

Meehkweelintamankwi Aanchsahaaciki

“We remember our forced removal.”

1846 - 2021

Commemorating the 175th Anniversary of the Forced Removal of the Myaamiaki From Our Homelands

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Photo by Doug Peconge.

aatotankiki Myaamiaki

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Myaamia Publications

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About the Relationship Between the Miami Tribe and Miami University

By Kara Strass - Aacimotaatiiyankwi Community Blog Post, Dec. 8, 2020

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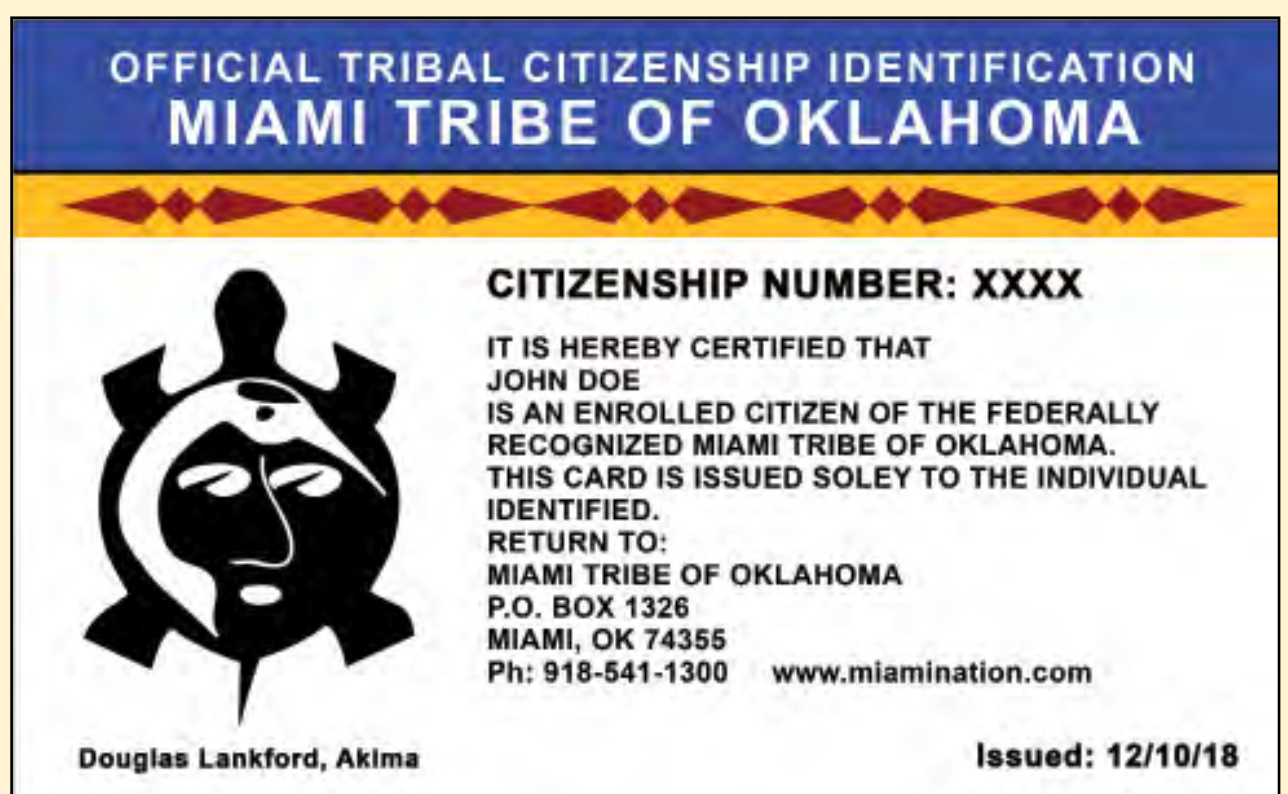
or by phone 918-541-1300.

REQUEST NEW CITIZEN ENROLLMENT CARDS

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has issued a new format for its **Tribal Citizen/Member Identification and Enrollment Card**. The new plastic card allows for the inclusion of a photograph of the Enrolled Citizen/Member and also allows the inclusion of a Myaamia name. Tribal citizens who wish to obtain the new card should contact Tera Hatley, Member Services Manager, at thatley@miamination.com or by phone at 918-541-1324.



CARD FRONT



CARD BACK

**Miami Nation News is on Facebook
at AATOTANKIKI MYAAMIAKI-
Miami Nation News**



aacimwita akima: The Chief Reports

By Chief Douglas Lankford, eecipoonkwia

Aya, ceeki eeweemakiki – greetings to all my relatives. Ciinkwia akookaki noontawakinci-ki – the spring peepers began to sing here in Myaamionki Nooŝonke Siipionki in late March and the sound of Ciinkwia – that rumble of thunder – followed as our cue to put our stories away for another season of peekitahaminki. I always look forward to the general change of seasons. Our winter had been mild until that deep cold arrived in mid-February. The deep freeze took a toll on several of our buildings including the Drake House and our Archive where water leaking from frozen drains (even with water dripping to help protect against freezing) and pipes damaged ceilings, walls and flooring.

I know the virus has been at the center of attention, personally and here at Tribal headquarters, and it has affected many within our community as victims or in loss of loved ones. Our sincere sympathy to all who lost someone during this strange time, from the virus or some other cause. Please know our hearts and prayers are with you. Like you, we are all tired of the pandemic. We long for family and community gatherings. I believe we are getting close to this long-awaited time of restoration. Until then, please, let us all continue to help prevent the spread so those still waiting for a vaccine can stay safe. We will be together soon.

The pandemic has hampered many functions of Tribal operations, and we have all become quite adept in the use of video meetings. We have worked hard to keep programs and projects in service and moving forward as safely as possible. This has been possible due to the commitment of our employees, and we are so grateful. When we had to close the Tribal offices to public access early in the pandemic, our concern centered around the need to plan and hold the Tribe’s most important and constitutional event, the annual General Council meeting. Thankfully, in early August we were able to hold the annual meeting, though all other events traditionally held leading up to the meeting, known as our National Gathering Week, were cancelled due to the virus threat.

The meeting of the General Council was safely held outdoors under the dance pavilion next to our Pow Wow arena. Our agenda included all standard reports from Tribal leaders, approval of minutes to the previous year’s meeting, and election of officers. Secretary Treasurer Donya Williams was re-elected to serve another three-year term, and Kay Russell was elected to serve a term on the Grievance Committee. For the first time, two sisters were elected to represent us at the same time as Grace Lankford was elected to the two-year term of Miami Nation Princess and her younger sister Bella was elected to the one-year term of Miami Nation Junior Princess. These girls are my Myaamia grand-daughters (great nieces), the grandchildren of my brother Jerry Lankford. They have grown up participating in our language camps, attending Tribal events and local Pow Wows, and we are very proud of them!

As we reported through our social media channels, the decision was made to sell the Trentman Road property in Fort Wayne, which housed our Cultural Resource Extension Office employees and served as a gathering place for community cultural education events. The location served us well; however, program attendance was growing at such a rate that we quickly outgrew the buildings’ crowd safety limits. The property sale closed on November 6, and we are actively seeking a new parcel of land that will allow us to plan for the kind of gathering place needed. Until that time arrives, we will soon have a “mobile office” vehicle that will allow CREO employees the ability to travel to various locations to host outdoor events when weather permits. Be sure to check the MYAAMIAMI Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

group Facebook page for updates to this and other news.

A ground-breaking ceremony will be announced on the Tribe’s Facebook page in late May for the new Cultural Resources Center, a cultural education and archives building provided for through a current Indian Community Development Block Grant. The new facility is set to be constructed on Tribal trust land located on the east side of our Nation’s headquarters at 3410 P. Street NW in Miami, OK.

Since my last report, Indian Country received a great win in the United States Supreme Court. On July 9, 2020 the landmark case *McGirt v. Oklahoma* was decided, holding that the Muscogee Creek Nation reservation was never disestablished by Congress and that jurisdiction for criminal offenses involving Native American victims or perpetrators within the reservation boundaries rests with either the federal or tribal government and not the state of Oklahoma. This decision, which results in reserved sovereign rights, was the biggest win for Indian Country in 80 years. There is an article in this edition of the newspaper which goes into detail about this case. Following the *McGirt* decision, other *McGirt*-like cases were filed in courts across Oklahoma with lower court decisions to date upholding former reservation boundaries for the Cherokee, Seminole, Chickasaw and the Miami Tribe.

Questions have arisen such as can Tribes handle expanded jurisdiction? What is the tax implication of expanded jurisdiction? The Tribes are looking into these issues but have taken a strong, united stance that there is no need for a legislative fix by Congress. On behalf of the Business Committee, in November I sent correspondence to the entire Oklahoma delegation to strongly assert the Miami Tribe’s opposition to any legislative action to overturn the *McGirt* holding. The Miami have also joined other Tribes from Northeast Oklahoma in an Amicus (friend of the Court) brief in a case called *Terry v. Oklahoma* which will consider the historic boundaries of the Ottawa reservation. We are waiting to see if the Court will accept our petition to participate in this case. We will continue to follow these *McGirt*-like cases and lend our support to ensure that tribal sovereignty is protected.

As you are aware, in May and June of 2020 the Tribe received Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”) Funds from the Department of Treasury in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts to the Tribe and its members. The funding we received was based on number of enrolled members, land base and number of employees. Tribes submitting information to the Department of Treasury received differing amounts based on certification information submitted. The Tribes received strict, narrow guidance on how funding amounts could be spent. The Business Committee appointed a CARES Act Fund Team (“CAFT”) and retained the services of an expert consultant to provide recommendations and guidance for fund expenditures. These steps were taken to ensure expenditures met Department of Treasury CARES Act Fund requirements so there will be no required repayment of CARES Act Funds for non-compliant expenditures.

COVID-19 has created great hardship for many, and the Tribe has worked to utilize these Department of Treasury funds to offset COVID hardships and to mitigate the spread of the disease. There is an article in this newspaper as well that speaks to programs the Tribe is implementing with use of the CARES Act Funds.

Lastly, I am pleased to report the conclusion of *Rosas v. AMG Services, Inc.* this month. *Rosas*, a California case, was the last of the state court class action cases stemming from the Tribe’s loan company business which was concluded in 2014. The Tribe won



Akima Eecipoonkwia
Chief Douglas Lankford
Photo by Andrew Strack.

in the lower courts, and though it took years, the plaintiff *Rosas* continued to litigate finally submitting a petition for certiorari to the California Supreme Court. On November 24th the California Supreme Court denied cert to hear the matter, concluding this lengthily legal matter. The Tribe can finally put this last piece of the history of the loan company behind it. Leadership would like to thank our team of lawyers at Fox Rothschild, the Jacobson Law Group and our in-house counsel, for their hard work and dedication to see this matter fairly concluded.

There are two important commemorative events on the horizon that I want to bring to your attention. There is an annual calendar date, October 6, that we commemorate with strong emotions and is known to us as “Removal Day”. A day in our history that is shrouded in sadness, anger, division and great loss. Note that I used “commemorate”, not celebrate. We hold that day in memory. We talk about it, teach our young people about it. As our knowledge about the events that required it continues to grow, so our understanding and feelings about that painful journey continue to morph and change. The removal occurred in 1846. October 6, 2021 will mark the 175th anniversary of that day of immeasurable change. Our Cultural Resources Office will commemorate this anniversary year with publications and presentations that will continue to expand our knowledge and understanding about the removal. We will close the commemorative anniversary year with presentations during the 2022 Winter Gathering.

The second commemorative event is to be a celebration of yet another anniversary. It was in 1972 that our late Chief Forest Olds set a course for our history in motion with his surprise visit to a beautiful campus and school in Oxford, Ohio bearing the name Miami University. As we close our commemoration of the removal, the 2022 Winter Gathering will mark the kick-off to the celebration of our 50-year relationship with Miami University. The events for this celebration are currently in planning and certainly will be announced further as a calendar is set.

Though our offices remain closed to the public, we believe, with the vaccinations now in wider distribution, that we will see a reopening date sometime in early summer. Until then, we are eagerly making early plans for the General Council meeting on the last Saturday in June. We will keep you posted on those plans and other news through our social media pages and the Tribal website at www.miamination.com. Until we can safely meet again, peehki-kanaweeko - be safe and well.
Akima Eecipoonkwia

The 2021 annual meeting of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma General Council is set for Saturday, June 26th, in Miami, OK. Please watch the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Facebook page and website for updates on the meeting. On Facebook at MYAAMIAMI Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and via website at miamination.com.

Recent United States Supreme Court Decision Leads to Local District Court Holding Miami Tribe of Oklahoma 1867 Treaty Reservation Boundaries Remain Intact

By Robin Lash, General Legal Counsel, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

On July 9, 2020, the United States Supreme Court issued a decision in a landmark case *McGirt v. Oklahoma*, 591 U.S., 140 S. Ct. 2452 (2020), which holds that millions of acres of land in east central Oklahoma established as a reservation for the Creek Nation was never disestablished by Congress and remains intact today. Specifically, the court looked at the 1901 General Allotment Act (“GAA”) which opened up surplus Indian lands to non-Indians; it did not disestablish the Reservation. The Court noted that while “Congress may have passed all above laws to create the conditions for disestablishment, to equate allotment with disestablishment would confuse the first step of a march with arrival at its destination.” Because the reservation was found never to have been disestablished by Congress, the state of Oklahoma could not exercise criminal jurisdiction over an alleged crime involving a Native American victim or perpetrator, or occurring within recognized reservation boundaries. That jurisdiction rests with either the federal or tribal government, not state jurisdiction. It is a matter of reserved sovereign rights.

Jimmy McGirt, a Seminole tribal member, was tried and convicted by the State of Oklahoma for felony sex crimes against an underage child. The alleged crimes occurred within the historic boundaries of the Muscogee Creek Nation, which the State considered to no longer exist. McGirt was serving a life sentence when the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals issued its decision in *Carpenter v. Murphy*, wherein it ruled that the Creek reservation remained intact and the State lacked jurisdiction to prosecute Murphy. The State appealed and the case was accepted by the Supreme Court but remained in pending status because of a conflict with one of the Supreme Court Justices. In the meantime, the Supreme Court accepted certiorari in the *McGirt* case, which raised the same question as Murphy. The *McGirt* decision is one of the biggest wins for Indian Country in 80 years.

