negative resource extraction and exploitation. Develop - Indigenous Peoples, communities and Nations are developed in a regenerative and sustainable manner based on our values and connection to land, culture, and identity. Decolonize - Indigenous ceremonies, cultures, languages, and ways of life are revitalized, recognized, and celebrated. Deadline is July 11. For info, see: <https://grants.ndncollective.org/collective-abundance-fund>.

**July 11
Let's Talk: Resources for YOUth**

Learn about accessing resources, programs, and benefits for youth aged 13-26 who are in foster care or have left foster care and hear from youth who have been in extended foster care. Supported by Indigenous community programs. This event is supported by Indigenous community programs. 6 - 8pm. The event will be in person and virtually on Zoom and Facebook Live. A meal will be served at 5:30 pm for those attending in person. Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, 2300 S 15th Ave, Minneapolis. To register, see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/642456242917>.

**July 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27
2023 Summertime Ribbon Shirt/Skirt Making**

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each session. Ribbon Shirt/Skirt Making (regalia making instructions upon request). We also invite community members to come and make these for our Class of 2024 Seniors. Registration required. One adult must accompany student. 5pm to 8pm. For info, email: indianed@mpls.k12.mn.us or call 612-668-0610.

July 12

Duluth – MN Writers Series: The Sky Watched

Author and poet Linda LeGarde Grover will be joining the Minnesota Writers Series for a special offsite event in Duluth. In addition to reading selections from her recently re-released collection, *The Sky Watched: Poems of Ojibwe Lives* (University of Minnesota Press, 2022), Grover will also join in conversation with Dr. Jill M. Doerfler, head of American Indian Studies at University of Minnesota-Duluth. During the second half of the event, members of the audience will be invited to share their own poetry as time allows. Co-sponsored by the American Indian Community Housing Organization, also the host site for this event. 5:30–7:30pm. To register, email: registrations@mnhum.org. For info, see: <https://www.mnhum.org/event/mn-writers-series-sky-watched>.

July 14 – 16

Mii Gwitch Mahnomen Days Powwow

Mii Gwitch Mahnomen Days Traditional Powwow. Veterans Memorial Grounds, 16601 69th Ave NW, Cass Lake. For info, see: <https://www.llojibwe.org/powwow/schedule.html>.

July 14 – Sep 9

Inde Wiisagendam (My Heart Hurts)

Inde Wiisagendam (*My Heart Hurts*) is a solo exhibition by Laura Youngbird (Grand Portage Ojibwe). Using the dress as a metaphor, her work addresses a wide range of social issues, injustices and biases. Through mixed media — combining drawing, painting and prints — Laura explores the dress as a consistent and important symbol in her work, as this simple garment contains layer upon layer of meaning. The works in this series examine mixed emotions and themes such as common thread, loose ends, and threadbare. NACDI, All My Relations Art Gallery, 1414 East Franklin Ave Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://allmyrelationsarts.com/exhibitions-events/exhibitions/inde-wiisagendam-my-heart-hurts>.

- **July 14:** Opening Reception, 6-8 pm with the artist speaking at 7pm.
- **Aug 17:** Artist Workshop, 5 pm

July 15

The Annex @ MIWRC

Join the Annex at MN Indian Women's Resource Center. Enjoy Native music, lawn games, traditional native games, HIV testing and HIV jeopardy, CGTC and HIV screening from 11-3. The Annex @ MN Indian Women's Resource Center, Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, 2300 15th Ave S, Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://annexteclinic.org/event/the-annex-mn-indian-womens-resource-center>.

July 15

Anniversary Party for Indigenous Roots

Join Trickster Tacos to Celebrate 3 years. Let's celebrate together with two free performances & some good medicine. 1pm to 8pm. Pretendians Native Rock Band, 1-3. Rez Reporter Comedy Show, 5-7. We will have Two Food Trucks as well as herbal teas and beverages from Roots Cafe. Indigenous Roots Cultural Arts Center, 788 E 7th St, Saint Paul. For info, see: <https://allevents.in/saint%20paul/3-year-anniversary-party-at-indigenous-roots/200024763543551>.

