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Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi under way



18-month-old Mateo helps play drums for the Aztec dancers at Wakan Tipi's Pollinator Festival celebration in St. Paul's Phalen Park. (Photo by Lee Egerstrom.)

BY LEE EGERSTROM

At some point late next year, a new Wakan Tipi Center on St. Paul's East Side will have a grand opening ceremony for a newly constructed site that will help all Minnesotans know and appreciate the thousands of years' history of the Capitol City and surrounding lands.

Indigenous people's long presence in and around St. Paul will become more obvious and celebrated. At the same time, the Wakan Tipi Center will continue stressing the importance of the area's environmental history as well.

The latter provided food, medicine and beauty for early residents and wildlife. It continues to do so in contemporary Mni Sota Makoce, or Minnesota, today.

The construction site for the center has been readied and construction plans are underway, said Executive Director Maggie Lorenz, a Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe member and descendant of Spirit Lake Dakota Nation. She heads the nonprofit Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi environmental organization, formerly known as the Lower Phalen Creek Project that has adopted use of the appropriate Dakota name.

Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi in the Dakota language means "those who care for Wakan Tipi." Wakan Tipi - "dwelling place of the Great Mystery" or the sacred, is the historic name for the sacred cave on St. Paul's East Side called

Carver's Cave for most of the past 250 years.

While construction for the center gets underway, programs operated by the organization will continue late this fall and into next year. They include programs for Indigenous youth groups and for plant and environment restoration efforts in the Phalen Creek watershed as well as winter story telling programs, Lorenz said.

The organization concisely states its goal on its website: "Engaging people to honor and care for our natural places and sacred sites and the cultural value within them."

Attendees at a major summer event, the Pollinator Festival 2023 at Phalen Park in early August, showed how these programs create community bonds stretching from Minnesota's Indigenous Dakota population to its newest residents.

Recent Hmong and Somali citizens participated in nature walks and other programs. Young Hmong children especially enjoyed dance and drumming by Kalpulli Yaocenxtli, a traditional Mexica-Nahua (Aztec) cultural group, and cheered on 18-month-old Mateo Salazar, from Richfield, who joined the drum team to keep alive another Indigenous North American cultural tradition.

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Digitizing our stories at the Minnesota History Center

BY EILEEN BASS/MHS

My name is Eileen Bass and I am a member of the Sac & Fox Nation of OK, with additional family ties to Standing Rock and Mvskoke Nation communities. This past summer, I was accepted into the Minnesota Historical Society's Native American Undergraduate Museum Fellowship (NAUMF) program. Six fellows would complete internships during NAUMF.

My work involved the digitization of tribal newspapers from Ojibwe communities. My in-person internship took place in the Library & Archives Department at the History Center. The newspapers that I worked with were primarily written by and for Ojibwe communities. Speaking of Ourselves = Ni-mi-kwa-zoo-min is the tribal newspaper from the Cass Lake reservation in Minnesota and the Lac du Flambeau tribal newspaper originates from the Lac du Flambeau band of Ojibwe in Wisconsin.

Several MNHS staff, Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center (MIWRC), and American Indian Learning Resource Center (AILRC) members took early steps to make digitization possible. In the spring of 2019, a meeting between MNHS, MIWRC and Franklin Library staff was held to discuss Ojibwe tribal newspapers. Anne Levin, the Collections Digitization Manager of MNHS, recalls that "it was a great opportunity to learn more about the MIWRC and their newspaper collection."

In 2016, MNHS first learned about the AILRC tribal newspaper collection from the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD)

Library. After consulting with the AILRC, UMD contacted MNHS about transferring a set of digital files for tribal newspapers. Matthew Rosendahl, the Library Director of UMD shared the following, "The library partnered with the AILRC to digitize the newspapers. The UMD library had digitized the newspapers and put them in our campus institutional repository, where they were available for approximately four years before we merged with the University of Minnesota institutional repository which has a requirement that all deposited items must be created by a part of the University. As such, we needed to find another place to make these digitized newspapers digitally preserved and freely available. Fortunately the Newspaper Hub was willing to do that." The AILRC would also donate print newspapers from their collection to MNHS, with the help of the UMD Library.

Between 2019 and 2022, issues of both Speaking of Ourselves and Lac du Flambeau News (a tribal newspaper) were donated to the Minnesota Historical Society by MIWRC and AILRC. These complemented issues previously deposited by the tribal publishers to MNHS and microfilmed for preservation and access.

Regan Kluver and Rita Walaszek-Arndt of the Native American Initiatives department of MNHS shared that the Library & Archives Department went to the team about digitizing the tribal newspapers. Kluver said, "the stars aligned." She followed up with Anne Levin about a project for a Native fellow to complete with the digitization collections team.

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Henry Greencrow, Billy Blackwell, and Carl Decora (from left) on AIR. Photo by Earl Seubert. From "Indians AIR Their Interests," *Minneapolis Tribune*, July 4, 1971.



Hockey legend Henry Boucha dies but his Native advocacy work lives on

BY LEE EGERSTROM

Minnesota's sports world and Native American communities learned this past month that hockey great and former Olympian Henry Boucha died while being treated for a heart ailment. He was 72.

That won't end Boucha's influence in the state. His memory will live on for generations to come and his advocacy work and promotion for Native American education will carry forward.

A big audience will come next year when Twin Cities Public Television (TPT MN) begins showing a documentary series about Native American athletes who became Olympians. The actual title of this documentary work and a schedule for its release is still to be determined, said Jessica Prody, communications director for TPT.

It was produced by Leya Hale (Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota and Dine), an award winning producer for Twin Cities Public Television. Boucha is one of the featured Native Olympians and collaborated on the project.

"Leya was the producer and Henry was the chief consultant for the documentary," Prody said. He originated the idea. His journey from high school hockey to the Olympics and then to professional hockey is an integral party of the presentation.

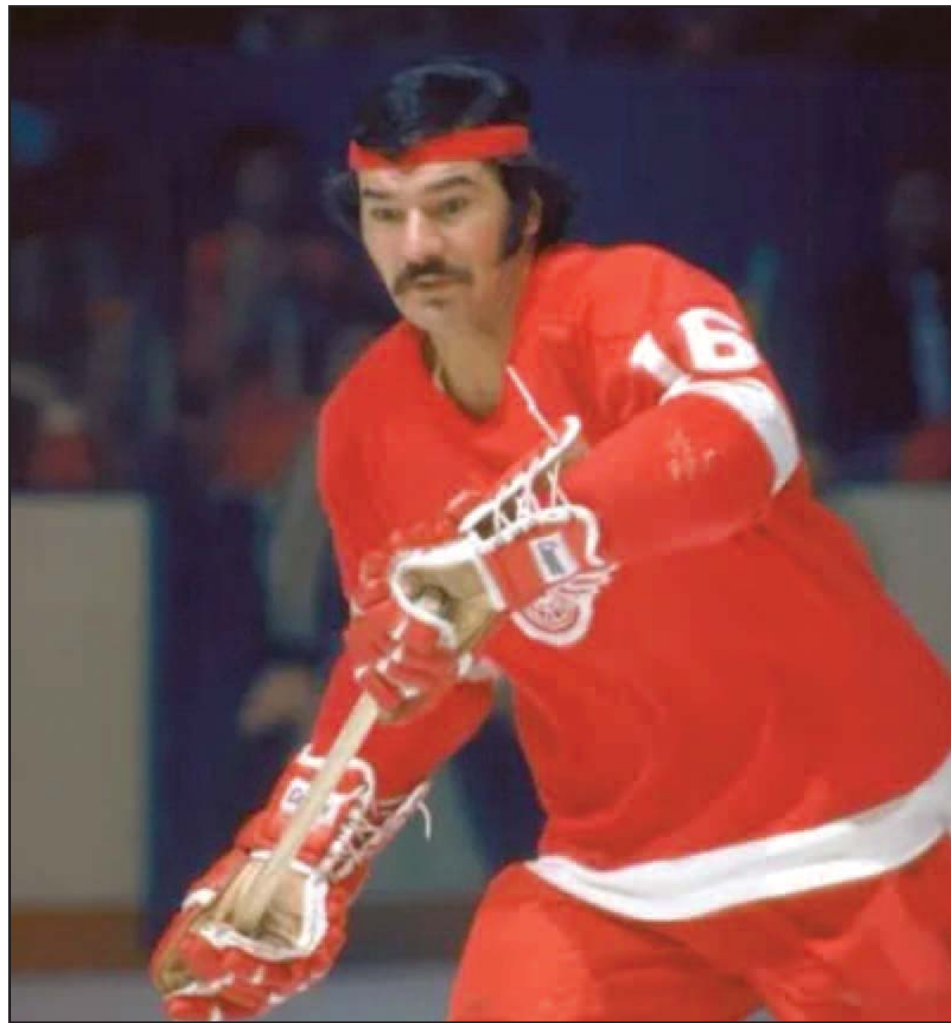
Henry got to see the final (version) before his death, she said.