Writing for the majority, Justice Neil Gorsuch agreed with both McGirt and the Mus-

cogee Creek Nation that the Muscogee Creek reservation had never been explicitly disestablished by Congress. Justice Gorsuch wrote: “Yes, promises were made, but the price of keeping them has become too great, so now we should just cast a blind eye. We reject that thinking. If Congress wishes to withdraw its promises, it must say so. Unlawful acts, performed long enough and with sufficient vigor, are never enough to amend the law. To hold otherwise would be to elevate the most brazen and longstanding injustices over the law, both rewarding wrong and failing those in the right. The judgment of the Court of Criminal Appeals of Oklahoma is Reversed.” Several other McGirt-like cases were immediately filed by Native Americans tried by the State of Oklahoma for major crimes committed on the Cherokee, Seminole, and Chickasaw reservations. All cases upheld former reservation boundaries.

It wasn’t long before the Miami Tribe’s McGirt-like case came before the court. In *State of Oklahoma v. Rebecca Rose Leppard* (Ottawa County Case No. CF-2019-194) the defendant, a Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal member, was charged in 2019 with Assault and Battery with a Dangerous Weapon and Domestic Assault and Battery. These crimes took place on the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma reservation. Leppard was subsequently found guilty and a sentencing hearing was set for September 3, 2020. Following the U.S. Supreme Court decision in McGirt, Leppard filed a Motion to Dismiss for lack of jurisdiction arguing the State had no jurisdiction to prosecute her as she is an Indian and the offense was committed in Indian Country. On October 15, 2020, the Ottawa County District Court dismissed the case finding that the offense occurred on the Miami Reservation, which had never been disestablished, and the State therefore lacked jurisdiction to charge and prosecute the case.

As with *McGirt*, in *Leppard*, the Court reviewed evidence and agreed that the Miami Tribe’s reservation was lawfully established under the Treaty of 1867. Also, as in *McGirt*,

the Court in *Leppard* Court then followed the three-step test in *Solem v. Bartlett*, 465 U.S. 463 (1984) to determine if the Miami reservation had been disestablished.

Under *Solemn* the court first looks at the congressional statute to determine if Congress clearly and expressly intended to disestablish the reservation. Under *Solem*, as clarified by *McGirt*, if step one is clear the Court does not proceed to steps two and three. Here the Court also looked at the 1901 General Allotment Act. Like *Solem* and *McGirt*, the *Leppard* court held that opening up reservation lands for settlement by non-Indians does not constitute the intent to diminish reservation boundaries. As such, in *Leppard*, the Court held that the Miami reservation remains intact and dismissed the case for lack of jurisdiction. The U.S. Attorney’s office will now review the case for prosecution.

These *McGirt* wins are so important to each and every Tribe. Native American defendants in criminal cases of all stages are filing McGirt-like appeals or pleadings to initiate review. The Miami Tribe is participating as an Amicus (friend of the Court) in an active case challenging jurisdiction for a crime prosecuted by the State which occurred on the Ottawa Tribe’s reservation. Each win for Tribes in these cases are wins for Indian Country.

Questions have arisen as a result of these cases upholding reservation status. Can Tribes assume the responsibility that comes with expanded jurisdiction? What are the tax implications with expanded jurisdiction? The Miami Tribe, like other Tribes, is creating its own Reservation Review Committee to identify impacts, needs or issues of the Tribe or its law enforcement, Social Services, or Court which may be impacted as a result of the *Leppard* case holding. “The Miami Tribe is very pleased that our reservation boundaries are finally recognized,” said Chief Lankford. “Sadly, it took a Supreme Court case to formalize what we, as Indian people, always knew.”

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Response to the Corona Virus Pandemic

By Robin Lash, General Legal Counsel, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

A year has passed since Miami Tribe Leadership declared a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic which began sweeping through the country and the Miami reservation. Through these past months the Business Committee has worked tirelessly putting measures in place to protect the health, well-being, and general welfare of the tribal employees, tribal members and the community. The Miami Tribe remains in a State of Emergency with government buildings closed to the public and employees working both on property and remotely from home.

In response to the April 2020 Department of Treasury announcement of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”) Funds to be released to tribal governments, the Miami Tribe submitted required documents and certifications to receive funds. The Department of Treasury issued different fund amounts to different tribes based on number of enrolled members, land base and number of employees. In May and June the Miami Tribe received CARES Act funding and the Business Committee appointed a CARES Act Fund Team (“CAFT”) and retained the services of a Cares Act expert consultant to work with the CAFT to make recommendations to the Business Committee for programs and services compliant with narrowly tailored Department of Treasury Guidance for CARES Act Fund expenditures. The Department of Treasury requires that all CARES Act Funds be used to cover costs that 1) are necessary expenditures incurred do to COVID-19; 2) were not accounted for in the budget on March 1, 2020; and 3) were incurred March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020.

The initial concern of the Business Committee was to provide some financial as-

sistance to its citizens impacted by COVID-19. The Business Committee was advised by legal and its CARES Act consultant that general disbursements to tribal members was not authorized in the Department of Treasury guidance and funds issued as such would likely have to be reimbursed. The Business Committee authorized the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma General Welfare Ordinance under which it would structure grants for tribal members to apply for assistance for needs as a direct result of COVID. The first program implemented was the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Family Assistance Program followed by the COVID-19 General Welfare Program Emergency Technology Assistance Grant. The Tribe’s Social Services Department, Indian Child Welfare program, and Housing Department also implemented funding assistance for those who qualified. At that time, healthcare experts forecasted the pandemic remaining up to a year or longer with projected spikes in COVID possibly resulting in additional shelter in place orders. In response, the Tribe planned for long range expenditures to assist the Tribe. To date, the following CARES Act Fund expenditures have been authorized: cleaning expenses for tribal buildings with COVID exposure; Police Department protective equipment, additional uniforms and supplies; electronic equipment to allow for remote employee work; upgraded servers and software to support remote employee work to ensure continued tribal services; equipment and software to convert cultural education programs in an electronic format including the language immersion camps; HVAC upgrades for clean air in tribal buildings; remodel and upgrade of the Long House to become a distance learning location; construction of a site with tiny houses to

provide a location for tribal members to quarantine safely; construction of a meat processing facility to process the Tribe’s livestock and provide meat processing for tribal members; mobile CREO office, Ft. Wayne Indiana; personal protective equipment (PPE) in all administration buildings; hazard pay for tribal police, Title VI, ICWA and HUD employees interfacing with the public; reimbursement to the Tribe for time paid to employees performing other work duties as a direct result of COVID; expenses related to holding the Annual Meeting outdoors. Other possible expenditures include remodel of headquarters storage area to create a large court room to allow for in-person court hearings with social distancing, and remodel of two additional sites for use as COVID quarantine locations for tribal families. The CAFT has worked hard to identify tribal needs, present options that comply with guidelines, document tribal justification for expenditures and work with contracted experts to ensure compliance. The expenditures to date are geared toward mitigating the spread of the disease while improving the Tribe’s ability to communicate with tribal members and provide services for tribal members during these trying times.

This global pandemic has been difficult for everyone. The Business Committee sends its condolences to those who may have suffered COVID related illness or loss of family or friends. The Business Committee asks that everyone remain patient and stay diligent in following CDC guidance to mitigate the spread of this disease. Happier days are coming. We are all in this together and we will come through this together.



Miami Tribe Sells Cultural Resources Extension Office

Staff Article

On September 19, 2020, Chief Douglas Lankford represented the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Business Committee at a local community meeting held outdoors at the Tribe’s Cultural Resources Extension Office (CREO) located at 10901 Trentman Road in Fort Wayne, IN. Invitations to the meeting were mailed to tribal households within a 150-mile radius of Fort Wayne. Tribal leadership hosted the informal meeting to inform the local community of the planned sale of the 10-acre property with the CREO office building where local members engaged in workshops and cultural education gatherings.

The sale of the property was planned after Tribal leadership heard the request of the Cultural Resources Office to locate a property better suited to the constant growth of cultural programs and for the Tribe’s important work and presence in the homeland region. The current location was purchased in 2014 and the growth in attendance at cultural education events and gatherings has already reached the properties capacity for parking and interior space for event attendance. Chief Lankford stated the sale of the property is the first necessary step in addressing cultural needs expressed by the Cultural Resources Office and to expand the Tribe’s land ownership and presence in the heartland region of Myaamionki.

Chief Lankford applauded the work of CREO employees Doug Peconge and Diane Hunter and cited their efforts in the tremendous growth in community engagement and public awareness of the Miami Tribe in the area. Chief Lankford also thanked the community for its strong support and encouragement for cultural

programs and gatherings hosted by the CREO. Chief Lankford stated the Tribe has initiated the search for a parcel of land better suited to the Tribe’s needs and assured the community the work of the CREO would continue in various locations until a new space is secured.

The property sold in early October and the sale closed on November 6, 2020. The funds from the sale are being held in reserve while the Tribe continues to search for another location better suited to the needs of the Cultural Resources Office and the need for greater space for community gatherings.

In a social media post on November 7th, 2020, Doug Peconge, Community Programming Manager for the CREO, had this to say: “Yesterday was an emotionally tough day as we closed on the sale of the Trentman road property in Fort Wayne. This property has been home to the Cultural Resources Extension Office(CREO) for over five years. While our Myaamia community gatherings there started with 20 - 30 community members, it has progressed to attendances of 60-80 community members. We have outgrown the building as a community. The Tribe has begun looking for a place that will better meet the needs and growth of our Myaamia community. I look back on the many wonderful conversations I have had with community members, the lacrosse games we played together, stomp dance, and the meals we shared together. I will always look back on that place with fondness and joy because of the moments we shared together. Today I am excitedly looking forward to a new home for the CREO and a place for all of us to create new memories.”

Miami Tribe Set to Construct Quarantine Site in Myaamia Reservation Area

Staff Article

On April 12th, 2021, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma broke ground on a project to install a series of tiny houses designed to serve the needs of Tribal citizens to quarantine away from their homes and families during the pandemic.

The project was approved by the Tribe’s Leadership in early 2021 and is made possible through CARES Act funding.

The tiny houses, 10 in all, will be placed on the south side of the Title VI Food Program facility located on the Tribe’s western campus in the Miami Reservation area of Ottawa County, OK.

The structures, purchased from Glamping Pods of America, are built in the Midwest and delivered as fully assembled. Each has heat/air units, sleep 2-4 adults and measure 10’ 5” wide by 16’ long. They include a small refrigerator, microwave, toaster, and other amenities.

The project is under the direction of the Tribe’s Roads, Cemetery & Parks Department and the construction was awarded to Maska Builders out of Tulsa, OK . The unique community of structures is known in Myaamia as minooteenhshi – a small village.



On April 12, 2021 the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma held a ground-breaking ceremony to kick off the construction of a unique tiny-house quarantine project. The structures will be located on the western building campus, just to the south of the Myaamia Community Center, in the Oklahoma reservation area. Participants in the ground-breaking, pictured left to right: James Battese, Cemetery, Parks and Roads Officer, Second Chief Dustin Olds, Chief Douglas Lankford, Secretary-Treasurer Donya Williams, First Councilperson Tera Hatley and Second Councilperson Scott Willard. AM Staff Photo.

Consolidation of Miami Tribe Office Locations Underway

Staff Article

In March 2021, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Business Committee completed the sale of two office buildings in downtown Miami, OK. The buildings, located at 121 and 125 N. Main Street, previously housed the Tribe’s Environmental Quality Department and the business archive.

The sale facilitates the ongoing effort to consolidate offices within the Tribe’s two campuses located within Myaamia reservation boundaries in Ottawa County, OK.

A large-scale relocation of offices within the Tribal Headquarters will make room for the Social Service programs and Vehicle Tag Office, currently located inside the old Tribal Headquarters at 202 S. Eight Tribes Trail.

A new Elder Activity Center (EAC) building is set for construction next door to the Title VI/Myaamia Community Center and Dining Hall. The building will house the small library, workout equipment, and computer access for elders as previously supplied in the old Activity Center. The new space will also include an arts and crafts area.

The old Elder Activity Center, located directly west of the Tribal Council House, will be converted to the Cultural Resources Center and house the Cultural Resources Office and related programs and projects. The south end of the building will provide the needed office and lab space for the Environmental Quality Department as they move from their downtown office location.

The relocation and consolidation plan will place all but three Tribal employees working in Miami, OK, within offices located in either the east campus (Tribal Headquarters) or the west campus (Council House, dining hall, wellness center, and pow wow grounds.)

The Myaamia Heritage Museum & Archive (MHMA) and the Miami Nation Gift Shop will remain in the 28 N. Main building in downtown Miami. The three employees for these businesses are the only employees who will be working off-campus.

The Tribe will lease the vacated office space at the old Tribal Headquarters to Miami Nation Enterprises for business development needs.

The consolidation and relocation work will be complete before the annual General Council meeting on June 26, 2021.

Nation’s Cabinetry is the Largest Tribal-owned Cabinet Company

Staff Article

Miami Nation Enterprises, the economic subdivision of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, has purchased the remaining minority interest in Nation’s Cabinetry. The purchase makes the company the largest tribal-owned cabinet manufacturer in the kitchen and bath cabinet market.

Nation’s Cabinetry, ranked 127 in the most recent FDMC 300, has grown from a regional startup to a multi-brand company and boasts sales across the U.S.

Read more about Nation’s Cabinetry, and other Tribal businesses, on the Miami Nation Enterprises website at <http://www.mn-e.com>.

FALL GATHERING - COMMUNITY REUNION
Friday, Sept. 24 & Saturday, Sept. 25, 2021

Tribal citizens and their families are invited to travel to Nooŝonke Siipionki Myaamionki - Miami, OK for this two-day celebration of our return to community gatherings. Watch for updates and details on social media and the tribal website at www.miamination.com.

2020 General Council Meeting

Staff Article

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma completed the Nation's constitutional duty to hold an annual General Council meeting in 2020 during the Corona Virus Pandemic. The original meeting date, set for the last Saturday in June each year, had to be postponed due to the swift spread of the virus in the spring months.

Tribal leaders determined the required meeting could be safely held outdoors under the dance pavilion next to the Miami Nation Pow Wow Grounds. The meeting was set for Saturday, August 1, 2020, and was announced to the General Council by letter and social media.

Registration tents were set up around the pow wow arena to allow social distancing for citizens and guests. The meeting was called to order at 8:23 a.m. Masks were encouraged, and social distancing was supported with chairs spaced safely. Approximately 110 people were in attendance with 80 voting age citizens counted.

Annual reports were given by Chief Douglas Lankford and Secretary-Treasurer Donya Williams. The minutes of the 2019 General Council meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

Per the Tribal Constitution, elections were held for Secretary-Treasurer of the Tribal Business Committee, a seat on the Grievance Committee, the two-year term of Miami Nation Princess and the one-year term of Miami Nation Junior Princess. The Ballot Committee counted the votes which were then certified by Legal Counsel. Donya Williams was re-elected to serve the three-year term on the Business Committee; P. Kay Russell was elected to serve the three-year term on the Grievance Committee, Grace Lankford was elected to serve the two-year term of Miami Nation Princess and Bella Lankford was elected to serve the one-year term of Miami Nation Junior Princess. Chief Lankford administered the Oath of Office.