July 18

St. Paul – Learning from Place: Bdote

Learning from Place: Bdote is an immersive experience that brings participants to sites of great significance to Dakota people in the Twin Cities. Participants will learn from Dakota community members through stories and histories that have often been left out of our state's history. Learning from Place: Bdote will begin at Fort Snelling State Park and end at Indian Mounds Park in St. Paul. We will be outside the entire time. Participants need to provide their own transportation, lunch, snacks and beverages. K-12 educators will receive 5 clock hours. Fee is waived for indigenous participants. Contact Eden Bart at eden@mnhum.org before registering. 8:30am - 2:30pm. For info, email registrations@mnhum.org or see: <https://www.mnhum.org/event/lfp-bdote-july>.

July 18

NNT call for Native actors

New Native Theatre seeks actors for our upcoming Winger production, Christmas in Ochopee by Montana Cypress. If you are interested in

being cast, please join us for a reading of the play over Zoom on July 18 at 6:30pm. For questions, email: charli@newnativetheatre.org, or see: <https://newnativetheatre.org/current-classes>.

July 19

Public Forum: How Integrated is Care for Pregnant and Parenting Women?

MN Families conducted community listening sessions with 7 communities throughout Minnesota (African American and Black US born women, East African women, Indigenous/Native American women, Latina women, LGBTQ+ people, Southeast Asian women and Women from rural communities) who are pregnant and parenting people around their experiences with behavioral health services. We are hosting a community forum for people and organizations to come discuss and learn about our findings. Noon to 1:30pm. Maplewood YMCA Community Center, Heritage Room C, 2100 White Bear Ave, Maplewood. Register at: <https://www.mnfamilies.org/meetings-2>.

July 19

Community Celebration of Art

Community Celebration of Art - Student Art Walk, Indigenous Art Market and Concert. This past April, elementary students painted over 800 4"x4" canvases inspired by the Dakota words Mitakuye Owasin - "we are all related". We invite families and friends to join us for an Art Walk to celebrate our artists and their amazing creations. This art walk will launch the celebration then stay for the artist market, food, music and community. All are welcome. Indigenous Art Market, 2-

9pm. We are all related art walk at 3pm. Join us in an Art Walk from Central Park to Downtown to view the 800 canvases on display in storefronts. Concert in the park with Thomas X, 7pm. Central Park Bandshell, 415 W 4th St, Red Wing. For info, see: <https://allevents.in/mobile/amp-event.php>.

Aug 7 & 14 (deadline)

First Peoples Fund

First Peoples Fund supports Native history, ancestral knowledge, and storytelling through art and culture. The Artists in Business Leadership and Cultural Capital Fellowships partner with Native artists and culture bearers to strengthen their business skills and ensure that art, culture, and ancestral knowledge are shared from one generation to the next. Fellows receive a \$10,000 project grant, technical support, and professional training to start or grow their arts business. Application dates: Artist in Business Leadership, July 15 - August 7; Cultural Capital, June 30 - August 14. For info, see: <https://www.firstpeoplesfund.org/fellowships>.

Aug 8

Mona Susan Power:

A Council of Dolls Publication Celebration

Join us for an evening with Mona Susan Power in celebration of her new novel, *A Council of Dolls*. A modern masterpiece, *A Council of Dolls* is gorgeous, quietly devastating, and ultimately hopeful, shining a light on the echoing damage wrought by Indian boarding schools, and the historical massacres of Indigenous people. With stunning prose, Mona Susan Power weaves a spell of love and healing. 7 - 9pm. Birchbark Bizhev, 1629 Hennepin

Ave, #275. Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://birchbarkbooks.com>.

Aug 15-17

Mni Ki Wakan (Water is Sacred) Summit

Mni Ki Wakan Co-conveners, Cultural Survival, Black Hills Clean Water Alliance, Thunder Valley CDC, the UN Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, and partners will convene the Mni Ki Wakan (Water is Sacred) Summit, themed, "Indigenous Water Justice, Global Collaboration; Dismantling Water Colonialism," in Rapid City, SD. The MKW Summit will bring together Indigenous Peoples, youth, Tribal water and environmental departments, Indigenous environmental water organizations, and allies. Registration is now open. There is no registration fee for community members. The session proposal application is open and has been extended to July 15. For info, see: mnikiwakan.org.