Boucha's family announced he died Sept. 18 while being treated for a heart condition in the Twin Cities. Funeral services were scheduled for Sept. 29 back home in Warroad, his hometown and where he had most recently lived.

The funeral was scheduled for Gardens Arena where Warroad High School plays hockey games and where Boucha, an Ojibwe with family ties on both sides of the U.S.-Canadian border. His high school jersey hangs from the rafters in the arena to help celebrate Warroad's hockey history and successes over the years.

It was at Warroad where Boucha's name became indelibly linked with hockey. He was a star player for the team that played Edina for the state high school championship in 1969. Edina won the game 5-4 in overtime after Boucha was sidelined with a punctured eardrum – a hockey story relived and retold by hockey fans every year high schools gather for the state tournaments.

After that, Boucha served in the Army, was a member of the 1972 Silver Medal winning U.S. Olympic team, and then played professionally with National Hockey League and World Hockey



Henry Boucha was a Minnesota high school hockey star. He played in the 1972 Winter Olympics and had a promising pro career until he suffered a serious injury. (Photo/Portnoy/Hockey Hall of Fame).

Association teams.

Detroit Red Wings drafted him in the second round of the NHL players draft in 1971, had successful seasons there, and then was traded to the former Minnesota North Stars. He was hit by a stick in a game against the Boston Bruins in 1975 that left him mostly blind in his left eye, an event that started to bring his NHL career to an end.

From 1971 to 1977, he plans for the Red Wings, the North Stars, the Kansas City Scouts and Colorado Rockies, and with the Minnesota Fighting Saints.

Two of Boucha's cousins, Gary Sargent and T.J. Oshie, have also been NHL hockey players, keeping alive northern Minnesota and Ojibwe ties to hockey.

Sargent was a hockey great at Bemidji State University before his professional career. He played from 1975 to 1983 with the Los Angeles Kings and Minnesota North Stars.

Oshie contributed to Warroad High School's hockey legacy after Boucha and was a member of the Washington Capitals' 2018 Stanley Cup championship team.

Boucha was inducted in the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame in 1995 after his playing days.

He has lived for a time in Alaska, back at Warroad, and lived and worked as a

real estate agent and education consultant for several years in the Twin Cities metro area.

He published an autobiography in 2013, entitled *Henry Boucha, Ojibwa: Native American Olympian*. It is available at many Minnesota bookstores or can be ordered by them.

Boucha told *The Circle* in 2020 that he had to "re-invent" himself after hockey. The book, he said, continued to help that process. He hoped the TPT pro-

duction will also continue that process on, showing that at least 21 great athletes and achievers were also Native Americans.

"I want these stories to be an inspiration for the next generation of Native kids," he said in the *Circle* article. "I had to regain my identity after my hockey days. That isn't the way it should be."

Since becoming a licensed real estate agent in 1987, Boucha said he felt compelled to promote Native America pride and public awareness of their contributions to greater American society.

"After hockey, I found myself in my culture, my traditions, (and) my spirituality. I want young Native Americans to find this strength that we all have been given and don't always recognize."

Following that rediscovery, Boucha worked as a youth hockey coach and also with Ojibwe and American Indian education programs at Warroad schools. Later, living in White Bear Lake and working as a metro area realtor, he also served as an American Indian education consultant for the 24 suburban schools in the South Washington County School District.

He also served as a board member of Kah-Bay-Kah-Nong Inc., an Ojibwe word for Warroad that is a nonprofit he founded to support Native education and related programs. In other community service work, he was board members for the National Coalition Against Racism in Sports and Media organization based in Minnesota, for the Juel Fairbanks Chemical Dependency board in St. Paul, and for Ain Dah Yung Center and its housing programs, also in St. Paul.

A preview of the forthcoming TPT production was recently shown on public television. The preview can be seen at <https://www.pbs.org/video/remembering-henry-boucha-40364>.

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Indigenous Writers Gathering brings Native authors, illustrators together

BY MARLENE WISURI

Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College in Cloquet, Minnesota, was the setting for the Indigenous Writers Gathering organized by Thomas and Betsy Peacock of Black Bears and Blueberries Publishing. On September 8, over 100 authors, illustrators, designers, librarians, and publishers gathered to share their experiences with writing and publishing. The evening began with a feast of venison, walleye, and wild rice and featured traditional flute music by Michael Laughing Fox Charette.

A full day on September 9, included presentations about their work by well-known indigenous authors Denise Sweet, Marcie Rendon, Brenda Child, Gwen Westerholm, and, via zoom from Alaska, Vivian Faith Prescott. Informal meet and greets plus book sales and signings rounded out a day of sharing and inspiration. Sponsors of the event were Black Bears and Blueberries Publishing, American Indian Community Housing Organization, Sami Cultural Center of North America, and Holy Cow! Press.

Of the event, Thomas Peacock said, "We started Black Bears and Blueberries Publishing because we saw a real need for books written by Indigenous authors, with illustrations by Indigenous artists. The Indigenous writer's gathering was a natural extension of our efforts by providing a venue for Indigenous writers to hear from established writers and sharing their writing interests with other writers. We want to encourage the development of Indigenous writers. Will we hold more of these in the future? If we can secure the funds necessary to do a good job of hosting the venue, we will, or we'll work with another Indigenous group willing to host it."



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The Circle is dedicated to presenting news from a Native American perspective, while granting an equal opportunity to community voices. The Circle is published monthly by The Circle Corporation, PO Box 7506, 3045 Bloomington Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55407. Editorials and articles are the sole responsibility of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinion, attitude, or philosophy of The Circle. The Circle does not endorse any product or service accepted as advertising, and reserves the right to reject any advertising, material, or letters. The Circle encourages the submission of Letters to the Editor, which must include the writer's name and address. Letters may be edited for language and length.

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Member of Minnesota American Indian Chamber of Commerce and the Minnesota Newspaper Association. Circulation: 8,000

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Top: Thomas Peacock speaks at the Indigenous Writers Gathering that brought Native writers, illustrators and publishers together. (All photos by Ivy Vainio.)

Second row, left: Michael Laughing Fox Charette, a self-taught Native flute player, performs for the audience.

Second row, right: Marcie Rendon, author of three books including *Sinister Graves* (book 3 of the Cash Mystery Series) talks about her work.

Bottom left: Denise Sweet speaks at the gathering.

Bottom right: Gwen Westerman reads from her book, *Mni Sota Makoce: The Land of the Dakota*, that she co-wrote with Bruce White.

Comcast Announces Four New Lift Zones and Unveils New Mural at Ain Dah Yung, a Comcast Lift Zone

The new mural, created by Thomasina Topbear in partnership with Comcast Employee Resource Group volunteers



Comcast recently announced the opening of four new Lift Zones in the Twin Cities that provides free WiFi access to enable students, seniors, families, and community members to get online and fully participate in the digital economy. The new Lift Zones are at the International Institute of Minnesota, Every Third Saturday, Al Maa'uun, and GMCC, and will support digital access and adoption through tech training and career building. This brings the total Comcast Lift Zones to more than 115 throughout the Twin Cities.