It is the custom of the Tribe to bestow honor and gifts to elders and the youngest child in attendance during the meeting. Those recognized were:

Eldest Female and Male in attendance: Tribal citizens Velma Turner and James Battese
Youngest Child of an enrolled Myaamia citizen in attendance: Ryla Eileen Rose Aiello, three-month old daughter of Myaamia citizen Jennifer Potter.

Tribal Elders "75 Year" Honor: Those receiving a Pendleton Blanket for reaching the age of 75 years: Chief Judy Davis and Sister Edwina Pope. (This honor is given only once to Myaamia citizens aged 75 or older. The gift requires attendance at the annual General Council meeting.)

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m. and a drive-thru lunch pick-up was provided.



Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Chief Douglas Lankford administers the Oath of Office to citizens elected to positions of service during the 2020 General Council meeting. Pictured with the Chief, from left to right are: Donya Williams, re-elected to a three year term of service on the Tribal Business Committee; Grace Lankford, elected to a two-year term as Miami Nation Princess/Ambassador; Bella Lankford, elected to a one-year term as Miami Nation Junior Princess; Kay Russell, elected to a three-year term on the Grievance Committee. Photo by Jonathan Fox.



Congratulations to Chief Judy Davis of Miami, OK, and Sister Edwina Pope, ASC, of Wichita, KS, (pictured with First Councilperson Tera Hatley) who received their Elder Blanket during the 2020 General Council meeting. It is the custom of the Tribe to gift elders attending the General Council meeting who are 75 years of age. Photo, left, by Jonathan Fox; right, by Doug Peconge.



Social distancing and masks were the order of the day during the 2020 annual General Council meeting of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. The meeting was held Saturday, August 1, outdoors under the dance pavilion at the Tribe's Pow Wow grounds to provide a safe gathering space for Tribal citizens and their families. Photo by Doug Peconge.

(Left) Outgoing Miami Nation Princess Tabby Watson, left, crowns the newly elected Princess, Grace Lankford during the 2020 General Council meeting. Young women aged 16 -21 are eligible to run for the two-year reign of Miami Nation Princess. Photo by Jonathan Fox.



The 2021 annual meeting of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma General Council is set for Saturday, June 26th, in Miami, OK. Please watch the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Facebook page and website for updates on the meeting. On Facebook at MYAAMIAMI Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and via website at miamination.com.



The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has approved a new icon to show respect to veterans.

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Adopts New Logo to Honor Tribal Veterans

AM Staff Article

In late June each year, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma holds the Nation’s General Council meeting. Before the business of the meeting proceeds, the Chief calls on all veterans in attendance to come to the front of the Council House to be honored. Gifts are presented and each veteran is handed the microphone to give their name, military service branch and years served. It is a tradition intended to show the respect due those who have served, and those who continue in active duty.

In the fall of 2020, the Tribe’s Cultural Resources Office sought approval for a graphic design with embedded cultural meaning created to visibly show respect to tribal veterans. The design bears the Myaamia word meekaahkiihpanaki - ‘those who used to be warriors’ - and is intended to provide a permanent reminder of the sacrifices, bravery and honor due to those who commit to military service.

The design is understood as follows:

- Red Text - because of the strong association between that color and war.
- Black background - war has long been recognized as a kind of darkness that descends and obscures our vision.
- White Pipe - symbolizes peace. (Note: Pipes covered in white feathers were used as a part of the ceremony of bringing about peace through creating new relationships.)
- Red Gunstock Warclub - symbolizes war. (Note: The warclub was the personalized weapon of a Myaamia warrior historically. Red is one of the colors associated with warfare because of its obvious connections to blood and sacrifice.
- The diamond patterns connect with the Myaamia community flag a reminder that our warriors fought and continue to fight to protect our community. Diamond patterns have been used to reference ciinkwia ‘Thunder being’ who was often sought out for help in matters related to warfare.
- The raccoon paw print recognizes that historically the Raccoon Clan

- had the responsibility of organizing war at the village level.
- Green circle - symbolizes peace. (Note: At the Treaty of Carlisle 1753 the Myaamia delivered a beaver blanket with a green circle painted on it. The Myaamia representatives described it this way: “We acquaint all our Brethren that We have prepared this Beaver Blanket as a Seat for all our Brethren to sit on in Council. In the middle of it We have painted a green Circle, which is the Colour and Resemblance of our Hearts, which We desire our Brethren may believe are sincere towards our Alliance with them.”
- Together with the pipe, the circle helps remind us that war has to be balanced with peace or we risk great harm.
- 3 Stripes (Note: These three colors, together with the black background, complete the directional colors of the Myaamia. Black/North pipoonahkonkiši ‘to the north’ - symbolizing depth of time and the accumulated wisdom of elders as well as death. Red/West pankihšinkiši ‘westward’ - the color of the adult age of responsibility, of our warriors, of blood shed, knowledge gained, the responsibility to live and share that knowledge, and maturity/setting sun.
- Blue/South maayaahkweeciši ‘to the south’- symbolizing older youth, warmth, and the renewal of spring. Yellow/East awansaapiciši ‘eastward’ - symbolizing birth/re-birth, and the young children who need a lot of care from the community.
- The Miami Nation Gift Shop has t-shirts available with the design but incorporating the Myaamia words for “We Honor our Veterans”, making the shirts available to the community to show support and honor our veterans.
- Flags will be ordered with the design to be flown at Tribal Headquarters, inside the Council House, and carried by veterans during Grand Entry at the Miami Nation Pow Wow and other dances.

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Provides New Identity Logo to Tribal Community

Staff Article

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has adopted a new Myaamia citizen’s icon designed to visually support individual Myaamia identity and tribal citizenship. The graphic merges the Tribe’s popular cultural community icon (turtle/crane/face) with the ring of directional colors found in the Tribe’s formal governmental seal.

The ring of colors, representing the four directions, is interpreted as follows:

- awaansaapiciši (eastward) is represented as yellow and is the color for our babies and very small children. It is the color of the rising sun, the new day, emergence, and birth.
- Maayaahkweeciši (southward) is represented by blue/green and represents our youth. It is the color of growth, learning, and seeking knowledge.
- Pankihšinkiši (westward) is represented by red and is the color of the adult age of responsibility. It is the color of our warriors, of blood shed, maturity, knowl-

edge gained, the responsibility to live and share that knowledge.

- Pipoonahkionkiši (northward) is represented as black and honors our Elders. Black represents earned respect, wisdom, closing of day/time/winter, and preparation for the journey ahead.
- The inner area of the circle is white representing peace and harmony.

The cultural community icon, in the center of the design, is made up of images of importance to the Myaamiaki. The shape of the turtle represents our homelands/place. The human face and the head and neck of ceecaahkwa - the sandhill crane - were understood, and recorded by our ancestors, to represent the people/Myaamiaki.

The new Myaamia citizen’s icon will be printed on garments, flags and other items to be made available to the Myaamia community through the Miami Nation Gift Shop at <http://www.myaamiagifts.com>.



The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has approved a new Myaamia citizen’s icon designed to support individual Myaamia identity and tribal citizenship.

City of Huntington, Indiana Recognizes Myaamia People with Official Proclamation

By Kara Strass

Wiipicahkionki ‘Huntington, Indiana’ along the Waapaahšiki Siipiiwi ‘Wabash River’ has been and continues to be an important Myaamia place within our homelands. Just as importantly, it is a place where Myaamia people still live and are actively involved in their community.

Huntington elected a new mayor, Richard Strick, in 2019, and early in his tenure, he connected with several Myaamia people, including Sue Strass and Robert Miller. As he learned more about the Myaamia people and our ongoing contributions to Huntington, he wanted the City of Huntington to recognize the Myaamia community and our contributions to the area with an official proclamation. The proclamation “recognizes the unique, lasting, and ongoing contributions from Myaamia people to the City of Huntington and strongly encourage all contemporary residents to work to properly understand the history.”

The proclamation was signed on Tuesday, November 24th, 2020. While the proclamation signing could not be open to the general public due to coronavirus precautions, a small group of Myaamia people was able to gather. Diane Hunter and Doug Peconge from the Cultural Resource Extension Office, Kara Strass from the Myaamia Center, and Myaamia citizens Katrina Mitten and Robert Miller were able to get together ahead of the signing to talk with Mayor Strick about Myaamia history, language, and culture. Myaamia elder Sue Strass of Hun-

tington, and a few additional family members were able to join for the official signing of the proclamation.

While the proclamation is a good first step in creating a relationship between the Miami Tribe and the local government in Huntington, Indiana, everyone involved agreed that there is much more work to be done to move the relationship forward. For those of us who continue to spend time in Huntington, we recognize our connections to Wiipicahkionki through the people and the land, and this is just the first recognition of that by the city government.

The language of the proclamation is as follows:

WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush first approved a joint resolution designating the month of November as “National American Indian Heritage Month” on August 3rd, 1990, and,

WHEREAS, the Wabash River, the Waapaahšiki Siipiiwi, was and continues to be the heart of Myaamia homelands, and,

WHEREAS, the Forks of the Wabash, the Wiipicahkionki, the ‘Flint Place’ was one end of overland portage between the St Lawrence and the Mississippi River, and,

WHEREAS, the Chief’s house built at the Wiipicahkionki was the last council house of the Myaamia Nation east of the Mississippi and capital of the Myaamia Nation, and,

WHEREAS, the Chief’s house was the

site of the signing of both the 1834 and 1840 treaties forcing the removal of many Myaamia people, and,

WHEREAS, the Myaamia people continue to have a sizeable population in the Huntington area and the Wabash River Valley, and,

WHEREAS, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has a continued presence in their homelands in Indiana through its citizenship and exerts sovereignty through the efforts of the Cultural Resources Extension Office and Tribal Historic Preservation Office

WHEREAS, the Myaamia people continue to persist in renewing Myaamia culture and language, and,

WHEREAS, the Myaamia people indelibly shaped the City of Huntington through land grants for historic church congregations and this same contribution is borne out in various street names, and,

WHEREAS, Huntington remains a significant place for the cultural continuity of the Myaamia people.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Richard Strick, Mayor of the City of Huntington, do hereby recognize the unique, lasting, and ongoing contributions from Myaamia people to the City of Huntington and strongly encourage all contemporary residents to work to properly understand and tell the history right.



On November 24, 2020, representatives of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma witnessed the signing of a proclamation, by Huntington, IN Mayor Richard Strick, honoring the contributions of Myaamia people to the Huntington area. Front row, left to right: Diane Hunter, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Kara Strass, Director of Miami Tribe Relations at the Myaamia Center at Miami University, Huntington, IN Mayor Richard Strick, Myaamia Elder Sue Strass, Myaamia citizen Robert Miller, Myaamia citizen Rachel Cirullo and Myaamia citizen and acclaimed artist Katrina Mitten. Back row: Myaamia citizen Kirk Strass and Myaamia citizen Haley Shea.

Myaamia Cultural Education Center Renovation Underway

Staff Article

With federal funding from the CARES Act, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has approved a plan to improve the Ethel Miller Moore Cultural Education Center (CEC) to allow for enhanced distance learning capabilities during and after the pandemic.

The Indian Action Team constructed the building in 1978 on 4 acres of Tribal trust land located within the Ethel Miller Moore allotment.

Originally designed to serve as the Tribe’s longhouse, meeting, and community center, the building was the first Tribal structure

owned by the Miami Tribe since the Nation’s arrival in Indian Territory in the early 1870s. In 2014 the Tribe listed the building on the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma’s National Register of Historic Properties.

The building is structurally sound but does require improvement before the planned cultural education programs can begin. The renovation plan will improve the kitchen area to allow cooking classes on-site and recorded for delivery to the Tribe’s dispersed community.

Improved lighting, technology resources, and expanded rest room facilities are a part

of the interior renovation work. Externally, improvements to the parking area are complete, while updating the septic system awaits improved ground conditions.

The building has most recently been used for arts and crafts classes and provides a beautiful setting for family reunions and funeral gatherings. The improvements should be complete before the Tribe’s General Council meeting in late June of 2021. The Cultural Resources Office will announce an open house event upon completion of the renovation.

About the Myaamia Ethnobotanical Database - mahkihkiwa.org

Named Mahkihkiwa – herb medicines as a reminder of the importance of plants to living well from a Myaamia point of view. If there is a plant you want to know more about, you can search its common name in English and then learn its Myaamia name and scientific name. At the bottom of each entry, there are drop-down menus for Myaamia Archival Sources and Botanical Sources. In the Myaamia Archival Sources menu you will find historical records from over 100 years ago as well as plant information that elders shared in the 1990s. Does your family have plant related information or stories to add? Let us know in the comments and it just might end up in Mahkihkiwa.

Meehkweelintamankwi Aanchsahaaciki - Remembering Our Forced Removal: 175 Years

Staff Article

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma is commemorating the 175th anniversary of the forced removal of the Miami Tribe from its homeland through written articles posted to the tribe’s community blog spot at aacimotaatiyankwi.org.

On October 6, 1846, the United States government began the forced removal of Myaamia people from our historic homelands in the Wabash River Valley. On that solemn, heartbreaking day, Myaamia people were forced at gunpoint onto canal boats near Iihkipihsinonki ‘the Straight Place’ (Peru, Indiana). All told, in just over a month of forced travel, over 320 Myaamia people were moved via canals and rivers to Kanza Landing (Kansas City, Missouri) in the Unorganized Indian Territory. At least seven Myaamia people died on the journey, and many more died over the following winter. Two babies were also born on the month-long journey. This forced removal fragmented the Myaamia community, as five family leaders retained the right to receive their treaty annuities in Indiana and thereby remained behind on individual or family reserves in the state.

As we post the accounts of the removal, we should all take a moment and reflect on this arduous journey and remember the Myaamia people who suffered separation from their homes and their families in the fall of 1846. It is through their struggles that the Miami Nation endured on a new national land base west of the Mihsi-Siipiiwi (Mississippi River).

Beginning with Weehki-Kihkatwe ‘Lunar New Year’ the Cultural Resources Office began Meehkweelintamankwi Aanchsahaaciki ‘Remembering Our Forced Removal’, a year of remembrance and commemoration. Throughout the year, we will feature educational opportunities, presentations, and events created to share knowledge about the Myaamia forced removal in an effort to help bring understanding and healing across our community. These efforts will help us see removal, not as a singular event in time that “ended” with arrival in Kansas. But rather as a great stone cast into our communal waters with ripples that have continued to move throughout generations. It is important to understand the effects of removal have been integral in shaping our national identity today.