Aug 18 - 20

SMSC Wacipi

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community's contest powwow. MCs: Redwing Thomas, Juakin Hamilton, and Whitney Rencountre. ADs: Clifton Goodwill and Yahsti Perkinsskiller. Host Drums: Young Bear and Dakotah Hotain. Grand entries: Friday at 7pm, Saturday at 1pm & 7pm, and Sunday at 1pm. Registration will close at 6:45pm and reopen after Grand Entry. Point system begins Friday at Grand Entry. Registration closes Saturday at 12:30pm. Free admission. Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, 3212 Dakotah Parkway, Shakopee, MN. For info, see: <https://www.smscwacipi.org/experience/2023-wacipi>.

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It's All Here

Did my grandfather vote?

BY ARNE VAINIO, MD

My Ojibwe grandfather was taken from his family when he was young and was put into a boarding school. I don't have many details and he never wanted to talk about it. Ojibwe was his first language, but he didn't speak it around his grandchildren as he didn't want us to be treated the way he was. Like all the children taken, he had his hair cut off, his clothes and any traditional items destroyed and he was given a uniform. He was beaten for speaking Ojibwe. The few times he did mention it were with bitterness.

When my grandparents were growing up there were federal programs to get Native people to relocate to cities to assimilate them into the dominant culture. The jobs they were able to get were menial and they had no union protection, no insurance, no retirement and they were completely expendable. There were no repercussions for mistreating them or firing them and my grandparents constantly lived under the fear someone at work would get mad at them. Even if they were taken advantage of, their only option was to remain quiet.

My grandparents used to get a new car every two years and they would trade in their old one. When they got a new car, they would drive over 200 miles north on the weekend to show everyone how well they were doing. My grandmother would wear her best clothes and my grandfather would wear a white shirt, black pants and shoes and belt to match. He combed Brylcreem into his hair and I can still remember the smell of it and how the top of the tube twisted off.

I don't ever remember my grandparents or my mother discussing politics. I remember my mom crying when

President Kennedy was assassinated, but nothing else.

When I was nine, my grandparents bought a brand new pale green 1967 Chevrolet Impala and it had 12 miles on it when they picked it up. That Saturday they put their best clothes on and they drove north to show it off. On the way, they were pulled over in a small town simply because my grandfather was Ojibwe and driving a new car. None of the paperwork he had mattered and they spent all day in the jail and weren't allowed to call us. The guards had a tin cup they would drag across the bars of the cell when they walked by and they called my grandfather "Chief" and they taunted them for the trouble they were in. When they finally had confirmation my grandfather did own the car, they opened the cell door. Everyone knew what was expected and my grandfather complied.

He looked at the floor. "Thank you." He said quietly.

Their visit was short and they had to leave early the next morning and had to go through a different town so they wouldn't be stopped again on the way back.

I was excited the first time my brother Kelly and I went to Minneapolis to stay with them. The buildings were tall and we drove through downtown and almost couldn't get close enough to the windows to see the tops of some of the buildings.

The days were not as exciting. I'd never seen a cockroach before and they were in the drawers and under the sink and they ran under the bathtub when I pulled on the chain for the bare single light bulb. We had to stay in the apartment while our grandparents were at work and were not allowed to talk to anyone. They both worked at the state sanitarium and my grandfather made

ice cream and my grandmother worked in the laundry. They were too tired to spend much time with us when they got home.

We were at the Ben Franklin store and Kelly and I were in the toy aisle wishing for different things we couldn't have and there was a café in there with a long counter with a shiny green top and red and chrome stools that could spin around. The menu above the kitchen showed hamburgers and French fries and malts and we begged to eat there. My grandfather looked disgusted with us, but finally relented. All four of us sat at the counter and everyone else at the counter stopped talking and simply stared at us. The waitress was leaning back on the cooler with her arms crossed and she didn't come to take our orders. She looked at my grandfather until he said, "Maybe we'll go somewhere else."