"We're proud to partner with these four wonderful organizations to launch new Lift Zones to advance digital equity and workforce readiness in our most vulnerable neighborhoods," said Kalyn Hove, Regional Senior Vice President, Comcast Midwest. "Our continued partnership with our community partners will equip individuals, families and seniors with the tools, skills and resources they need to achieve their goals."

Comcast also unveiled a new mural at Ain Dah Yung, a Comcast Lift Zone since 2020. Comcast Employee Resource Group volunteers painted pieces of the mural created by Thomasina Topbear of City Mischief Murals, an Indigenous arts organization, and the pieces were assembled to create a full mural.

The mural is located in their permanent supportive housing that supports Native youth who have experienced homelessness with their own efficiency apartment with a complete suite of culturally responsive on-site services.

"The Ain Dah Yung Center provides a healing place within the community for American Indian youth and families to thrive in safety and wholeness," said Sheri Riemers, Executive Director, Ain Dah Yung. "Providing internet to our youth helps them access jobs and training resources, which are key to ensuring their success as they move forward, and we are proud to partner with Comcast as we work together to make this center a place to advance equity and opportunity."



City of Minneapolis plans to sell two lots to Red Lake Nation for \$1 each

BY JON COLLINS/MPR NEWS

Plans are moving forward for two lots that have been vacant for decades off Lake Street in south Minneapolis, where members of Red Lake Nation are working to build a healing center and garden focused on serving Indigenous people living in the city.

Officials from the city of Minneapolis and Red Lake Nation announced the sale of two city-owned properties on the 2900 block of Bloomington Avenue, one a vacant lot and another containing a long-vacant building, for \$1 each.

The sale still needs approval by the Minneapolis City Council, which is expected to make a final decision in October.

Cheri Goodwin heads up Red Lake Nation's family and children's services department called Ombimindwaa Gidinawemaaganinaadog, which means "uplifting all our relatives." Goodwin said they aim to provide resources that are ethnocentric and culturally specific to help Indigenous people struggling with drug dependency or homelessness.

"We are here today to say that we're going to take over our services, we are going to drop our disparities, smash our disparities once and for all by building culturally spe-



Frank Desjarlait speaks at a press conference in Minneapolis. (Photo by JonCollins/MPR News.)

cific services," Goodwin said.

American Indians are five times more likely than white Minnesotans to die of opioid overdoses, according to data from the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Addressing the opioid epidemic is going to require a more culturally informed approach that focuses on decolonization, Goodwin said.

"When we open these doors, we're going to have food, we're going to have a kitchen, we're going to have showers, we're going to have washers and dryers, we're going to have cultural services to start," she said. "These plots of lands will be our cultural community garden."

Rehabilitation of the building will be completed in mid-November and will cost about \$900,000, which the tribe has already allocated, Goodwin said.

Red Lake Chairman Darrell Seki, Sr. said they hope to expand the project in future years to provide affordable housing or a treatment center on behalf of the people of Red Lake. "This is progress for our people, it's progress for our great Red Lake Nation," Seki said. "It's not the end, it's the beginning."

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey said it's important that the city partner with Red Lake Nation and others who have been disproportionately harmed by colonization

and broken treaties in order to successfully uplift people.

"The work that we want to be doing on this parcel, the work we're going to be doing in partnership with Red Lake, is not just preventing people from dying, it's letting people live," Frey said. "People deserve to live a brilliant life, and that means attacking addiction head on."

Red Lake Nation Secretary Sam Strong said it isn't easy to work with people struggling with drug dependency or other disadvantages like homelessness, but that it's going to take a society-wide commitment to help people get to a safer and better place.

"These are our family members, these are our brothers and sisters, our mothers and daughters, these are our people – and we can't forget them," Strong said. "When we forget these people. We lose our place in the cycle of life, and it impacts us all."

The city will write down the remaining \$159,998 in estimated value of the lots, according to city documents. The city bought the properties in 1996, then later sold them to a developer for a multi-unit rental building that was never built. The city acquired the properties again in February.

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Leech Lake formalizes adult-use recreational cannabis on tribal lands

BY MELISSA OLSON/MPR NEWS

The Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe has formalized adult-use recreational cannabis on its tribal lands, while taking a step toward opening dispensaries as other tribal nations have done.

An ordinance passed by Leech Lake's business council in August creates a regulatory framework for the sale and consumption of cannabis and cannabis products on its northern Minnesota lands, LeRoy Fairbanks, a district representative of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe told MPR News.

Leech Lake Chairman Faron Jackson, Sr. said the band could begin operating a dispensary by the end of the year, with possibly as many as three dispensaries open to band members and non-band members alike.

"We have a couple of preliminary spots [on Leech Lake lands] that we've been thinking about. That's still up in the air," Jackson said.

The new regulatory framework is intended to allow Leech Lake to move forward while at the same time giving the council the ability to amend as needed.

Jackson says he has taken policy direction from Leech Lake's elders and military veterans.

"They have been purchasing hemp oil at Walmart and Target, and they use a little bit of that in their own homes even before cannabis was legalized on tribal lands," says Jackson. "And it has some good medical benefits for them, helping them with their post-traumatic stress or anxiety and things of that nature."

He says he is also carefully listening to band members who he says remain "apprehensive."



LeRoy Fairbanks is the District III Representative of the Leech Lake Band. (Photo by Monika Lawrence/MPR News.)

Just prior to Minnesota legalizing adult-use recreational cannabis on Aug. 1, Leech Lake announced that Minnesota state law would effectively legalize adult-use recreational cannabis within the boundaries of Leech Lake reservation.

Unlike Red Lake Nation, an Ojibwe community just to the north, Leech Lake doesn't enforce a separate set of criminal prohibitory laws on its lands. Leech Lake tribal police and county sheriffs enforce Minnesota's criminal laws across the reservation. Leech Lake does exercise civil authority over their lands, such as regulating cannabis.

Like Red Lake and White Earth Nation which started selling about a month ago, Leech Lake could begin marketing cannabis products months before non-tribal dispensaries, which must be licensed by the state.

Leech Lake Legal Director Christopher Murray says in addition to allowing the band to operate dispensaries, they want to encourage entrepreneurship among Leech Lake band members. The new ordinance creates a cannabis commission to license businesses and regulate sales.

"The point of doing it in this way in setting up a robust infrastructure is to mature that regulatory body," said Murray. "The eventual goal would be to open up entrepreneurship for band members across the reservation."

Murray says the idea came from Leech Lake citizens who commented on the draft of the ordinance this past August.

"While there was support for moving forward with band-owned retail at this time, a large amount of the comments focused on allowing band members to develop their own businesses, and a lot of that was focused on cultivation."

Murray says the state's explicit respect for tribal sovereignty has meant that Leech Lake will chart its own course on how best to support its members.

"I think it really allowed the opportunity to take this approach and see how the community wants to proceed rather than having a top-down approach."

Correction: The above story clarifies an earlier version on the effect of Leech Lake leaders, actions regarding adult cannabis use.

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“It was a fantastic event,” said Jenna Grey Eagle (Pine Ridge Lakota), the environmental justice educator and stewardship coordinator who enjoyed seeing visitors learn about the area’s environment.

One walking tour in Phalen Park had about 100 participants. They learned about acorns, nightshade, milkweed, hoary vervain, and various other plants that the original Dakota residents used and how they can still be utilized for food and medicine.

A second plant walk involved about 70 summer youth program participants who studied native plant species and their ecological and medical benefits. It was led by Wakan Tipi’s Hope Flanagan.

“Our biggest goal with these plant walks is that the general public and the Native community feel inspired to get to know plants more, grow them, and advocate for them,” Grey Eagle said.

The coming year will be busy for Wakan Tipi. Bill Gessner, curator and program director, said as the group will be refining Kindergarten through Grade 12 education resources while it moves into its new center and museum facility.

It will also continue refining a Dakota Lifeways Institute and other public programs. One anchor program,

called Gifts of the Plant Nation, will continue online seasonal webinars focusing on an important medical plant each season, he said.

“Winter programming for us will also include the popular Seeds and Snowshoes seeding event.”