Just as our ancestors undertook a journey that broke their hearts, we want to continue the healing journey throughout the next year to further bring our hearts together. The article included in this edition, “The Indian Removal Act of 1830 and Subsequent Pressure for Myaamia Removal”, by Diane Hunter, Miami Tribe Historic Preservation Officer, is the first history installment uploaded to the Aacimotaatiyankwi Myaamia Community Blog in early February. Since that time more installments have been added. We encourage all Myaamia families to read the articles and should any person, young or old, have any questions we encourage you to submit them to Diane Hunter, our Tribal Historic Preservation Office and author of the removal history blog entries. Reach Diane at dhunter@miamination.com.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 and Subsequent Pressure for Myaamia Removal

By Diane Hunter, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Tribal Historic Preservation Officer - Reprinted from the Aacimotaatiyankwi Myaamia Community Blog - posted Feb. 5, 2021

October 6, 2021 is the 175th anniversary of the beginning of the Miami Forced Removal from Indiana in 1846. This blog will trace the series of events and decisions that led to our Removal and beyond. A new blog post on the first Friday of each month will take you from before the 1830 Indian Removal Act to the October 1846 Removal. During the dates corresponding to the time of the Removal itself, almost daily posts will be added on each date on which we know what was happening in October-November 1846.

The 1830 Indian Removal Act is often seen as the starting point for the forced removals of tribes in the eastern parts of what is now the United States to west of the Mississippi River, but the Act had been in planning for years. Tribes had been pushed west since the arrival of the first Europeans on the east coast, and the pressure to remove became more and more intense throughout the 1820s.

This October 23, 1826 passage from a letter from Indian Agent John Tipton, Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass, and Indiana Governor John B. Ray to United States Secretary of War James Barbour illustrates that Americans were already trying to figure out how to get us out of Indiana:

“It was impossible to procure the assent of the Pattawatamies [Potawatomi] or Miamies to a removal west of the Mississippi. They are not yet prepared for this important change in their situation. Time, the destruction of the game, and the approximation of our settlements are necessary before this measure can be successfully proposed to them. It was urged as far as prudence permitted, and, in fact, until it became apparent that further persuasion would defeat every object we had in view. It was then important that the Indians should be separated into bands, by the intervention of our settlements. As long as they can roam unmolested through the country, we may in vain expect either to reclaim them from the savage life they lead, or to induce them to seek a residence where their habits and pursuits will be less injurious to us...But our principal difficulty has been with the Miamies. The country which they occupy is much more valuable than that occupied by the Pattawatamies. It is immediately upon the Wabash, and commands the great avenue of communication between the Ohio and the lakes.”

The U.S. Government’s strategy was to wait until they could remove our food source of fresh game and crowd us out by moving around and between us so that we would want to go west. They didn’t like the way we lived and hoped that living so close to Americans, we would either assimilate to their way of life or leave on our own. But the most critical issue to them was the land. They wanted our land and needed us to sell them the land and leave.

It is clear from this letter that the Americans were strategizing and unsuccessfully trying to persuade us to go. On February 15, 1830, James Noble sent a letter on behalf of Myaamia Principal Chief J.B. Richardville to the Secretary of War, saying that Chief Richardville opposed removal, making clear the Miami people did not want to be removed west.

All of this happens before the May 29, 1830 passage of the Indian Removal Act. Section 1 of this Act makes it lawful for the President of the United States to set aside land west of the Mississippi River “for such tribes or nations of Indians as may choose to exchange the lands where they now reside, and remove there.” And Section 3 says, “it shall and may be lawful for the President solemnly to assure the tribe or nation with which the exchange is made, that the United States will forever secure and guaranty to them, and their heirs or successors, the country so exchanged with them....” The Act does not require our removal west; it merely makes the exchange of our land for land west of the Mississippi River legal for the President to arrange.

The Indian Removal Act opened a path for further action by the U.S. government, including a July 9, 1832 Statute, “An Act to enable the President to extinguish Indian title with the state of Indiana, Illinois, and territory of Michigan:” “Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United states of America, in Congress assembled, That the sum of twenty thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby appropriated for the purpose of holding Indian treaties, and of finally extinguishing Indian title, within the state of Indiana....”

Immediately following the passage of this law, the U.S. government began negotiations with the Miami National Council to pressure us to cede our land and go west of the Mississippi. These negotiations followed what became a familiar pattern:

You should go west.

We will not go.

Think about it. We need a definite answer.

We will not go.

Let’s talk about this again tomorrow....

On September 10, 1832, just two months after the passage of the “Act to enable the President to extinguish Indian title,” U.S. Commissioners came to our Council House at the Forks of the Wabash in present-day Huntington, Indiana to meet with our “principal chiefs and warriors.” In their opening statement, Jonathan Jennings, one of the Board of Commissioners, said, “My Children... You who have seen many snows and have once seen the country filled with game; you who were at the Treaty of Greenville will remember that your Great Father then took you strongly by the hand. Since that time, he has always loved you - He still loves you. Your Great Father sees his red children much imposed upon by some of his bad white children, and he is sorry for it. He sees too, that the game is gone from the lands they now live on.” His statements show that the plan laid out in the October 23, 1826 letter for “the destruction of the game” had been successful. (Note: The 1832 talks between the Miami National Council and the U.S. Commissioners took place at the Miami Council House at the Forks of the Wabash. This structure was destroyed in the 1950s.)

Jennings continued, encouraging the tribe to remove west of the Mississippi because of bad white men: “Your Great Father has sent us to say to you that he has much land beyond the Mississippi where game is plenty and where the bad white man shall never go to disturb you. This land, your Great Father will keep for

Continued on page 6B.



Diane Hunter is a Myaamia citizen and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer in the Cultural Resources Office of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. AM staff photo.

Miami Nation Enterprises Hires New Director of Administrative Operations

Staff Article

Miami Nation Enterprises / Federal Contracting Group is pleased to announce that it has named Kendra King Bowes as its new Director of Administrative Operations effective May 1, 2021. In this new role Kendra King Bowes will have direct reports in business capture operations, strategic teaming and tribal certifications, office management and program management startup and launch development.

Dennis Allen, CEO of Federal Contracting Group's parent corporation said "Kendra brings outstanding credentials to our Federal Contracting Group sector. She will be a high-performance driver from day one. We are delighted to have her impressive credentials and experience as well as her Native American heritage in leading this vital segment of Federal Contracting Group."

Mrs. King Bowes has 20 years of experience in federal government contracting having served in various roles with Native American and Tribally owned companies throughout her career. She has been responsible for health, environmental, and professional services contracts supporting the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Interior, Defense, Homeland Security, Treasury, and Housing and Urban Development. She most recently served as general manager for Miami Environmental & Energy Solutions, LLC.

She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management and Marketing from

Oklahoma State University, a Master of Public Administration degree from George Mason University and is a Project Management Professional (PMP). She is a tribal member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Mrs. King Bowes said, "I am excited to serve in this new role with Miami Nation Enterprises and the Federal Contracting Group. As the Director of Administrative Operations, I will have the opportunity to support all the MNE federal contracting businesses and their diverse portfolios. It is a pleasure working for such a great company from my home state that is dedicated to supporting its Tribal members."

Mrs. King Bowes will assume the role of Director of Administrative Operations effective May 1, 2021.

Miami Nation Enterprises is the economic arm of the federally recognized Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. Miami Nation Enterprises was founded by our Tribal leaders in June 2005 to provide support and economic development opportunities for the good of the Miami Nation and its citizens. Under the umbrella of MNE, we operate a diverse collection of commercial companies and a Federal Contracting Group with offices and employees across the United States. The success and growth of MNE has helped our Native American community in various ways, including funding enhanced education, benefits for elders and other indispensable services vital to the Tribe's wellbeing and future.



Kendra King Bowes is the new Director of Administrative Operations for Miami Nation Enterprises. AM Archive Photo.

Please join us in congratulating Kendra as she takes on this new role to help ensure the company's future success.

Here's to Future Growth!

For more information or to schedule interviews, contact Gena Lankford, HR Director, at glankford@mn-e.com (918)533-6344.

Myaamia Heritage Program Fights Feelings of Disconnect During Pandemic

By Stella Beerman, Myaamia Student, Miami University

In-person classes began Monday, September 21st, 2020 for students at Miami University, despite classes already being in-session online for six weeks. Miami currently has 30 Myaamia students enrolled at the school as part of the Heritage Program. As the first and second years began moving in, it got me thinking about how our program, the Heritage Program, has been affected by Covid-19.

Like the rest of the country and presumably the world, everything around Oxford is weird for students right now. There are no longer winding lines down the street to get into the bar, students no longer crowd coffee shops in the morning, and overall, this town that is normally bustling with activity just feels quiet.

Unlike many other colleges and universities, Miami decided to do something unique to slow the spread of COVID. We spent the first 6 weeks of school participating in remote learning, while the school decided if it was safe to return to campus. This meant that while upperclassmen were able to move back to Oxford into off-campus housing, the freshmen and sophomores were faced with more difficult decisions.

First-year students who didn't want to defer a year had no choice but to stay home until Miami decided the fate of their year. Second-year students had the opportunity to forfeit the normally-required on-campus housing and move into apartments around Oxford. All students were given the option to remain remote for the entire semester and skip Oxford altogether.

During those first 6 weeks, the Heritage Program felt more disconnected than ever. Normally, all students enrolled in the program have two important gatherings during our first weeks on campus; our first class and our Fall Retreat. These gatherings give students a chance to get reacquainted after a summer apart and a chance to meet the incoming students and new staff members.

The first class is always loud, excitement fills the air as students see each other and the staff for the first time in months. We share a meal together and discuss our plans for the semester as a community. This semester's first class was done via Zoom and while it was nice to see everyone again, it wasn't the same.

Staff at the Myaamia Center attempted to create a space for students in Oxford to gather once a week and share a meal together, however, after the first week, COVID numbers in Oxford spiked and in the interest of everyone, the gatherings had to be paused.

I could already feel the disconnect as I interviewed my peers for this article. While I got quite a few excited responses from returning students, the incoming students didn't share that same willingness to participate. This isn't their fault, it's just more intimidating to sit down for a one-on-one Zoom conversation with someone you have never met.

Myaamia students have had little opportunity to gather as a community this semester. Upperclassmen have expressed empathy towards the first-years as we acknowledge that the first few weeks on campus are some of the most formative in terms of creating friendships within this community. We're excited to finally welcome them with open arms as classes resume in person.

Myaamia Center Offers Wide Range of Materials Via Youtube

By Stella Beerman, Myaamia Student, Miami University

Have you ever wanted to know more about your history, culture, or language?

Have you ever wanted to attend a Myaamiaki Conference at Miami University but you couldn't make the trip to Oxford?

What about Myaamia crafts? Is there something you've been wanting to try but didn't know where to start?

Well, let me tell you a little bit about the Myaamia Center's Youtube page. This page, hosted by the Myaamia Center, features videos about all kinds of things; from language resources to traditional game tutorials, and even information about story-telling. There is a ton to learn on this page.

I've decided to split up the material found on the page into four categories to tell you about.

The first category, and one of my favorites, is events, which include videos of previous events hosted by the Tribe or Myaamia Center. These videos include keynote speeches from past Myaamiaki Conferences, a virtual tour of the Miami Tribe's properties, and a walk-through of the Ribbonwork Exhibit that was on display at Miami University in the Spring of

2020.

Since the Myaamia community is spread throughout the country, and it would be impossible for people to attend everything, these types of videos give the entire community an opportunity to interact with events they may not be able to attend in person. This has become even more important as Covid-19 makes it harder to attend events in person.

On the Myaamia History playlist, you can find a four-part series by George Ironstrack where he dives into the history of our community. Given all that the relationship between Miami University and the Miami Tribe has achieved, there is also an overview of that relationship.

For those interested in accessing language resources, this page is plentiful. There are songs that utilize the language with translations, specific vocabulary lessons, like parts of the body, and other short language lessons. These lessons include breaking the language down into its smaller parts, such as the consonants, vowels, and nouns. Aside from learning and using the language, you will also find videos explaining how and where to access the my-

aamia dictionary and Daryl Baldwin's personal reflections on his work with the Myaamia Language.

Finally, we're left with broader cultural practice videos. These include tutorials of traditional Myaamia games, crafting your own mocasins and ribbonwork, and a few about Myaamia stories. If you've ever wondered how to use that Lunar Calendar you're sent every year, there's a video for that, too.

An additional resource we've been given, thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic, is a full Eemamwickii experience. Given that the youth camps had to be held online this year, this means that the entire community can now virtually access the material from the camps. While these resources are intended for children, it's still a great resource for the whole family, especially if you're just starting your Myaamia education. There is truly something for everyone on this page. I encourage you to check out the Myaamia Center's Youtube page at "www.youtube.com/myaamiacenter" and see what you can find for yourself!



MHMA Implements New Digital Access Platform: Kaakisitoonkia

By Meghan Dorey, MHMA Manager, and Amy Dianne Bergseth, Archives Technician

The Institute of Museum and Library Services awarded the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma a grant in July 2019 for the further development of an online portal for archival digitization. This website is for members of the Myaamia community and others to view records and items from the collections of the MHMA. Over the past year we have been creating content and this portal is now active at Kaakisitoonkia.com. The name of this website comes from the Myaamia word kaakisitoonkia, meaning “preserved objects, as in an archive.”

The website is built on a content management system called Mukurtu (pronounced MOOK-oo-too) CMS. This tool for digital access to archival and museum content is unique in that it was created with and for Indigenous communities. The name Mukurtu comes from the Warumungu word for a bag used to carry and safeguard things. Mukurtu was made to meet this Aboriginal Australian community’s needs of security and safekeeping as well as following cultural protocols and proper accessibility guidelines. In practicality, this means that there are controls for restricting access to certain cultural materials based on a user’s position and place within a community. For instance, some Indigenous communities have stories or other cultural information associated with objects that would not be appropriate to share outside of their own community. A user from that community could be granted an account that allows them to see that additional cultural information. Whereas someone without an account, and without granted accessibility, sees only what the community has decided is appropriate. Our intention is that the content generated from this grant will be available to anyone who is interested in learning about Myaamia culture through records and objects. The structure is there to be employed if there are situations where greater sensitivity of cultural knowledge is needed in the future.

Kaakisitoonkia allows for the presentation of information, records, and fragile objects located in different archives all in one place. Items can be ‘housed’ in one area at the web platform even if the physical originals are located in different museums and archives. This

is especially important since Myaamia cultural artifacts and historical archives are scattered throughout the United States and across the globe. Digitizing fragile items will also increase access while preserving the physical objects from further deterioration from additional handling. This digitization makes it easier for tribal members and other researchers to access them for cultural, language, and genealogical research.