We went to a small café and it was mostly full of Native people. The paint on the walls was greasy and peeling and cigarette smoke hung thick in the air. I could smell bacon and burnt pancakes and we sat at a small booth with torn seats. The waitress didn't say anything. She wiped the table with a single pass and pushed the salt and pepper shakers closer to the wall. She put napkins and glasses of water down and she threw four menus on the table and left. Kelly and I wanted the hamburger and French fries with a malt, but my grandmother said, "You caused enough trouble already, the hamburger steak dinner is the special and that's what you're getting."

The waitress brought our food and the plates were loud as she dropped them on the table. She dropped spoons and forks and butter knives and left without saying anything. My fork had some hard food stuck between the tines and I held it up for the waitress to see and my grandfather grabbed it away from me. He took my butter knife and cut the food out of my fork and wiped it with his hand and handed it back to me.

The hamburger steak was tough and I had the dirty fork stuck in it and I was sawing on the steak with the butter knife. The hamburger was along the side of the plate and as I was sawing on it, the plate moved to the edge of the table



and flipped over and landed on the floor. The gravy was in the dirt between the broken tiles and peas and carrots were everywhere. The waitress was glaring at us as she wiped the floor and she brought a mop and slapped it down angrily. When she left there were streaks of soap on the floor and I looked at the bubbles popping. She didn't bring me another meal and I knew enough to stay quiet. My grandparents and my brother ate in silence and I didn't look at their food as they ate.

We got outside and my grandmother leaned down and hissed, "What's the matter with you? We brought you to a nice restaurant and all you did was embarrass us!"

I didn't make eye contact with anyone I didn't know during the rest of the week and I was happy when we were finally going home.

I cannot imagine either of my grandparents standing in a voting line and they would have been easy to intimidate. Any threats carried out against them would have no consequences and any pushback offered by my grandparents would result in their punishment.

We take much for granted and we live busy lives. My grandfather would have welcomed an opportunity to have a say in the way he was treated and in his future.

His vote would have mattered. My vote matters. Your vote matters.

Vote.

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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2023 ELECTION DATES

July 18: Register by July 18 to save time on Primary Election Day

Aug. 8: Primary Election

Sept. 22: Vote by mail or in person from Sept. 22 through Nov. 6.

Oct. 17: Register in advance by Oct. 17 to save time on Election Day

Nov. 7: Election Day. Vote.

Find out important voting information for your precinct by entering your address into the Polling Place Finder at: <https://pollfinder.sos.mn.go>.



On this past summer solstice my soul sister and I celebrated. In the past I always was like, "Wow." Solstice is here again and did not know how to recognize this amazing, timeless event on my own so I just used to humm. My Soul Sister Witch and I made plans to acknowledge all of Creators gifts and expressed our appreciation with a small fire in a cauldron.

Well, it became the best smudge ever. She added herbs from her own wild garden and burnt sage and cedar too. I wish I could communicate how much better I felt after our ceremonies. It included laughter, crying and compassion. We bonded as old Souls do when we instinc-

tively meet another, so our paths were meant to be. I had met this phenomenal witch many years ago but I believe now that we were meant to bond.

She is mine and I am hers. So mote it be. So yes, my sister, you may come over and collect milkweed to make soup or whatever you desire. I share Creators gifts to us.

I cannot imagine a world sans butterflies and bees.

As I write this Custer got his karmic destiny in 1876. I love it. My respect is for all the warriors who decided it was a good day to die, but...Yellow Hair did. Howah!!! Makes me speculate if any Republicans cherish hairs from his corpse like they do for their Jesus. Heya, heya, this is how my mind works, he lost just as you all invaders will in time. Start reading up on Hippie/Commune cultures asap. Use protection or yooz won't last long. Ahem! JS.