This occurs while Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi leaders have worked with many agencies and partners to manage and develop their shared interests.

Among them, there has been the always-necessary task of fundraising.

Lorenz said that since initial grants got programs and planning underway, the group has received another \$1 million in a grant for the center from the Mellow Foundation in 2002 and \$2.5 million this year in bonding from the Minnesota Legislature. That mean Wakan Tipi has raised \$13.2 million of the \$13.5 million target goal for the project.

In addition, work continues to develop a memorandum of agreement (MOA) for various partners in Wakan Tipi. The land is owned by the St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department, for instance, and an agreement with the city is needed to co-manage that land that is also legally known as the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary.

“The goal is to allow for traditional indigenous land stewardship practices

at the site, limit use of chemicals and pesticides, and create guidelines for other stewardship groups who work at the site,” she said.

The MOA also needs to outline how Wakan Tipi and the city should engage the federally recognized Dakota tribes in Minnesota for work on the sanctuary land and adjacent Indian Mounds Regional Park. The latter, on the bluffs overlooking downtown St. Paul, the Mississippi River bend, and the historic Kaposia village in what is today South St. Paul, has been a sacred burial grounds for Dakota and other Indigenous tribes through millennia.

The modern history of this geography shows the complexities with which Wakan Tipi’s caring people must work.

The Lower Phalen Creek Project, now known as Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi, was founded by activists in 1999 as a Native-led, East Side (St. Paul) environmental conservation nonprofit. Its program areas stretches from Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River through the East Side River District.

Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi is in reference to the historic and sacred cave known for at least 2,000 years. The colonized name for Wakan Tipi was Carver’s Cave, so named by English explorer Johnathan Carver

The Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary

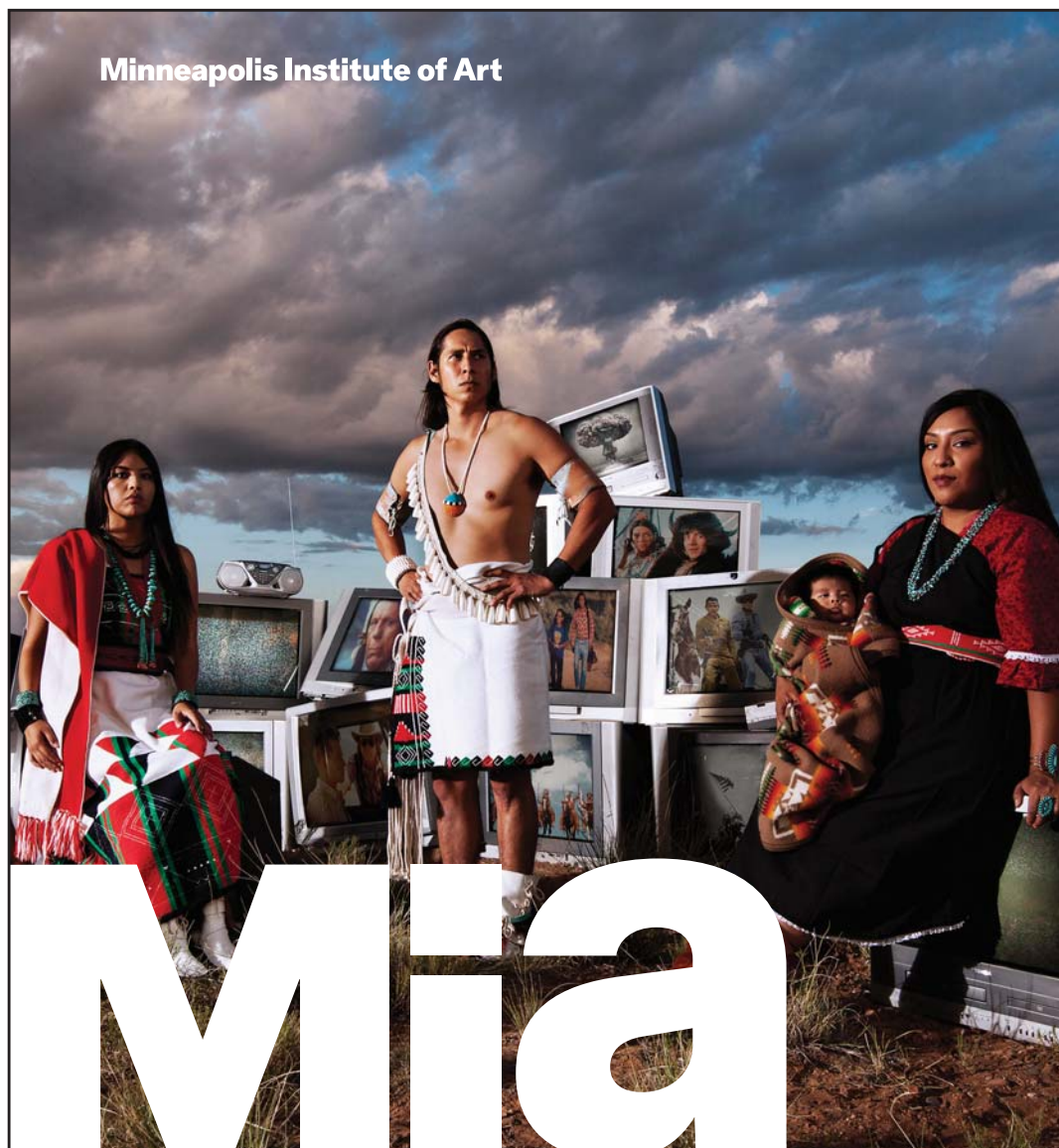
was created in 2005 as a St. Paul city park. It involves 29 acres of land on the East Side of downtown St. Paul, along the bluffs above the Mississippi River and by the Wakan Tipi historic cave. It also traces up the Phalen Creek area that has been known over time by multiple names, including Swede Hollow and the Italian East Side.

That organization name is still official. Wakan Tipi is a “doing business as (DBA)” name, said Lorenz. The legal name is in honor of a former St. Paul ‘East Sider,’ the late U.S. Rep. Bruce Vento, who was a key environmentalist member of Congress.

Despite its presence within the city adjacent to the downtown, its unique physical positions allows for natural grasses, prairie and forestry vegetation, and diverse wildlife that include eagles, vultures, hawks and multiple songbirds. It shares terrain with Indian Mounds Regional Park, another sacred site with burial mounds dating back 1,500 to 2,000 years.

Information about Wakan Tipi Center’s progress: <https://www.wakantipi.org/wakantipicenter>.

Information about the organization’s programs can be found at <https://www.wakantipi.org/programs>.



Minneapolis Institute of Art

In Our Hands Native Photography, 1890 to Now

October 22, 2023–January 14, 2024

This sweeping exhibition traces the histories of photography and diverse Indigenous cultures from the Rio Grande to the Arctic Circle. Organized by a council of primarily Native artists, scholars, and knowledge sharers, in partnership with Mia curators, “In Our Hands” presents more than 150 photographs of, by, and for Indigenous people. See through the lens held by Native photographers and celebrate their influence on photography today.

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Cara Romero (Chemehuevi, born 1977), *TV Indians* (detail), 2017, archival inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist © Cara Romero

"That whole team was very excited and would follow up with me before I could follow up with them about getting a Native fellow involved in this project because they knew that the work would be done regardless, but that it was going to be ten times more impactful for a Native person to be caring for these items and to digitize them rather than someone else who appreciates them but does not get the full grasp of what it is that they're handling."

MNHS has permission from the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe for Speaking of Ourselves to be available for online viewing from anywhere, so long as the reader has access to the Minnesota Digital Newspaper Hub for online collections. Currently, digitized issues of the Lac du Flambeau News can only be viewed in the History Center's Gale Family Library.

Randy Vickers, of the MIWRC, spoke of the importance of cultural relevance that the Lac du Flambeau News provided when he first saw them. "There was a big huge box full of papers that were in good condition and then I was like, "my god, I can't throw these out. Ashley put them all together and that was pretty great. I'm very glad that stuff is not lost, it's very important that we keep information alive. It's a way to mitigate the effects of genocide or ethnocide. Let the cultures exist and continue existing and growing."