When a user visits the website, they can find items and documents in a number of ways. One option is to browse collections, categories, or individual items (termed “Digital Heritage Items” in Kaakisitoonkia). They can also search for specific keywords or people. Each digital heritage item includes specifics such as the creator, author, contributor, dates of creation, and other collection information. Digital heritage items are assigned categories such as “Artwork” or “Government & Business” to further categorize the materials. Each item also has linked names and keywords. A user may click a keyword or name to find other materials related to that topic, theme, or person.

Many materials are already available on the site. One benefit of Kaakisitoonkia is that we are able to recreate physical exhibits in a virtual environment for community members who are not able to visit the gallery in person. Currently, “Myaamia Miincipi: Miami Corn” is on display. We have been able to include digital heritage items for all object descriptions as well as text panels and even include a number of additional items related to miincipi for this exhibition on Kaakisitoonkia. It is the hope of the MHMA that this structure of creating a collection for each physical exhibit will allow all community members to engage with the programs and educational opportunities, even if they are never able to visit.

A few years ago, the MHMA undertook a major effort to reclaim the Miami National Council Books that were previously held in the collection of the Gilcrease Museum. With the assistance of the Cultural Resources Office, the NAGPRA Advisory Council, and the Nation’s legal team, we were successful in this effort. Two volumes of records from 1860-1911 were

transferred to the MHMA collection in 2017. Digitizing and making access available to these records was a high priority and a basis for the tribe to apply for this grant. Written in Kansas and Indian Territory in the mid- and late-nineteenth centuries, these two account books report tribal council meeting minutes, record copies of correspondence, and include other important governmental information. The digital heritage item for each volume in Kaakisitoonkia is actually a group of many items. Each page is included with descriptions, transcriptions, and an index of every person who appears on that page. Another important account book is also now available: the “Punkin Center” account ledger book. Created by storeowner John Sharkey, the husband of tribal member Rose Ann Geboe Bourie, this ledger details receipts of items people in the community bought from his general store, first in Kansas and then in Indian Territory after relocating with the Nation. In addition to shedding light on what kind of goods the community was buying and using, Mr. Sharkey sometimes also included notes about the Miami community and its members. Passed down through several generations of Rose Ann Sharkey’s descendants, this ledger was loaned to the MHMA by Susan Mayfield Sanderson and family for the purpose of digitization. We thank Sue for her willingness to trust us with her family treasure! We often say Myaamia history is many family stories assembled, and every family has a story. If others are interested in having their personal family records digitized for inclusion in Kaakisitoonkia, contact the MHMA Manager, Meghan Dorey at mdorey@miamination.com.

The grant is for two years and the first year is already complete. In the coming year we will focus on fully documenting the Robert and Mabel Owens Collection, a substantial assembly of objects such as woven baskets, tools, and wooden bowls. Once completed, we will work to add more complete information about the collections of stories, pictures, and documents donated by Tribal members. Visit Kaakisitoonkia.com and watch the number of materials added to the website continue to grow!

Aatotantaawi - A Myaamia Reading Community

Staff Article

Aatotantaawi - *Let’s talk about it!* - was started in the Summer of 2020 as a safe way to gather Miami citizens together virtually for conversations about books and media from Native people or include Native content.

A team of employees from the Myaamia Center and the Cultural Resources Office, with some community members, work together to facilitate online discussions and hold zoom events for the group. So far, the Aatotantaawi participants have discussed the movies *Hostiles* and *Te Ata*, the non-fiction books *Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann and *keehkapiišamenki: The History of Allotment of Miami Lands in Indian Territory*, and the novels *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice and *There There* by Tommy Orange.

The group has also hosted storytelling nights over the winter months. We encourage all tribal members to join the ‘Aatotantaawi!’ Facebook group to join in the conversations and provide feedback. If you’d like to join the zoom events but don’t have Facebook, you can email Kristina Fox at markskm@miamioh.edu to receive event information by email.

Miami University Establishes Chief Floyd Leonard Faculty Fellowship

By Kara Strass, Director of Miami Tribe Relations, Myaamia Center, Miami University

As many of you are aware, we are in the process of developing new initiatives that will increase the Myaamia Center’s ability to promote our work on the national level and also infuse more of our content into curriculum and student experiences across campus.

To that end, we would like to formally announce the establishment of the Chief Floyd Leonard Faculty Fellowship. The initial purpose of this fellowship will be for us to work with an MU faculty member (Fellow) to seek out new ways to strengthen the relationship and increase the presence of Myaamia and Native American content in the curriculum across campus. Our first official fellow will be Dr. Sandra Garner who many of you know. Dr. Garner will be working closely with the MC over the next 3 yrs to develop a framework and strategy for increasing our ability to share what we do. Dr. Garner will be participating in occasion mtgs, classroom activities, research projects, and visiting with many of you in order to increase her understanding of what we are all working on. Please feel free to engage with her and share your work.

We recognize and appreciate the support of the Leonard family for allowing us to honor Chief Leonard in this way.

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and Miami University To Celebrate 50th Anniversary

By Kara Strass, Director of Miami Tribe Relations, Myaamia Center, Miami University

In 2022, both the Miami Tribe and Miami University will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their unique relationship. The relationship, which began when Chief Forest Olds visited Miami University in 1972, has grown from relationships between individual people to a mutually beneficial partnership. The relationship has seen many important milestones, including the 1991 creation of the Myaamia Heritage Award for Myaamia students attending Miami, the founding of the Myaamia Project in 2001, and the transition to the Myaamia Center in 2013. Today, we have 95 graduates of the Myaamia Heritage Program and 30 enrolled students. The relationship, and especially the cultural revitalization and educational development work of the Myaamia Center, has been integral to the myaamia eemamwiciki or the ‘awakening’ of the Myaamia nation.

The year-long celebration will kick-off at the 2022 Winter Gathering and will also include the 2022 Myaamiaki Conference and a week-long celebration in the fall. The planning committee includes Miami University staff, MTO Cultural Resource Office staff, and Myaamia students and alumni. This group will be responsible for developing the year-long celebration that appropriately commemorates this milestone.

CONNECT WITH YOUR MYAAMIA COMMUNITY THROUGH FACEBOOK. JOIN THE GROUP “MYAAMIAMI MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA”

An Interview with Tammy Benson, Author of “Wisdom from the Colors”

By Julie Olds

In 2008, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma received a Social Services grant written to provide a healthy marriage initiative program for the tribal community and which included funding to provide Tribal employees the unique training in the personality assessment program known as “The Color Code”. The company hired for the training was Motive Matters, LLC out of Webb City, MO, owned and operated by Myaamia citizen Tammy Benson and husband Van.

Per the directive of Tribal leadership, the training was mandatory for all tribal employees. I recall many employees, including myself, were confused as to why we were being required to participate in a “healthy marriage” project. I remember complaints about the requirement, and out right anger upon completing the 20 minutes of annoying questions in the on-line quiz presented to begin the program. But the worst part was having to give up personal time to go to the 3.5 hour training session. On a Saturday!

Well, that training session proved to be a life-changing event for me, and I believe for all who participated. I had taken part in personality assessments before, but this one was very different. The focus was on understanding self and *why we “do what we do”*. A truly introspective, reflective and painful exercise! I loved it. I was disappointed when the training ended on that Saturday afternoon, but I left Tammy and Van’s tremendous presentation eager to apply the concepts to my personal life to improve it for myself, my family and literally everyone I know, or will ever know. I cannot place a value on what I learned. I have used the understanding of the Color Code literally every day since that training.

I am especially happy to share, after 14 years of teaching the life changing knowledge of The Color Code, Tammy has written a book titled “Wisdom from the Colors: Aha Moments and Lessons We’ve Learned”. The book is available through Amazon where you can also purchase “The People (Color) Code” by Dr. Taylor Hartman.

I recently corresponded with Tammy about her book and asked permission to print an article about her effort. That correspondence turned into a Q & A and I am pleased to share Tammy’s answers and enthusiasm with our Myaamia community.

JO: Tell me what Motive Matters is, when and why you established it, your mission/vision/values/purpose.

TB: Van and I are licensed and certified by Color Code International to teach The Color Code System. Motive Matters LLC, our company, was established in 2007. The Color Code Personality Assessment is the foundation of our company. The magic of our message is that it identifies why you do what you do (your motive), not just what you do (your behavior.) Hence the name, Motive Matters. Unlike some personality programs, we teach against stereotyping and labeling people. The Motive Matters system promotes personal growth. We call this developing character. It’s not about knowing; it’s about growing.

Our mission is to make a positive difference in the world by helping people create successful relationships. The message brings understanding, acceptance, appreciation of differences, and the ability to work together. I like to say, “Your strength covers my weaknesses, and my strength covers yours.”

Many people use our personality assessment in their business to strengthen the interactions of their teams. Educators use it to make sense of individual students while creating a community where everyone can work together and learn. Families use it to nurture healthier marriages and improve parent/child relationships.

JO: Tell me how the Color Code personally affected you and why you and Van became life coaches.

TB: On July 2nd, 2020, we celebrated our 42nd wedding anniversary. We share this story in the book and during our classes. After 25 years, we almost lost our marriage. I actually went to a friend and said, ‘I’m done.’ She said, ‘I

want you to come to a “color” meeting.’ We reluctantly attended. Thankfully we discovered that we see life differently, through the lens of our unique personality styles. Understanding these differences, plus our hard work and God’s grace, enabled us to not only restore our relationship but create a stronger bond of friendship and fun. We spent the next four years putting our marriage back together. During that time, some friends, who were having trouble in their marriage, asked for our help. We knew the seriousness of the situation, and we decided to get further training. We love being married, and we love helping others see the strengths that exist in their color combinations

JO: Tell me why knowledge of the Color/People Code is important and how Tribal members can learn about its self/life impacting affects.

TB: The Miami Tribe played a significant role in the history of our company. In 2008, I contacted you/Julie Olds for some wisdom. You connected me with the tribal grant writer, Tami Lowery. After hearing our story, Tami said, with emotions in her voice, “I have a grant I’ve wanted to apply for and you are a perfect fit!” We began an amazing partnership with the Tribe. We shared our message, through the grant, with local school systems, law enforcement agencies, tribal teams and tribal members, and members of the community. This partnership not only helped many marriages and families, but it strengthened our company, as well. Thank you for partnering with us. We are grateful!

Through the Cultural Resource Office, Josh Sutterfield researched the Essential Elements of Relationship (email tammy@motive-matters.com if you would like a copy of this.) The one that touched me the most is expressed in the term peelakiinki. This word is formed from the basic stem pelak- used to construct terms for ‘healing’ and ‘curing.’ This describes perfectly what the Color Code message did in our marriage; it helped us heal and cure our relationship. Thank you, Josh, for the value you added to our program.

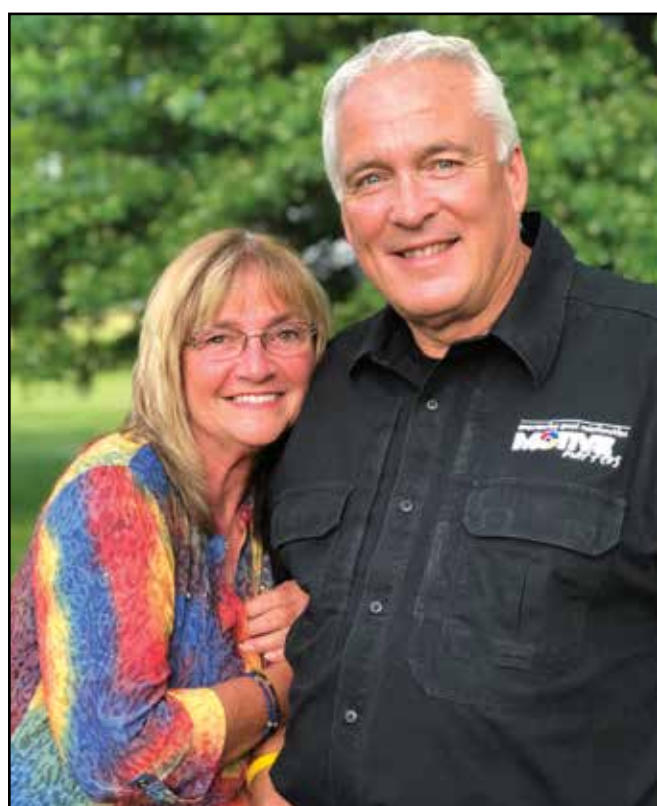
JO: When did you realize the need for the book?

TB: During our early trainings, people would often make insightful comments, fire off a funny joke, or tell a tender story. Countless times, Van and I would look at each other and say, “OH MY GOSH!” After a few months, I started writing down these “aha moments.” They were too good not to remember. Looking back through my stacks and stacks of notebooks from our many years of training, I knew I had to share this wisdom with others. Thus, the book, their wisdom, and our aha moments. It really is the people’s book; I’m just the “Keeper of the scrolls,” so to speak.

My purpose in writing the book was to help people. We sincerely believe that the combination of live training and the lessons and examples found in Wisdom from the Colors will provide helpful solutions to the often-complex world of relationships, both at home and at work.

JO: Tell our readers a little about yourself.

TB: I am a proud Miami, the niece of our beloved Chief Floyd Leonard, the daughter of one of the strongest women I know, Shirley Leonard Sweeten, and the granddaughter of Joe and Ruth Leonard. It was my honor to serve as Miami Nation Princess in 1974-1975. I had the honor of traveling with our Chief across this great country as an ambassador of goodwill. We spoke to many groups from the President and dignitaries of Miami University in Oxford Ohio to classrooms full of inquisitive 3rd and 4th graders who wanted to know if I had ridden my horse to the school or what it was like to live in a teepee. I had many opportunities to present the Lord’s Prayer in Indian sign language. One of my most memorable presentations was the opening of our annual PowWow, a celebration that brings together many tribes in our Four State region. To this day, representing my people as Tribal Princess is one of my most treasured memories. Van and I live in Mt. Vernon, Missouri. We have four incredible daughters, beloved sons-in-law, and 15 of the most precious grandchildren ever!



Tribal citizen Tammy Benson and husband Van. Benson photo.

ters, beloved sons-in-law, and 15 of the most precious grandchildren ever!

JO: Tell me about your future plans for Motive Matters, how tribal members use your website, and any related info you want included.

TB: The Motive Matters system has evolved over the past 18 years, and we love teaching it and living it now more than ever. We use it every day, and we can’t imagine doing life without the understanding and appreciation of the gifts each Color brings.

Many times, during the final stretch to complete the book, I would put on my RED wrist band (some days I put one on each wrist) to remind me to stay focused and finish strong.