Ack! I feel sick and celebratory at the same time. I wish I had been there like I feel I was. Or maybe it is a blood memory? That is also a reason. I mean the anti-Custer Blood Cluster. Am I mean, especially outing human monsters? Ya. I have no intention of quitting. Evah Nevah!

When I went to let one of the dogs inside I smelled heavy smoke and had to wonder who died now? That was my

first thought since we Shinobs have a fire going until our relative is buried. Then I remembered the Canada wildfires just up the way from here. I feel sad. But then I got mad and questioned whether Canada knew there is a border with the U.S. and could they plz keep the deadly smoke to themselves?

I joke. Before the European invaders there were no lines drawn on any maps dividing us all. There was a general agreement of which Nation was prominent in their area and aside from a few squabbles over lands and resources rather than murder each other they consulted the Grandmothers, took their advice and then smoked the Pipe of Peace.

Since there was plenty for all and we shared among many nations...that is until the colonists showed up on the East coast all pitiful with scurvy. No one knew at the time, but our ancestors took pity on them and saved them, not knowing they also brought deadly diseases from the distant lands they came from. Thus begins the genocide of Indigenous people (the entire North and South Americas that we knew as Turtle Island), never written of in U.S.A. history. The invading colonists showed no mercy with their attempts to murder all of us, with everything at their disposal, the weapons of war to annihilate we

indigenous human beings who are still here, standing tall to this day. Just remember this: THEY DID NOT WIN!!!

Whew! That took a lot out of me to write the above down. Not that I don't experience racism everyday 24/7, whether sitting inside on my chair or venturing outside. It is pandemic and more people are needed to address the bison or jaguar in the room and agree on how to eliminate this inhuman stigmatization of the 'other' who also bleed red blood.

As of writing this I have not had any crazy, absurd situations that is the norm for me so I feel good about that. Last month on June 13 was Purrince's 10th Purrday. There was not a small plane flyover but he had at least his fave canned food and we all meowed in his honor. Such a cacophony! Glad the neighbors didn't call the Fuzz on us but maybe they were all skeert of what was going on in my house. And that's good.

I do not celebrate July 4. Why would I? Sheesh! But because it is July in the US, the heat is gonna beat us up. So I implore yooz all to protect your families and ya, if you have to, stay inside. Be safe and stay there.

— ELMO CONT. FROM PAGE 4 —

"As the Family Spirit Program staff of Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, we are hoping to assist our leadership, communities, and families to heal our nation in small and humble ways," added Lyons.

According to the the Sesame Workshop and the Center for Indigenous Health, the program "will take place over the course of a year and include new play spaces for Indigenous communities featuring favorite Sesame Street characters and learning tools such as books, videos and interactive games tailored in collaboration with the Center for Indigenous Health to reflect Indigenous cultural values, empower families, and inspire a healthier future. Many of these materials will be distributed through the Center's Family Spirit early childhood home-visiting program that reaches thousands of Indigenous families every year."

Lisa Martin, (Sault Ste. Marie Ojibwe) is the Senior Research Associate at Johns Hopkins Center for Indigenous Health and is based at Sault Ste. Marie, MI. Martin is on the leadership team for the Family Spirit and Johns Hopkins Center for Indigenous Health/Sesame Workshop Partnership.

A component of that partnership between the Family Spirit Program through the Johns Hopkins Center for Indigenous Health and Sesame Workshop was to make available Sesame Street Character visits to Indigenous community events from across the country.

Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit behind Sesame Street, is partnering with the Family Spirit program to co-create uplifting, educational, and empowering resources that reflect Indigenous values and Indigenous community considerations. In addition to two new videos featuring Indigenous children and their families sharing traditions from their culture and ways they stay healthy, printed materials will be available to families participating in the Center's Family Spirit home visiting programs.

To view videos created by Sesame Street for this program, see: <https://sesameworkshop.org/resources/my-whole-healthy-life-meet-reignen>, and

<https://sesameworkshop.org/resources/my-whole-healthy-life-meet-wa-sta-tse>

For more info about the Leech Lake's Family Spirit Program, see their website at: <https://www.llojibwe.org/health/familyspirit.html>

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