Eileen Bass checking newspapers before scanning. (Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.)

"Digitization is important today for both access and preservation, which are core goals for MNHS and the newspaper collection. Digitization is the present and future of museum, library, archival collections to enable access" said Anne Levin.

Walaszek-Arndt shared that people may not know that tribal communities get their primary information from physically printed tribal newspapers. "Because they're physical papers, we need to digitize that information because it's still being greatly used

among our tribal communities. We need to preserve what's in there because it's really pertinent to what's happening at those specific communities today."

Throughout my internship, I was impressed with the coverage of many local issues within the Lac du Flambeau and Cass Lake reservations, along with larger topics across Native country, including sovereignty, environmental rights, music, film, and politics. My internship involved working on the digital collection of Speaking of Ourselves, which had been digitized with MNHS microfilm from its monthly publication in the late 1970s and early 80s.

The digitization process for inclusion into the Newspaper Hub involved learning software that would utilize search engine optimization, cropping, page sequencing, and zoning for keywords. The box of monthly physical copies of Lac du Flambeau News had been published in the 1990s. This work involved ironing down creases, scanning the flattened pages, and then doing final quality checks of the downloaded images.

I look forward to more digitization work being done at the History Center for the purposes of research, historic preservation, and culturally significant accounts of our strong relatives.

Questions about the Digital Newspaper Hub can be sent to newspapers@mnhs.org, see <https://www.mnhs.org/newspapers/hub>.



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Cooper Anderson plans to play NCAA DI lacrosse at Providence College

Cooper Anderson (Choctaw/Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe) is a junior lacrosse and basketball player at Edina High School. He also plays club lacrosse for Team Minnesota on the 2025 team. Anderson accepted an offer to play NCAA DI college lacrosse at Providence College.

Anderson tied the Edina Lacrosse record with 60 points including 37 goals and 23 assists. Last spring he was named 2nd Team All State, 2nd Team All

Metro, 1st Team All Section 6 and 1st Team All Lake Conference.

Anderson's indigenous roots help guide him in his play on the field and knowing where the game comes from.

"My Indigenous core value that sticks out the most is family," said Anderson. "Doing my best for my family and my lacrosse family. I know this is the creator's game so I work hard to respect the game. When I do my best I know I am representing Native peoples in a



good way."

"I remember when I was little my Dad asking me if I wanted to dance powwow. I know he danced when he was young. I said 'no' but when it came to lacrosse I was into it right away. I have loved playing the game since the first time I held a stick," added Anderson.

Anderson is continuing to prepare to be at peak performance when lacrosse practice starts after the basketball season. Last June 8, 2023 Prior Lake defeated Edina 11-8 to win the Section 6 Tournament and the Hornets ended the season 13-3. The team is also preparing to be highly competitive in the 2024 season.

"Right now I have captain's practice with my high school team once a week and my club team once a week," said Anderson. "Otherwise I am lifting weights and working on my shot. I need a faster shot to compete at the highest levels."

"I would like to be 185 lbs. by the time the high school season starts. I would like to win a state championship before I graduate. I also have one more summer of club lacrosse. I enjoy traveling to the east coast to play some of the top teams and players in the country. I would also like to be able to step into my first year of college and be a contributing member of the team," added Anderson.

James Anderson is Cooper's dad. He talked about his son showing the emotion of playing at the highest level. He said, "Cooper is a very good lacrosse player. I appreciate that he acts like he has scored or made great plays before. He celebrates by giving high fives but never showboats or rubs it in any way. He lets his actions define him and that rubs off on his teammates. When his teammates score they celebrate in a respectful way. He is never too high and never too low and it is about doing what is best for the team."

"Cooper best attribute is his person-

ality," said Andy Lee, Head Coach of Edina Lacrosse. "He knows when to push, and he knows when to laugh and keep his teammates all together in the best and challenging times. Cooper understands the game well, and always involves his teammates."

"The best story can come from last year at rival Minnetonka, down by two goals with 5 (minutes) to go. Despite having an off day, he kept fighting and encouraging with his teammates to get us back in the game. Cooper ended up scoring our sixth goal right before we tied it in OT. Then in OT, he knew exactly where his teammate Drew Stocco was going to be and without hesitation gave him the chance to finish the game to which Drew did. Unselfish player, who grows with each practice and game," added Coach Lee.

"Cooper is a unique athlete and person," said Rob Graf, Cooper's club lacrosse coach with the Team Minnesota 2025 team. "Opposing coaches and college recruiters have seen his 6' 4" size, basketball quickness, sprinter speed, high-level skills and lacrosse IQ on the field, and these qualities command respect by their impact on the result of whatever game he's participating."

Coach Graf talked about how Cooper makes others better by being respectful to all people. He said, "As examples on our sidelines, in the heat of a mid-July practice, it's Cooper that offers to give his bottle of water to a teammate who has drank his, no questions asked and no criticism offered."

Coach Graf said, "I've been coaching lacrosse since roughly 1989, and I can honestly say there are very few individuals who combine the natural level physical abilities and skills, a burning competitive fire on the field, and willingness to do the extra work that Cooper has along with the kindness toward others that Cooper brings to all he meets."

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Working together on advancing our shared priorities



Boozhoo, happy fall! In September, Governor Walz and I traveled to Japan to expand on our strong economic partnerships. We met with over 50 Japan-based companies that call Minnesota home and promoted our state as a destination for businesses to grow.

While in Japan, I had the opportunity to promote Minnesota as a destination for working women at the Japanese Women's Leadership Initiative, an initiative that's working to give women in philanthropy, journalism, nonprofits, and small business the tools to success. We spent a great deal of time discussing our historic child care investments and child tax

credit which will greatly increase the accessibility and affordability of child care for Minnesota families and caregivers and increase pathways for working women to build a career.

It was powerful having these conversations with Japanese women leaders knowing that we share much of the same pain but also hope for our children and shared values. I am proud that in Minnesota, we're investing in our workforce, and our businesses, to make sure we remain a destination for workers across the globe and foster hope and opportunities for success.

Supporting working women is crucial to achieving our goal of making Minnesota the best state for children and families. As we continue to implement the incredible policies passed last session, I am excited and hopeful that the implementation process for our new Department of Children, Youth, and Families has begun. This office will work in partnership with state agencies and the Children's Cabinet to prioritize our future: children, youth, and families.

Some of the many programs that the Department of Children, Youth, and Families will adopt from other agencies include child care services, child safety, child support, early learning

services, after-school learning programs, youth justice, and juvenile justice and restorative practices. Creating an intentional space for children, youth, and families to access, engage with, and participate in policy making is critical to ensuring we are supporting families in effective and impactful ways. And this department is all part of our mission to build systems that provide every child with a safe place to call home, food on the table, and opportunities to succeed in and out of the classroom.

Also in September, the Governor hosted the fifth annual Governor and Tribal Leaders Summit. We have made a lot of progress over the past four years building our relationship and government-to-government partnerships with the Tribes. It is always exciting to work together on advancing our shared priorities to move towards a future that lifts up all people who live here.

At the end of the month, the Governor and I visited the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe for our 10th government-to-government visit to a Tribal Nation during our administration. We met with Tribal Council and had an opportunity to tour some sites that are a priority to the Tribes. The most

recent bonding bill included funding for Tribe's new Wellness Center. I look forward to returning and visiting once it is completed. Our work to improve government-to-government relations with the 11 tribal nations in Minnesota is happening 365 days a year, but these visits provide even more opportunities to build upon these partnerships and learn the specific priorities of each separate tribal government.

We are just days away from celebrating American Indian Month here in Minnesota. I look forward to seeing many of you at the various events on Indigenous Peoples Day and throughout the month. Then in November, we will recognize National American Indian Heritage Month. As many of you, I am Native 365 days a year but October and November are opportunities to celebrate and recognize American Indian cultures, contributions, history, traditions, art and land because our nation and state's history is American Indian history.

Thank you for staying engaged, making your voices heard, and for calling Minnesota home. We are stronger when we stand together.