I drew on my BLUE gifts as they pushed me to finish, knowing that people would be helped by the examples I was sharing.

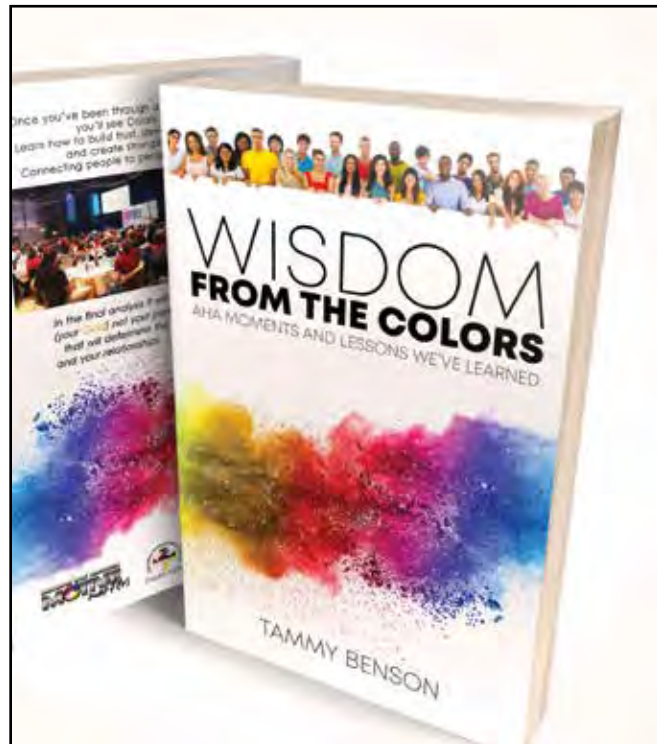
I used the gifts of clarity and patience from the WHITES as I remained steady and self-regulated.

And, oh happy day, to have and use the YELLOW gifts of optimism and enthusiasm that helped me finish the project with love and excitement!

You may have a good relationship and want to make it a little better, or you may be having some trouble and need a little help. We want you to know, we understand. If you would like to get started on the road to better relationships, go to www.MotiveMatters.com and take the free Color Code Personality profile. You will learn more about your unique, individual personality, and the personalities of the people in your life.

If you would like to attend one of our fun and informative, in-person trainings, contact me. Tammy@MotiveMatters.com. I’ll send you upcoming times and locations.

Our book, Wisdom from the Colors, can be purchased on Amazon.com. Wisdom from the Colors is a fun read, complete with knowledge and inspiration for all who are looking to make relationships more vibrant and rewarding.



The new book “Wisdom From The Colors...” on personal relationships, authored by Myaamia citizen Tammy Benson, is available on Amazon.



Restoring Bird Habitat - Carrying On Traditions That Were Meant to Be Erased

By Bradford Kasberg, Wetland Restoration Manager, Audubon Great Lakes - Reprinted with Permission of the National Audubon Society.

Bradford Kasberg is a citizen of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, and a consulting ecologist to the Tribe’s Cultural Resources Office. Brad received B.A. degrees in Geography and Anthropology at Miami University in 2012, and a Masters of Landscape Architecture from the University of Michigan in 2016. This article can be found online at <https://www.audubon.org/news/working-restore-bird-habitat-i-carry-traditions-were-meant-be-erased>

The 1893 World’s Fair, held in Chicago, celebrated the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus’ arrival in the Americas. To support the Columbian theme, city leaders raised statues of the explorer to honor what was widely regarded as his discovery and the subsequent conquest of a wild and empty continent—a feat also embodied in this booming city built on drained wetlands and cut-up prairie.

Simon Pokagon, a Potawatomi scholar from the southern Great Lakes, didn’t buy into this narrative. At the fair, which lasted for six months and attracted more than 27 million visitors, Pokagon handed out an essay printed on birch bark. “In behalf of my people, the American Indians,” it opened, “I hereby declare to you, the pale-faced race that has usurped our lands and homes, that we have no spirit to celebrate with you the great Columbian Fair now being held in this Chicago city, the wonder of the world.” He saw that the “fowls of the air withered like grass before the flame” of colonial powers. Birds and other animals were “shot for love of power to kill” and left to rot. “Thus our inheritance was cut off,” Pokagon wrote, “and we were driven and scattered as sheep before the wolves.”

In Pokagon’s eyes, to make Columbus a central figure in Chicago’s story was a further betrayal of the Indigenous people who lived there for millennia, and the birds and wildlife who shared the region’s extensive wetlands. Instead, there is a deeper story to be told about this region’s past and its original inhabitants—one that can help us live here responsibly today and create a more sustainable future. As a citizen of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, a people who call Chicago and much of what is now Illinois and Indiana our homelands, I strive to tell this story. And as the wetland restoration manager for Audubon Great Lakes, this story is, for me, one with birds at its heart.

“Chicago” is derived from Indigenous names for this area of immense wetlands and slow-moving rivers. To the Miami it was šikaakonki, a place to gather wild leeks. Other Algonquian-speaking peoples had similar names for this place. My ancestors helped to steward these wetlands and the birds that lived in them. They harvested vegetation, such as cattails and lilies, for food and materials for furnishings and shelter. They burned wet prairies to thin vegetation and improve their hunting of waterfowl and other marsh birds. Coupled with our cultural values that prevented overharvesting, these activities helped to maintain wetland diversity vital to the marsh bird populations.

In today’s industrialized Chicago, I carry on the tradition. Like my ancestors, I use fire and other tools to restore biodiversity in the same wetlands they managed, which today are threatened by invasive species, pollution, habitat loss, and climate change. As the birds that I work to protect reveal themselves through my binoculars, I hear the stories my community still tells of these creatures. I see our artwork, which demonstrates our awe and admiration for

our bird relatives. I’m reminded of the way my tribe’s land-use practices kept habitats healthy and sustainable, practices informed by careful observations of phenological connections—the way that seasonal changes in weather and the life cycles of living beings become synchronous.

This traditional ecological knowledge, gathered over centuries, describes plants and animals not as lesser beings to be manipulated, but as relatives from whom we learn and grow, and who we help in return. Living in a good way means maintaining that balance of relationships, keeping an eye on the well-being of plants and animals as a reflection of our own. As a result, our languages, our stories, our agricultural practices, and our calendars are all interrelated, born of lessons learned through generations of careful and consistent ecological observations of our homelands.

Birds play a significant role in Indigenous knowledge because they are compelling and familiar figures on the landscape. Their responses to subtle changes in weather and habitat conditions were as apparent to my ancestors as they are to today’s climate or migration scientists. The second month of my tribe’s lunar calendar—aanteekwa kiilhswa, or crow moon—occurs when American Crows begin to mate, signaling one of the earliest transitions of winter into spring. At this time, we know maple sugaring should be at its peak, as slightly warmer weather encourages trees to burst with life. The following month is cecaahkwa kiilhswa, or Sandhill Crane moon, which denotes further spring transitions as the cranes, our community symbol, reappear. Then comes wiikhkoowia kiilhswa, the whip-poor-will moon, when these strange birds return to our homelands. It marks the final spring transition and the time to plant our first crop of corn. We even say that the Eastern Whip-poor-will’s call sounds, in our language, like “plant it!”

While I consider myself a birder, I recognize that the history of birding mirrors this country’s colonial past. As white settlers undermined and devalued Indigenous knowledge systems, people like John James Audubon came to the United States to “discover” and claim to document for the first time North American birds that my ancestors already knew well. Today’s birders likewise tend to seek out the new and unusual. Like any other birder, I revel in learning how to identify new birds by observing their behavior and delicate features. But I don’t maintain a life list—I see those running tallies of birds one has witnessed and identified as an expression of a colonial concept of acquisition.

Indigenous communities, in contrast, tend to carefully observe the regular and familiar birds of their landscape as symbols of their unique, multilayered cultural connections. Seeing šinkiphsa, or American Coot, year after year may not be so exciting to some birders. But whenever I encounter one, I think of the role they play in one of my favorite stories of my tribe, and the resilience it took for my ancestors to pass these stories on to future generations. A relationship with familiar birds is important to Indigenous communities. It’s proof of our connection to the land.

This vast cultural knowledge is the “inheritance” that Pokagon warned Indigenous peoples were losing. Even within his lifetime, such observations and relations with birds had become more difficult to maintain. By that point Indigenous communities had already experienced hundreds of years of aggression against



Myaamia citizen Brad Kasberg is the Wetland Restoration Manager for Audubon Great Lakes. Photo by Frankie Pedersen.

our traditional ways of life and self-sufficiency. We were forcibly driven from our lands; in 1846 my ancestors were removed from the southern Great Lakes to Kansas, and later to Oklahoma. This forced relocation and the destruction of our natural resources denied us of our traditional harvesting, trading, and migration routes. Cultural and spiritual practices were outlawed, and languages—hundreds of them—for all intents were banned. The threads of our knowledge systems frayed.

But that knowledge wasn’t lost. Today it’s being rewoven into communities across the continent. Cultural and linguistic revitalization has become a priority across Indian Country. My tribe had no fluent speakers in the middle of the 20th century, but today a generation of youth are using their language. In some instances, their first words are in Miami rather than English. Tribal communities are exercising sovereignty rights for cultural harvesting and stewardship—rights not granted by state or federal governments but maintained since time immemorial—and playing key roles in conservation and climate adaptation efforts.

At the same time, broader social changes are making American culture more inclusive of Indigenous voices. There’s a growing push across the country to recognize the second Monday in October not as Columbus Day—a holiday concocted to honor a man who never even set foot on North America—but as Indigenous Peoples’ Day, a celebration of the continent’s deeper history and diverse tribal cultures.

Chicago’s leaders haven’t yet agreed to recognize this holiday, but change is coming. Here, as across the country, Black and Indigenous activists this summer led demonstrations for racial justice. Soon after the protests, the city removed its three statues of Columbus, two of which dated back to that World’s Fair 127 years ago. Their views no longer obscured by these monuments to a false past, perhaps more people will begin to see the true history of the land.

pisentawaataawi (let’s listen to him) - Myaamia historian George Ironstrack, Assistant Director of the Myaamia Center at Miami University, speaks well and discusses Myaamia language and culture in a podcast from the “Conversations at the Washington Library” series on Anchor.FM. Listen at https://anchor.fm/mountvernon/episodes/179--Revitalizing-Myaamia-Language-and-Culture-with-George-Ironstrack-ekntr2?fbclid=IwAR3yETbIZIYZxsR3cRJhIH_VwKfdpaDvDpgKSuEg8Z999uv9U1H1d2sySc

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 - continued from page 1B

By Diane Hunter, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Tribal Historic Preservation Officer - Reprinted from the Aacimotaatiiyankwi Myaamia Community Blog - posted Feb. 5, 2021

you as long as the sun shall shine or the rains fall; as long as the name of Miami shall exist...Your Great Father will give you more land over the Mississippi than you have here. He will also give you money. He will send you safe under the protection of some white friend to your new homes. He will feed you there until you get cornfields of your own; until your hunters lay up plenty of Buffalo, Deer and Beaver."

The Miami National Council was not ready to answer this request and asked time to consult among themselves. Peepakicia (Flat Belly), described as "an aged chief," replied, "Father, we have heard what you have said. We will go and consult among ourselves, and then we will answer you."

J.B. Richardville pointed out that we had lives to live in the midst of these discussions:

"Father, we have listened to what you have said to us. - We did not come here prepared to give you an answer today. Your children are hungry; they will go home and eat, and when they have deliberated and consulted together, they will come back and meet you in this council-house. Then they will answer you. They all take you by the hand and part with you now in friendship - You have distinctly told us of the wishes of our Great father the President. When we meet you again we will be plain with you, and tell you what we are willing to do." Richardville paused for "some minutes as if waiting for others to speak" and then said, "Father, we now part with you and go home. When I stay away long my wife scolds me."

When the Miami leaders resumed the council with the U.S. Commissioners on September 24, 1832, "Chappene a chief arose" saying, *"Father, You who sit before me, You wish to hear your children. They are now ready to answer you. You have said a good deal to us - There is more meaning in it than we can understand. Do not understand us as consenting to your propositions because we have assembled here. - In speaking to your red children, you say that your Great Father loves them. His conduct contradicts this. He asks his red children to leave their homes and go into the dark west, and yet you say he loves them. Is this the love of our Great Father? Your children cannot agree to your request. We have no more to say to you now."*

Chappene showed that we were not taken in by Jennings' flowery words professing President Andrew Jackson's love for the Miami people. We knew that the government's attempted action was not that of a loving Father. We saw through their lies, and we would not accept their proposal.

Commissioner Jennings ignored our unwillingness to go west and tried to add pressure by saying that they were disappointed. "From your answer we cannot tell what to say to your Great Father the President - Every thing is left in the dark...We must hear something more certain from you very soon, or we must close our councils and leave here."

Richardville responded emphatically, "Father, we think our answer is good - you point to the west and ask us to go there - **There I shall never go, nor will my people** - They are all opposed to leaving here. They will not sell their lands. **I speak not for myself, but for my people** - We hope we have done our Great Father no harm in rejecting his offers, and we hope our Great Father will not be displeased with his red children for exercising their own judgment in their own affairs." Richardville stressed our national sovereignty, which gives us the right to make our own decisions for our own people. It is due to our sovereignty, after all, that the U.S. government was in council with us.

Not taking no for an answer, Commissioner John Davis then said that President Jackson thinks he is doing a good thing for Miami people by sending us west. He hedges their proposal, saying that the President "does not expect the old men of your nation to leave their present homes and go to the west. - If the young men will sell, their Great Father will... send them there safe...If they will not sell all their lands, they will perhaps sell a part - We wish to know, and know distinctly what they will do." Richardville emphasized our sovereignty, but Davis directly threatened that sovereignty by claiming that Miami people might have to follow U.S. laws, rather than Miami National Council decisions. "Unless they consent to sell the laws of the white man must be extended over them."

Richardville did not accept Davis's threat and said, "Father, I have told you I do not speak for myself but for my people - I am appointed to speak for them - What you hear from me is the voice of the Miamies. Father, a few minutes ago I told you that your red children would not go to the Mississippi country - They wish to stay on their ancient lands. **You say your laws will be extended over them if they remain - This can-**

not be done - There is no power to do this - We are governed by our own laws and subject to none other - The Miamies will never consent to leave the homes of their fathers - I also as an individual will never consent to do so."

Commissioner Jennings asked us to reconsider, but Richardville again repeated, "...we have given our answer - We have consulted together and some days ago determined to sell none of our lands - We have answered more than once that we will not sell, and still you ask us for land. We have no other answer but this to give - We will not leave our present homes - You tell us again that our Great Father loves us - His acts do not show it - If he loved them he would clothe and feed them. He would not send them into the western wilderness."