Miigwech and until next time,
Peggy Flanagan



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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 Oct 17 - Dec 28. Enrollment is open. Contact Amy at 612-644-9726 or email: amyamndtbuzzard@yahoo.com.

Waite House Middle School Programming

Join our Middle School Programming! We will be offering tutoring services and craft making workshops. We will be doing tab bracelet's, candles, piñatas, plastic earrings and other projects. Drop-off transportation is provided within 1 mile-radius of Waite House. Mondays and Tuesdays from 3:30pm-6:30pm. For more information email: Kaycm@pillsburyunited.org. Waite House, 2323 11th Ave. S., Minneapolis. For info, see: puc-mn.org/waite-house.

**Thru 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. 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>.

Oct 5, 12, 19, 26

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. 11am - 3pm. NACDI, 1414 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://nacdi.org>.

Oct 7 - Nov 12

For the People

For the People, a world premiere comedy by Native voices. By Ty DeFoe and Larissa Fasthorse. April Dakota has well-meaning but misguided dreams of opening a wellness center on Franklin Avenue to serve the Indigenous community in her Minneapolis hometown. She's counting on a grant from the Franklin Avenue Task Force - a group of endearing Native elders and leaders - to make it happen. But her presentation goes sideways and her proposal is rejected, forcing her to make a decision that puts her

dream, the community and her culture at risk. Thankfully, the Task Force pulls together to help April fight for the future of Franklin Avenue and the people who call it home. Created in partnership with the local Indigenous community, this new comedy examines the myriad facets of contemporary Native life with humor and joy. Guthrie Theater, McGuire Proscenium Stage, 818 S 2nd St, Minneapolis. For info: <https://www.guthrietheater.org>.

Oct 9

Indigenous Voter Registration Celebration Day

Join us in celebrating National Registration Day on Indigenous Peoples Day. Lunch will be provided (wild rice soup, frybread, and pumpkin bars). At 2 pm there will be a land blessing for IHB's new site one block away. There will be Aztec dancers, balloon twisters, drawings for gift cards and traditional lacrosse sticks, face painting, info tables, vendors, speakers, and swag. Noon to 3pm. American Indian OIC, 1845 E Franklin Ave, Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://nacdi.org/events/indigenous-voter-registration-celebration-day>.

Oct 10

UROC Community Day 2023

Celebrate University-community partnerships at UROC's annual Community Day open house with engaging displays, live music, food by local chefs, official UROC swag, and more. Visit with UROC's University researchers and their community partners, meet Goldy Gopher, and engage in live story-

telling with local artists. The event is free and open to the public. 3 - 7pm. Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center, 2001 Plymouth Ave N, Minneapolis. For info see: <https://uroc.umn.edu/news-events/uroc-community-day-2023-3-7pm-tuesday-october-10>.

Oct 11

A Conversation with Patrick Blanchard

Join us for a conversation with Patrick Blanchard, a Native American (Ojibwe/Oneida) and Puerto Rican local visual artist and the Chicano and Latino Studies Artist in Residence for 2022-23. He will be sharing his newest painting exploring the connections between Indigenous peoples north and south across Turtle Island and Abya Yala. Facilitated by Madelaine Cahuas, Assistant Professor in Geography, Environment & Society. 5pm. Liberal Arts Engagement Hub, 310 Pillsbury Drive SE, #Rm 120, Minneapolis. For info: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-conversation-with-patrick-blanchard-tickets-722898036487>.

Oct 12

Anishinaabe Museum of Treaties and Culture Opening

The Anishinaabe Museum of Treaties and Culture is taking form in downtown Park Rapids, Minn. in the old Carnegie Library, which also was the former site of the Enbridge office for the Line 3 tar sands oil pipeline project. The museum will open two years after the controversial Line 3 went into operation in the heart of ceded Treaty territory.

Giiwedonong's permanent features include Anishinaabe treaties with Indigenous nations and colonial nations, from the One Dish One Spoon Treaty to the 1867 Treaty with the Anishinaabe. The museum's grand opening will feature a prominent Water Protector exhibit with numerous photos, plus stories and narratives from the Water Protector movement. Anishinaabe Museum of Treaties and Culture, 101 2nd St W, Park Rapids MN.

Oct 12

IHB Bingo

Honoring our wellness and health. Lets play bingo and learn about diabetes, healthy living, wellness and more. Great prizes and more. Second Tuesdays of the month. Noon. Must register at least 24 hours in advance. Indian Health Board, 2020 Minnehaha Ave, Minneapolis. Bingo will also be held on **Nov 12th** and **Dec 12th**. For info, see: <https://www.indianhealthboard.com>.

Oct 12 thru Jan 13

Aabijijwan Ukeyat yanalleh Exhibit/Opening Reception

Join us for the opening reception of Aabijijwan Ukeyat yanalleh on Oct 12. View the art exhibit thru Jan 13, 2024. Aabijijwan Ukeyat yanalleh is a collaborative exhibition from artists Karen Goulet (Ojibwe) and Monique Verdin (Houma). Karen and Monique are sisters of the same river, connected by the planetary life force known as the Misi-ziibi (Big River, Ojibwe) near the headwaters in the north and remembered as Misha sipokni (Older than Time, Chata) in the coastal territories of the southern Delta. Food and drink will be provided. 6-8pm. All My Relations Arts, 1414 East Franklin Ave, Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://nacdi.org/events/aabijijwan-ukeyat-yanalleh-opening-reception>.

Oct 13

2023 Youth Cooperative Homeownership Cohort

Youthprise is accepting applications for our 2023 Youth Cooperative Homeownership Cohort! We're looking for 8 to 12 young people ages 16-24 years old who are interested in cooperatives and homeownership. As a cohort member, you will: Shape the future by contributing your ideas toward creating a space where residential, commercial, and recreational elements come together; Explore the benefits, financial aspects, and community dynamics of cooperative living; Be compensated at a rate of \$30/hr (over \$2,000) for your engagement. To be eligible: You must be a Minneapolis resident ages 16-24; Have an interest in homeownership and cooperatives; Commit to putting in 2 hours each week for 9-12 months for learning, planning, design, and development; Identify as Black, Indigenous, or a person of color. Deadline is

October 13, 5pm CST. For info, see: <https://youthprise.org/homeownership-cohort>. Or contact: fayise@youthprise.org

Oct 14

Edible Boulevards' cooking class

Join us for Minneapolis Edible Boulevards' next cooking class, co-hosted with Waite House and Pillsbury United Communities. We're excited to partner with Derek Nicholas again, who is a member of the Red Cliff Band of Ojibwe and the Nutrition Program Coordinator for the Division of Indian Work. He'll be talking about how this recipe celebrates his own roots. Let's make Hominy (or Corn) Salad just in time for fall! In-person at the Waite House and on Zoom. 11am to noon. Please register whether you're attending in-person or on Zoom, so we can update you on the class ahead of time in case there are changes. Please bring: a chair or blanket, sunscreen and a filled reusable water bottle for yourself. The cooking classes are always free, so everyone has access to them. Waite House, 2323 11th Ave S, Minneapolis.

Oct 14

Eclipse at the Bell Museum

Get ready for a Solar Big Year in 2023-24 with an annular eclipse in October 2023. Join us at the Bell to celebrate Minnesota's partial view of the annular eclipse on October 14th from 10am-2pm. The eclipse will be at its peak at about 11:45, and we'll see about 45% of totality here in Minnesota. Throughout the day, we'll have solar-focused activities, a live stream of the eclipse from New Mexico, where they'll see the ring of fire, and our expert astronomy staff will be here to answer all of your burning questions about the Sun! Bell Museum, 2088 Larpenteur Ave W, St Paul. For info: <https://www.bellmuseum.umn.edu/astronomy/eclipse-at-the-bell-museum-2023-2024>.