Still not accepting our refusal, Commissioner Davis then said that he wondered if the tribe would sell part of their lands and send a party to look at the lands in the west. He offers a new proposal, saying, "If they should like it [the land west of the Mississippi], they and the rest of you that choose to go, may then remove there, if not, they can remain at the present homes." Davis clearly does not intend to allow us to stay if we don't like the lands to the west. It is clear that he would not keep that promise. He asked that we think about it and meet the next day to discuss the matter again.

At the next day's meeting, Richardville told the Commissioners, "Father, we have nothing now to say - yesterday we said all we had to say," but Davis repeated the offer and asked again for their answer.

Richardville, probably wearily, but seeing through their wiles, said, "Father, we have nothing more to say on the subject. You go about like the fox in the night time to gather information, to steal our opinions - We say what we have to say in council - Genl. Tipton who sits before me, knows that I listen not to the advice of others, that when I make up my mind I do not waver, I am firm. What I now say to you is my decision, and the decision of the Miami nation, not of others - We will sell you none of our lands."



The 1832 negotiations between the Miami National Council and the U.S. Commissioners took place at the Forks of the Wabash. This photo shows the Wabash River at the Forks in Huntington, IN. Photo by Meghan Dorey.

But Davis insistently asked again if we will sell part of our lands, and Richardville interrupted him, emphasizing the value of the land to us and our knowledge of the value of the land to them. In definite terms, he said, "Father, this is impossible - You see where the sun is - it is useless to put off the evil day till tomorrow - We can answer you now - We know the value of our soil as well as the white man can tell us - Here the Great Spirit has fixed our homes - Here are our cornfields and cabins - From this soil and these forests we derive our subsistence, and here we will live and die - I repeat, we will not sell an inch of

our lands."

Still persistent, Davis asked us to think about it again. Still firm, Richardville repeated, "Father, our answer is already given - expect no other - It is useless to talk on that subject further."

Richardville spoke final words to Agent Marshall, "Father, you know what we have decided upon; your children want their annuities - They wish to go home and so do I - My wife wishes to see me."

Marshall assented, and the council ended.

In this blog post, we have seen that after the passage of the 1830 Indian Removal Act, the U.S. government put pressure on the Miami National Council to agree that Myaamiaki would remove west of the Mississippi. Our leaders stood their ground. In next month's blog post on March 5, we will see that the Miami National Council continues to resist Removal, in spite of unrelenting pressure from the U.S.

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Note: Regarding the use of "father" in addressing the commissioners, Myaamia diplomacy has long been structured through the use of kinship terms. Prior to European arrival, common terms that were used to describe relationships between allied groups were: grandfather, uncle, elder brother, and younger sibling. Beginning in the 1700s, the French positioned themselves as a "father" within diplomatic circles. After the end of the Seven Years War, the British took up this title of "father," and following the end of the American Revolution the United States did the same. Myaamia people expected a father to be a loving and kind provider, which contrasted with Euro-Americans patriarchal understandings of fatherhood that were centered on ownership and control. By the 1830s, Myaamia leaders understood this difference, but continued to use the word "father" in negotiations, in part, because it was ingrained protocol.

Follow articles about the forced removal of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma on the Myaamia Community Blog at <https://aacimotaatiiyankwi.org>



Myaamia Dictionary 2.0: Why the Update?

Posted to Aacimotaatiiyankwi Community Blog by Jarrid Baldwin, Sept. 29, 2020

At the start of September, we released a new Myaamia dictionary app. Those of you who were regular users of the old Myaamia dictionary app may notice that the new app looks and performs differently. We want to take a moment and use this post to explain why these changes were necessary. Originally, our online dictionary – Myaamiaatawaakani – and our online research tool – the Miami-Illinois Digital Archive (MIDA) – were built to work independently. Myaamiaatawaakani was built for language learners to be able search in English or Myaamiaataweenki for words and phrases that we want to use in our daily life. It includes sound files for most entries so that learners can practice pronunciation. MIDA was built for our linguistic team to use in the ongoing research necessary for the reconstruction of our language. The goal of this research software is to bring digital copies of all known Miami-Illinois language documents into one virtual space. Using this tool, researchers can then transcribe and analyze all of these sources to meet the needs of our ongoing language development.

These separate development paths created challenges in data management and software maintenance. In response to these challenges, the original Myaamia online dictionary, associated apps, and Miami-Illinois Digital Archive have been merged into the new Indigenous Languages Digital Archive (ILDA) software suite. In addition to streamlining data

and software maintenance, the new ILDA platform is more stable and has stronger security features. These changes will significantly improve our ability to maintain and develop our language’s online presence. ILDA contains raw data from archival materials that are challenging to use and understand. Therefore, ILDA should always be used with caution and with consultation by our linguists.

The ILDA software suite has been in development for several years through the Myaamia Center with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. ILDA was created for the National Breath of Life Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages to respond to the growing needs of tribal communities nationwide who are revitalizing their languages from documentation, or what we call “archive-based revitalization.” ILDA is also more stable because it is hosted by Miami University’s Information Technology Services secure data center. To assure adequately trained programming support, ILDA is implemented using industry-standard programming languages and database technologies. As of the fall of 2020, ILDA is being utilized by six tribal communities and will undergo further development based on its growing use. Visit the Miami-Illinois ILDA website to learn more at <https://mc.miamioh.edu/ilda-myaamia/dictionary> Visit the National Breath of Life website to learn more at <https://miamioh.edu/myaamia-center/breath-of-life/index.html>

Tips for Using the Myaamia Online Dictionary App

Posted to Aacimotaatiiyankwi Community Blog by Jarrid Baldwin, Dec. 1, 2020

aya ceeki, the purpose of this post is to help you understand how the new Myaamia Dictionary website and mobile app work and to give you some tips for how to search on them effectively. For those who have yet to download the dictionary app, check out the Dictionary Update post for instructions on how to set up the app in just a few easy steps. We released an updated version of the website and mobile app for Android and Apple devices on September 1, 2020. You can learn more about this change in our Myaamia Dictionary 2.0: Why the Change post.

When you open the mobile app, the three options are “search”, “browse”, and “feedback.” If you’re using the website, these options appear in the top right corner of the screen. The search function allows you to search the whole dictionary, in Myaamia or English, by word or phrase. If you are interested in just scrolling through and seeing all of the content in alphabetical order, use the browse button. The last option, feedback, is for requesting a word or phrase you cannot find or if you would like to report a problem, such as an incorrect sound file. You can watch a walkthrough for mobile devices of these functions in our Intro to Myaamia Dictionary Video on YouTube.

The dictionary is organized by what we call “entry headers,” which are pieces of a word that have a meaning but still need something added to them to make a full word or sentence. These entry headers won’t be visible on the app in order to simplify the layout for small screens, but it is at the top of every entry on the web version. Within these entry headers there will be a few different subsections depending on what kind of word they are (noun, verb, etc.). A verb, for example, will have the subsections “basic forms,” “commands,” and “example sentences” while a noun will have “basic forms” and “example sentences.” These are meant to help you with the most common and ready-to-use words and phrases so you can use them immediately. There are also audio files attached to

every word for when you want to practice speaking. Make sure your mobile device is not in “silent” mode in order to hear the sound files!

Now, on to the most important part, searching the dictionary. The first thing you need to know is that the dictionary is a work in progress and we are constantly improving the search function. There are a ton of Myaamia words and phrases on the dictionary. If you’re searching for a common or useful phrase, then it is most likely on the dictionary. If you’re not finding what you’re looking for, it might be because of how you’re searching. Searching the dictionary is different from using a search engine, like Google or Bing.

Here are some tips and tricks:

- Spelling is important! No matter which language you are searching in, make sure your spelling is accurate.
- When searching for a phrase, the order of your words might affect whether or not you find the translation. For example, try searching “turn the light on” and “turn on the light.” Why does only the second one have search results even though they mean the same thing? This is because the search function only searches exact matches. Be sure to think about what you type and try different variations if your translation doesn’t come up.
- When searching for something that you can say many different ways, try rephrasing your search if you get no results. For example, if you search “I am working out,” nothing will appear, but if you search “I am exercising” then you will find what you are looking for.
- When a lot of results show up in your search, sometimes your answer may be down the list quite a bit so do not be afraid to keep scrolling. You can watch a walkthrough for mobile devices of these search function tips and tricks in our Searching Tips and Tricks for Myaamia Dictionary app Video on YouTube.

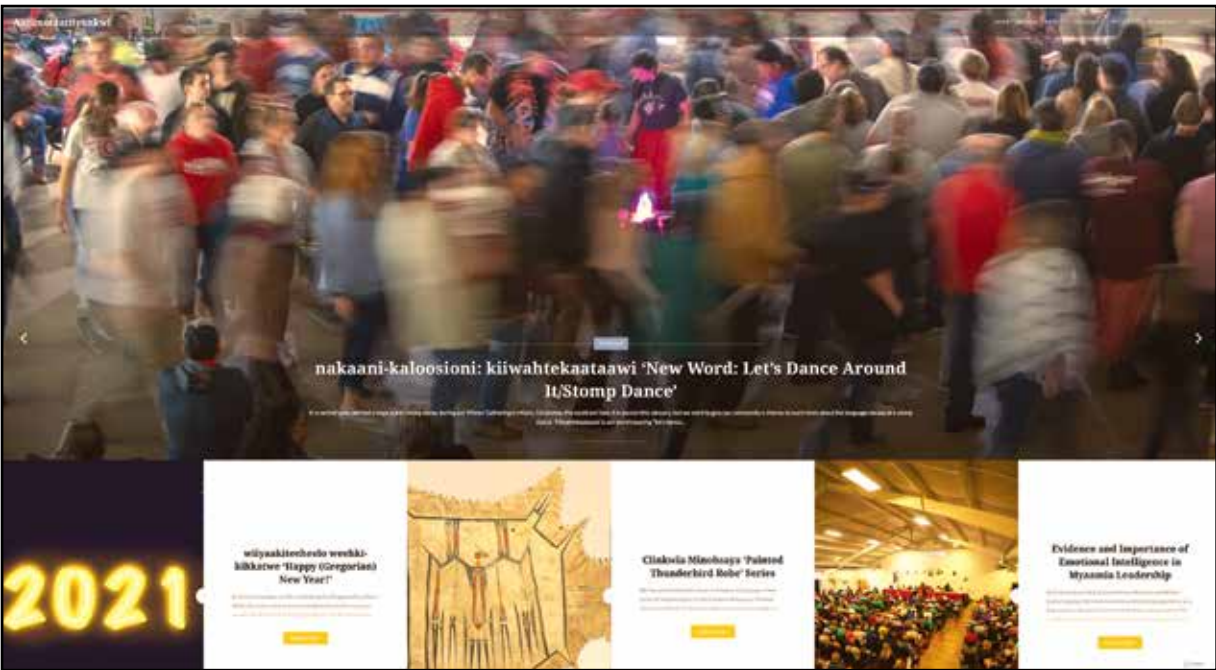
Aacimotaatiiyankwi: A Myaamia Community Blog for Knowledge Sharing

Reprinted from the Aacimotaatiiyankwi Community Blog

Over the last couple of years, you may have heard Aacimotaatiiyankwi fairly frequently, especially on social media. Aacimotaatiiyankwi is a blog about the Myaamia community written for and by Myaamiaki. When the blog first began, there were long articles about Myaamia history that would be left out of most history texts. Periodically, a weather report in Myaamiaataweenki would be posted. It was created as a way to connect our community across time and place. Today, you will see not only all of that but a broader range of posts. Authors use their various forms of expertise to talk about topics of interest to our community. Posts reflect on reclaimed cultural practices such as naming, our ongoing language and educational work, and even some psychology related to our collective experiences. The goal is to create a place where we can talk about what it means to be Myaamia and learn about our community.

Aacimotaatiiyankwi allows us to tell our own story and share it publicly. The focus on educational materials has allowed non-Myaamia people to find answers that would otherwise be unavailable. We can reinforce our position as a living people and share our contemporary experiences.

You can find all of our posts at <https://aacimotaatiiyankwi.org/> with new posts every week! If you would prefer, you can also sign up (at the bottom of the webpage) to have new posts sent to your email. The editorial staff is open to questions, comments, and feedback for future posts, and just to help you learn more!



The Myaamia community blog “Aacimotaatiiyankwi” is a knowledge sharing space written by Myaamia people for the Tribe’s dispersed community of over 6,000 citizens. Some of the topics covered by the blog:

- Ciinkwia Minohsaya ‘Painted Thunderbird Robe’ Series
- An Introduction to Myaamia Nouns and Animacy
- Four Versions of a Little Turtle Speech at Greenville, 1795
- Ciinkwia waahpyaaci ‘Thunder has Arrived’
- Making Myaamia Mahkisina
- Waawaahsinaakwahki ‘It Shimmers’ (Ribbonwork)
- Eehsenaamišipoohkiiyankwi ‘Maple Sugaring’
- Mahkoonsihkwa’s Experience with Myaamia Ribbonwork
- Continuing Pressure to Remove West - Removal Series
- Maple Sugaring: Myaamia Student Perspectives
- iiši peesintamankwi aalhsoohkaana ‘How we Listen to Winter Stories’
- A History of Eewansaapita

About the Relationship Between the Miami Tribe and Miami University

By Kara Strass - Aacimotaatiiyankwi Community Blog Post, Dec. 8, 2020

In 2022, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and Miami University will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their unique relationship. The relationship began when Chief Forest Olds visited Miami University in 1972, and it has since evolved from relationships between individual people into a multi-layered collaboration built on trust, respect, and a shared commitment to education. Myaamia people may have a relative who attended Miami University, visit Miami for the Myaamiaki Conference or an Athletics event, or see Miami faculty or students at a Tribal event. But what does it really mean to have a relationship between a Tribal Nation and a University?

For the first couple of decades of the relationship, it was focused primarily on educating the Miami University community about the Miami Tribe. After Chief Floyd Leonard was elected in 1974, he would often come to the University to educate about the Tribe as a contemporary Nation. He would often bring with him other people from the Tribe or even leaders from other Tribes to attend University events and class visits. As the relationship continued to deepen, the focus shifted to the possibility of educating Myaamia students as well. The first Myaamia students enrolled at Miami University as part of the Heritage Award in 1991. What began as simply a tuition waiver for Myaamia students has evolved into a 4-year program where Myaamia students take a series of courses together, attend Myaamia Center events, and receive individualized support and advising. To date, we have had 95 graduates of the Myaamia Heritage Program, and there are 30 Myaamia students currently enrolled at Miami.