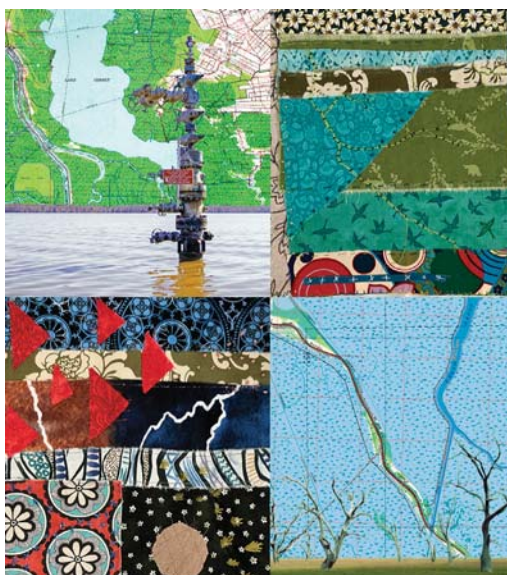
Oct 16

Native American College Fair

The Native American College Fair provides a setting that allows students to have meaningful conversation with representatives about college life, admission & financial aid. As of 2021 all colleges & universities participating in the Native American College Fair must offer Native American specific supports on their campus. Limiting the schools who participate will provide future Native college students with information regarding schools currently offering supports specifically for them. 7 am - 12pm. Minnesota History Center, 345 W Kellogg Blvd, St Paul. For info see: <https://tinyurl.com/26cumh4u> or email: nativeamerican-collegefair@gmail.com.

ALL MY RELATIONS ARTS PRESENTS

AABIJIIWAN / UKEYAT YANALLEH



Aabijijwan / Ukeyat yanalleh is a collaborative exhibition reflecting on the Misi-ziibi (Big River, Ojibwe) by artists Karen Goulet (White Earth Ojibwe) and Monique Verdin (Houma).

Karen and Monique have created multimedia artworks inspired by their research, past residencies and cross-cultural conversations about how the Big River or Misi-ziibi Headwaters and Delta Mississippi have been in conversation with each other for thousands of years. This exhibition is a moving contemplation about our place near the water and under the stars.

On view: October 12, 2023 - January 13, 2024

Opening Reception: Thursday, October 12th, 6 - 8 pm



1414 E. Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55404 | ALLMYRELATIONSARTS.ORG

2023 ELECTION DATES

- 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>.

**Oct 21, 2023 - Oct 2025
Reframing Our Stories**

Witness the resilience and strength of Minnesota's Native communities through stories reframed by their own words, experiences, and perspectives. From a decades-old box of photographs simply labeled "Indians," came the idea for a powerful new exhibit. Inside the box were dozens of pictures of Native community members, organizations, activities, and events that are relevant today. Now in the hands of Indigenous community members, those photos have new meaning. As part of the Our Home: Native Minnesota exhibit, Reframing Our Stories showcases the strength and resilience of Native people and inspires audiences to learn about the past, present, and future of these communities. Native community members get in free. Minnesota Historical Society, 345 W. Kellogg

Blvd., St. Paul. For info, see: <https://www.mnhs.org/historycenter/activities/museum/our-home/reframing-our-stories>.

**OCT 21
FDLTCC Pumpkin Run**

Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College (FDLTCC) invites the community to the 18th annual Pumpkin Run & Walk. This year's event will include a fun new option, the Ring Road Fun Run, making the day even more fun for the whole family. The new Ring Road Fun Run will begin at 9:30am and the 5K (3.1 miles) race will begin at 10:00am. The Ring Road Fun Run covers a single lap of the beautiful FDLTCC Campus, while the 5K starts and ends on campus. Both races are open to runners and walkers of all ages and abilities. To celebrate the fun Halloween theme of the race, participants are encour-

aged to wear costumes or orange clothing. Prizes will be given for the best costumes. The entry fee is \$25.00 per person, with special pre-registration rates for students and individuals if submitted before October 15. Every registered finisher will receive a fabulous Pumpkin Run and Walk shirt, plus delicious post-race refreshments. For information or to get an entry form, visit <https://link.fdlccc.edu/PumpkinRun> or call 218-879-0800. Register at <https://tempotickets.com/PumpkinRun2023>.

Oct 22 - Jan 14, 2024

In Our Hands: Native Photography, 1890 to Now

Enter into the vivid worlds of Native photography, as framed by generations of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and Native American photographers themselves. Presenting over 150 photographs of, by, and for

Indigenous people, "In Our Hands" welcomes all to see through the lens held by Native photographers. Organized by a council of primarily Native artists, scholars, and knowledge sharers, in partnership with Mia curators, this sweeping exhibition traces the intersecting histories of photography and diverse Indigenous cultures from the Rio Grande to the Arctic Circle. Beautiful, complex, and surprising, these artworks celebrate the legacy of groundbreaking photographers and their influence on the medium today. Other events related to this exhibit will take place in Oct. See their website for info. General Admission \$20; Contributor Member+ Free (additional tickets \$16); Youth 17 and under Free. Minneapolis Institute of Art, 2400 Third Ave S, Minneapolis. For info, see: <https://new.artsmia.org/exhibition/in-our-hands-native-photography-1890-to-now>.

**Oct 27
Nick Swardson**

Nick Swardson, a household name in the comedy scene, is set to hit Shooting Star Casino with his one-of-a-kind wit and humor. Known for his dynamic style and impeccable comedic timing, Swardson has carved a niche for himself in the entertainment industry, seamlessly transitioning between stand-up comedy and Hollywood blockbusters. He is best known for his recurring role as Terry Bernadino in the comedy series Reno 911!, for his work with Adam Sandler's Happy Madison Productions, and for his own personal sketch comedy series Nick Swardson's Pretend Time. 8 - 9:30pm. Tickets: Star \$54, Select \$28. For info, see: <https://www.star-casino.com/event/nick-swardson>.

**Oct 31
MHS Native American Artist-in-Residence program**

The Minnesota Historical Society has opened applications for the next round of Native American Artist-in-Residence program. Artists will receive \$30,000 for collections study and development of community programs as well as extensive support and training from MNHS staff, interns and consultants. Artists develop a community-based project inspired by their research in order to disseminate new knowledge of the art form in the artist's home community. For questions regarding the program and application process, contact Chloe Cashman at: chloe.cashman@mnhs.org. Applications can be submitted online at: <https://www.mnhs.org/residencies/naair>.



GUTHRIE THEATER



A comedy born from the Twin Cities Native community

For the PEOPLE

by **TY DEFOE** and **LARISSA FASTHORSE**
directed by **MICHAEL JOHN GARCÉS**


Ernest Briggs


Sheri Foster Blake


Kendall Kent


Kalani Queypo


Katie Anvil Rich


Wes Studi


Nathaniel TwoBears


Adrienne Zimiga-January

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October 7 – November 12

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To reserve or purchase your tickets, go to guthrietheater.org or call the Guthrie Box Office at 612.377.2224 and use the applicable promo code listed above.

The 50% off discount is not valid on previously purchased tickets or with other discounts. Handling fees apply. Visit www.guthrietheater.org/forthepeople to learn more about the play and related events. The Guthrie Theater is located at 818 South 2nd Street in Minneapolis.

“It’s the only thing I have left for you”

BY ARNE VAINIO, MD

I was a brand new physician on call and he had fallen off a barstool about a week earlier. Eventually he had trouble breathing and the ambulance took him to the Emergency Room. A chest x-ray, then a CT scan showed he had bled into the pleural space around his right lung and collapsed his lung almost completely. He had two broken ribs and I could see every breath was painful for him. He winced when I examined the bruised area below his right armpit and he stopped his breath short when I put my stethoscope in the area of his broken ribs.

He never complained. He had to be taken to surgery for a decortication of his right lung, which meant the surgeon had to make a large incision between his ribs to go in and scoop out and peel off the clotted blood that was stuck to his lung. He had lost almost half his blood volume and needed transfusions before he went in to surgery. After surgery he had to have a tube going into his chest to pull the air and blood out continuously so his lung could gradually inflate itself again. He was on a ventilator for a few days and the tube was in for almost a week.

He was polite every morning when I went in to round on him and he smiled at me every time, even when I could clearly

see he was in pain. Once the breathing tube came out, he was able to talk, but he never volunteered any information and his answers were brief. He would never call the nurse to ask for pain medicines because he didn’t want to bother her and said he knew she was busy. He always thanked me for coming in.

He recovered from that completely and his collapsed lung just became a part of his history. We grew to really like each other and I was always happy to see him on my schedule. He had some abdominal pain at a visit several years later. I ordered x-rays and they showed pieces of shrapnel from a war injury in Korea. He had never volunteered that information and on further questioning, he also had shrapnel in his left knee. The shrapnel wasn’t the reason for his pain and it never really bothered him and he declined to have it removed. I made a notation in his chart that he was a war hero and needed to be treated with respect and for the most part the Emergency Room doctors honored that.

He continued to drink and off and on would end up in the hospital because of it. During his binges, he stopped taking his diabetes and high blood pressure medicines and eventually he was admitted to the hospital with a heart attack. This damaged the left side of his heart and made him prone to getting congestive heart fail-

ure, or fluid in his lungs. He didn’t come in for visits very often and most of the time I saw him was when he was hospitalized for something.

His diabetes continued to worsen and I could never convince him to take his insulin regularly. Consequently he suffered a stroke that made his right side weaker and that caused him to fall several times. He walked differently than he used to and he ended up with a blister on his right foot. That went on to become a sore that just never healed and he finally ended up with osteomyelitis, or an infection in one of the bones in his foot. This is very difficult to treat with antibiotics and he eventually had an amputation below his knee. He was never able to get the hang of a prosthetic leg and spent most of his time in a wheelchair.

His amputation made it impossible for him to live on his own and he was in a nursing home for about a year, then a group home. He always said the food was fine, the staff treated him well and he denied any pain. The staff brought him in for regular visits and his blood sugars and his high blood pressure finally came back into control.

I tried a few different ways to ask him about his war injuries and he always changed the subject. One time his eyes got moist when I asked him about Korea and his injuries.

“I couldn’t save him.”

“Who?”

“It doesn’t matter. It was a long time ago.” He changed the subject and he would never talk about it again.

His circulation was so bad that his left foot turned dark and he didn’t tell the staff members about it until his foot was cold. I saw him in the clinic and directly admitted him to the hospital. It was too late to save his foot and he had an amputation of his left leg just below the knee.

He came in a few times for urinary tract infections and he came in for regular visits, but years of uncontrolled diabetes had already done irreparable damage. His eyesight was failing and cataract surgery only helped a little. He was hoping laser treatments to his eyes would bring back some of his vision, but the treatments were to try to prevent further damage.

He went into renal failure and I had to stop one of his heart medicines as his kidney function was worsening. I referred him to a kidney specialist, but he didn’t understand anything that was said to him when I asked him about that visit.

“You’re my doctor. I’ll trust you to know what to do.”

He had episodes of congestive heart failure off and on and he usually recovered with a few days in the hospital on intravenous medicines to get his kidneys to get rid of the fluid buildup.

He was admitted for a similar episode and this time his x-rays showed a pneumonia filling his right lung. His temperature

was high and his labs showed he was fighting an infection. He was agitated and moaning and needed to be sedated. He pulled his IV out and kept trying to get out of bed. His niece was his only relative and he had signed forms giving her permission to make decisions for him if he became incapacitated. He made it clear he did not want to be on a ventilator again.

Two days of IV antibiotics made no difference and his pneumonia was getting worse on repeated daily chest x-rays. His lung sounds were coarse and wet. I gave him a diuretic to try to pull some fluid off his lungs and it dropped his blood pressure too much to repeat it. He would intermittently answer questions, but mostly was restless and not responsive.

His niece finally asked if we could just make him comfortable, as he just wasn’t getting better and at 86 years old, didn’t have any reserve left. We stopped his antibiotics and I stopped all medicines except those for pain and agitation.

The next morning I went in and he was still restless and not responding to his nurse. His lungs sounded worse and his breathing was labored. I discussed plans with his nurse and she left the room and it was just he and I. I pulled a chair up and moved closer to his ear so I could talk to him quietly.

“It’s Dr. Vainio. I remember what you told me a long time ago. There’s no way you could have saved him. No one could and it’s not your fault. You did your best and he knows it and he always knew it.

I have something for you and for him. It’s the only Ojibwe song I know and it was given to me to sing in the American Cemetery in Luxembourg. I sang it there for my wife’s great uncle Johnny Mercer and everyone who died on that B-17 bomber and for every warrior there. It’s a Soldier Song and I want to sing it for you now.

It’s the only thing I have left for you.”

I didn’t have a drum, so I held his hand and I tapped out the drumbeat on the back of his hand with my other hand and I started to sing.

I was uncertain at first, but about halfway through the song, he began to relax and my singing became stronger. His grimace softened and he started to breathe easier and he stopped his constant restless moving. His hand had been simply resting in mine and he began to hold my hand and he held it until the song was done. He didn’t open his eyes and he didn’t say anything. After a minute or so his hand stopped squeezing mine. I held it for a little bit longer and I put it back on his chest.

His niece was with him and she called me after he died later that morning. “He was really calm, Dr. Vainio, and he died peacefully. What did you finally give him that made such a difference?”

“He was a soldier. I just gave him permission to die with honor.

It was the only thing I had left for him.”

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Anishinaabe Museum of Treaties and Culture opening Oct 12

Giiwedining, the Anishinaabe Museum of Treaties and Culture, is taking form in downtown Park Rapids for its upcoming fall opening (the Anishinaabe word Giiwedining means “in the north.”).

Recently, far north Red Lake artist Brian Dow began mural and trim paintings on the former Carnegie Library, which also was the former site of the Enbridge office for the Line 3 tar sands oil pipeline project. The museum plans to open October 12, 2023, two years after the controversial Line 3 went into operation in the heart of ceded Treaty territory after years of legal court challenges and protests, which included the arrest of more than 1,000 Water Protectors.

Giiwedining’s permanent features during the museum’s grand opening will feature a prominent Water Protector exhibit with numerous photos, plus stories and narratives from the Water Protector movement in both northern Minnesota and Standing Rock, North Dakota and the Anishinaabe treaties with Indigenous nations and colonial nations, from the One Dish One Spoon Treaty to the 1867 Treaty with the Anishinaabe.

“We are working to foster an understanding of long-standing Indigenous covenants, contracts and treaties, as well



On the front steps of the Giiwedining Museum. Top from left John Brugier and Joshua Roy. Bottom from left Claire Greene, attorney, and Winona LaDuke.

as sharing the context of the land transactions in this region,” explained Renee Burneau, Board Chair of the newly formed museum and a Red Lake resident, who is helping guide and develop the cultural knowledge of the museum. “There’s a real need for the history of Akiing or northern Minnesota to be told and shared from an Indigenous perspective.”

“We want to share our history and honor Water Protectors with the museum’s debut,” said Winona LaDuke who is coordinating the project for Akiing.

“Many people who want to learn about citizen engagement, regulatory processes, treaty rights, and the history of Minnesota will be pleased to come to Giiwedining,” said LaDuke.

“This summer, we began dressing our building, and we are going to add a lot to Park Rapids in terms of public art, culture and a story,” explained Dow, a painter, graphic artist and clothing designer. He is working with traditional Anishinaabe beadwork designs and also leading a group of youth in creating a Water Protector mural by Isaac

Murdoch on the building’s western wall.

The Giiwedining Museum began as a project funded by Honor the Earth and Akiing, an Anishinaabe Community Development organization. In October of 2022, Akiing purchased the Carnegie building and has been undertaking essential renovations to prepare for its first exhibits.

Frank Bibeau, Executive Director of Akiing, is pleased with the progress of the museum project to date and looking forward to the impact that this new cultural asset will have in Minnesota’s North Country: “We have a group of hard-working people bringing together history, culture, treaty and constitutional rights. And that story will begin a new public narrative in northern Minnesota.”

The Giiwedining Museum, funded entirely on private contributions, is the first independent Indigenous Museum in Minnesota. Giiwedining plans to develop a supporting membership base and will also seek funds from state agencies and foundations to support future exhibits and additional staffing.

For more information on the project, check out the website: <https://giiwedining.org>.

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