A second main outcome of the relationship was the creation of the Myaamia Center. The Center (originally the Myaamia Project) was created in 2001 when the Tribe approached the University to see if they could provide support for language revitalization work. The University agreed to provide support for one position for three years. Soon after, Daryl Baldwin arrived on campus and began to focus on creating materials for Tribal programs, including the creation of the Myaamia Heritage Courses for Myaamia students at Miami, the Eewansaapita summer youth camps, and the Myaamiaki Conference. In its almost 20 years, the Myaamia Center has grown slowly and steadily, and today has 6 full-time and 8 part-time staff who are focused on language and cultural revitalization

and educational development.

One way that the Myaamia Center is able to do the work of language and cultural revitalization is through collaboration with faculty and students at Miami. One great example of this is the partnership that has been created with the College of Engineering and Computing (CEC). Because the field of language revitalization is so new, there were few technologies available for the Center to use when using archival documents. By turning to the CEC, we were able to work together with CEC students and staff to design software that met our own research and teaching needs. The Myaamia Center continues to have CEC masters students who have apprenticeships at the Center and undergraduate students who work on projects for their senior capstones. These projects have helped the Center to create the Indigenous Languages Digital Archive (ILDA), the Myaamia Online Dictionary website and app, as well as the Ethnobotanical Database. Through these types of projects, the Myaamia Center is able to create personalized systems that meet our needs, and the students get real-world experience and are able to learn about the Miami Tribe and our unique work. This is only one example of many partnerships across campus that lead to mutually beneficial outcomes for the Myaamia Center and the faculty and staff on campus.

We are all very excited to celebrate the 50th-anniversary milestone of this relationship in 2022. The celebration will kick-off at the 2022 Winter Gathering in Oklahoma. As usual, we will invite many Miami University faculty, staff, and students who will be able to learn about the Tribe and our relationship with Miami through experiencing games, dances, and storytelling. The next Myaamiaki Conference will take place April 9, 2022, which is where we will share about the work of the Myaamia Center with the Miami University and Myaamia communities. Additionally, there will also be



Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Chief Forest Olds, left, visits with Miami University President Phillip Shriver during the Chief's visit to the University campus in 1974. Miami University archived photo.

a week-long University-wide celebration in the fall. For those of you who have attended our Athletics celebrations in the past, this will feel familiar but expanded to include the entire Miami campus. We will share all of these events and more through email and on Myaamia Center social media, so be sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We hope to see many of you in 2022 to help us celebrate all of the work that has been done both at Miami University and through the Tribe to make the ongoing relationship so successful.

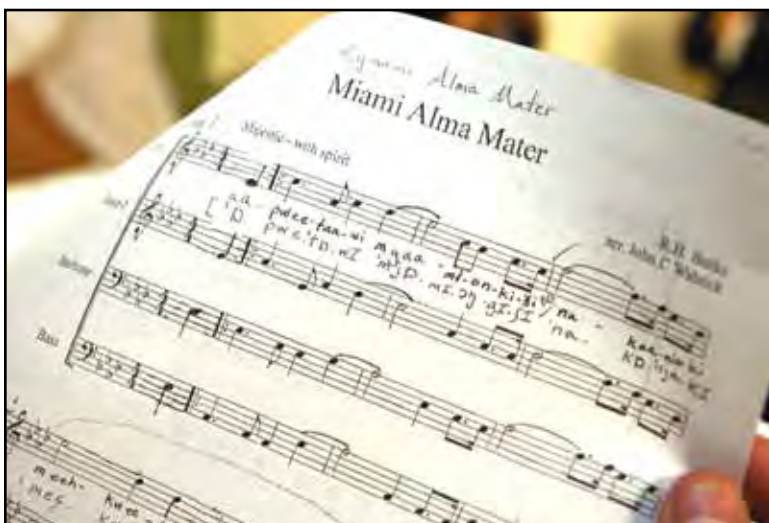
You can learn more about the relationship between the Miami Tribe and Miami University on the Miami Tribe Relations website at <https://www.miamioh.edu/miami-tribe-relations/index.html>



Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Chief Floyd Leonard, left, and Dr. Phillip Shriver, President Emeritus, Miami University. Photo by Hugh Morgan.



The story of the relationship shared between the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and Miami University in Oxford, OH, spans fifty years of partnership, reciprocity and respect. From Chief Forest Olds momentous visits to campus in 1972 and 1974, to the friendship shared between Chief Floyd Leonard and Dr. Phillip Shriver, the investments in building a true and abiding relationship are well documented and highly visible. Pictured, at upper left, Chief Leonard and Dr. Shriver (holding Myaamia miincipi); Miami University President Greg Crawford (above center) plays mahkisina during a visit to Oklahoma (photo by Karen L. Baldwin); the addition of Myaamia language to the University alma-mater (far left); the Myaamia Heritage Logo (below) - the icon of this incredible relationship.



Toopeeliciki: Highlighting Accomplishments and Honors Bestowed on Miami Citizens!

Late breaking news:
President Biden nominates Myaamia Center Executive Director
Daryl Baldwin to the National Council on the Humanities.

John Bickers to
Complete Ph.D.

By John Bickers

aya ceeki. aamaawia weenswiaani niila myaamia mihtohseenia. Seekaahkweeta neehi Pa-laanswa eeweemakiki. Hey everyone, my name is John Bickers and I’m a citizen of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. I’m a member of the Godfroy family descending from Seekaahkweeta and her husband Francois Godfroy.

I am currently a Ph.D. candidate at the Ohio State University where I received my Master’s degree in May 2019. Last November I also passed my general examination, which signaled the end my course work and allowed me to focus on writing my dissertation, which will ideally be published as a book after I finish my program. The dissertation, tentatively titled “The Miami Nation: A Middle Path for Indigenous Sovereignty,” is a political history of the tribe starting with the creation of a centralized Myaamia government after the Treaty of Greenville (1795) under Pinšiya (Chief Jean Baptiste Richardville) and traces how our tribal government developed throughout the nineteenth century until the ratification of our first constitution in 1939 as the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma under Katakimaankwa (Chief Harley Palmer).

First and foremost, my project emphasizes that the Miami Nation is and has always been a sovereign nation and our history needs to be interpreted through that lens. I believe that our government and our leaders were critical to our survival as a people even today, and I try in my work to make that point. To that end, my dissertation will pay attention to our institutional development, how our ancestors created offices like Principal Chief, Second Chief, Councilpersons, and Secretary-Treasurer and how those roles functioned historically and perhaps differently than they do today. Additionally, my dissertation examines the various political, economic, and social policies the Miami National Council adopted, and the community debates surrounding them, especially: tribal citizenship laws determining who could be considered a member of the tribe, the introduction of private property through privately owned reservations and allotments, their experimentation with American education programs, and of course how our Government addressed our two removals from Indiana to Kansas and Kansas to the Indian Territory (Oklahoma).

Over the last several years, I have seen many Myaamia people get Ph.D.’s in their fields and I am honored to be following in those footsteps.



John P. Bickers

Kara Strass
Named to Notre
Dame Domer
Dozen List

Staff Article

Kara Strass, Director of Miami Tribe Relations at the Myaamia Center at Miami University, has been named one of the 2021 Domer Dozen by the University of Notre Dame’s Alumni Association. Each fall, Notre Dame honors twelve young alumni who have shown extraordinary dedication to making a difference and have made significant contributions in one of the four core tenets of the Alumni Association’s mission statement – faith, service, learning and work.

In 2016, Kara Strass ’11 joined the Myaamia Center as a graduate assistant while pursuing her master’s degree in Student Affairs in Higher Education (SAHE) at Miami University. After graduating in 2018, Kara joined the Myaamia Center staff. In January 2020, Strass formally transitioned into the role of Director of Miami Tribe Relations, where she is responsible for strengthening the relationship between the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and Miami University, as well as for providing advising and support to Myaamia students.

Originally from Huntington, Indiana, Strass attended the University of Notre Dame and graduated in 2011 with a bachelor’s in biological sciences. After graduation, she joined the Orr Fellowship, which places recent graduates in start-up companies in Indiana. In her time in the fellowship, she worked at BioConvergence (now Singota Solutions) as a Project Manager for clients working on pharmaceutical development.

Strass’ involvement in the Native American Student Association at Notre Dame impacted how she thought about support for Native



Kara Strass. Photo by Scott Kissell, Miami University.

American students on college campuses, eventually leading her to the SAHE program at Miami. Her graduate studies focused on Student Development Theory and how to apply these theories to make Myaamia students successful in their college endeavors. Her work at the Myaamia Center includes serving as a liaison between the Miami Tribe and Miami University, providing education and outreach to the broader Miami University community, and planning for programs including National Breath of Life Workshops and the Myaamiaki Conference.

Tori Levy Writes a New Children’s
Book

Staff Article

Miami Tribe citizen and 2019 graduate of Miami University, Tori Levy, works as an editor at Publications International where she edits children’s books. She recently had a unique opportunity to move beyond just editing the books and decided to write her own. Tori’s book, Bye-Bye Bully, which she co-authored, is a graphic novel that teaches children about empathy and kindness. Through it’s comic book style layout, the book provides eight scenarios for how kids can stand up to a bully.

Having seen so many children’s books through the editing process, Tori and her company wanted to publish their own that addressed different important topics, like bullying. When this opportunity landed on Tori’s desk, she came up with the idea of the graphic novel style that could provide examples for how to deal with a bully. From there, she did research into other books that address the topic and ways that you can best grab the attention of young readers, through both the content and the imagery. Tori recognizes that this is a tough topic to teach young children about and that books can be a great way to help kids learn, “Bullying is such an important subject that should be addressed, and I feel like it is sometimes hard to address it with little kids through talking. Books are such a great medium to introduce the topic and how it could be handled through behavior choices and how you could help your friends out in situations that you see around you.”

Tori didn’t expect to ever be writing childrens books, but she has always loved books



Tori Levy

and working with children, so she decided to jump at this exciting opportunity. She isn’t sure whether she will be writing another book, but hopes to have that opportunity again soon. Bye-Bye Bully also won the Mom’s Choice Gold Award for Children’s picture books that address values & life lessons. If you want to read Bye-Bye Bully for yourself, you can purchase a copy online, including on Amazon.



Ezekiel Cooper

Ezekiel Cooper Named 7th Grade Salutatorian

Myaamia citizen Ezekiel Cooper was named Salutatorian of his 7th grade class this year, at East Central Junior High School in Tulsa, OK.

Ezekiel is a straight A student and was voted Teacher's favorite by his ELA teacher. He is enjoying a very good year and is interested in becoming a "virus chaser" to find cures and vaccines for them.

Ezekiel is a student in the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Eemamwiciki Summer Youth Cultural Education Programs. He is a descendent of Oklahoma allottee Isadore Labadie.



Jared Nally

Jared Nally Honored in 2020 National Native Media Awards

Myaamia citizen Jared Nally has been awarded First Place in the Student Category for Print/Online Best Editorial at the 2020 National Native Media Awards hosted by the Native American Journalist Association. The honor was bestowed on Nally during a virtual ceremony on October 15, 2020.

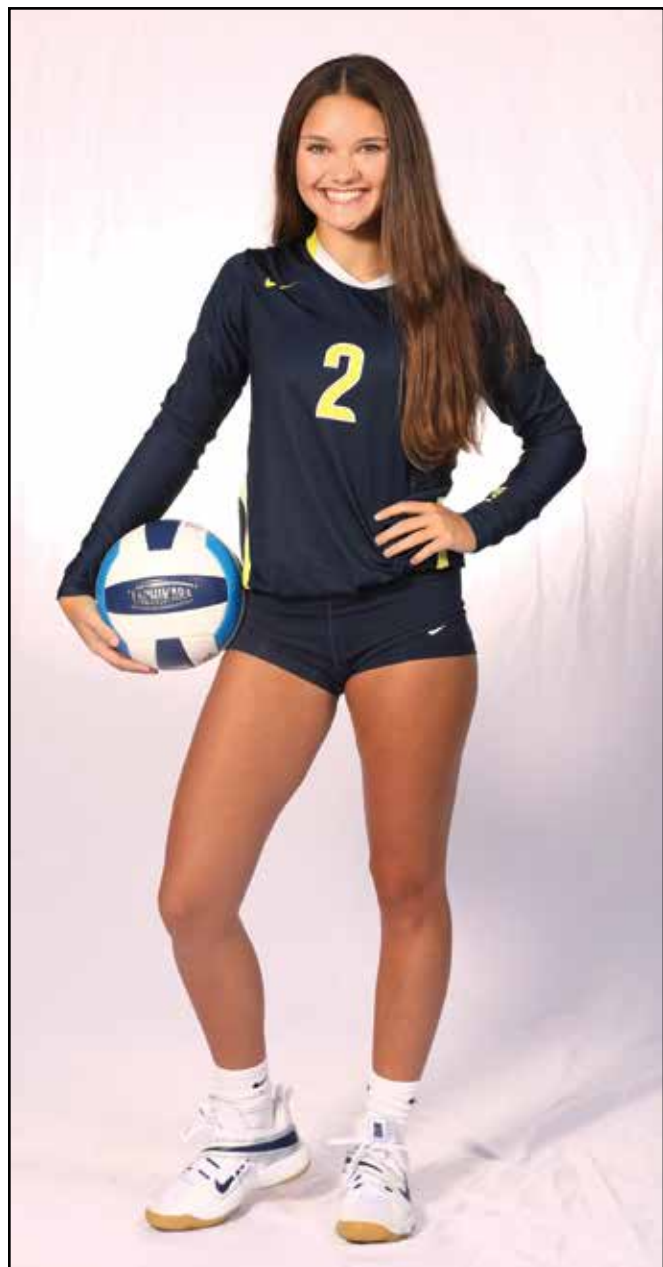
Nally is the Editor-In-Chief of Haskell Indian Nations University's "The Indian Leader", the country's oldest Native American student newspaper. "The Indian Leader" was also honored with First Place in General Excellence in Print for overall student coverage.



Paul Eikenberry

Paul Eikenberry Named to University of Iowa President's List

Paul Eikenberry of Neola, IA was among 900 undergraduate students at the University of Iowa named to the President's List for the 2020 fall semester. To be included on the list, a student must have a minimum 4.0 grade point average in all academic subjects. Paul, who has been named to the President's List every semester, is a student in the Iowa's Tippie College of Business and is majoring in Business Direct Admission. Paul is the son of Myaamia citizen Rachel Eikenberry and husband Mike of Neola, IA. Mayaawi Teepee!



Kallie Fenske

Kallie Fenske Honored Ahead of National Championship

Kallie Fenske, from Broken Arrow, OK, is a 5' 5" powerhouse setter for the Johnson County Community College volleyball team. In her second season at JCCC, she was honored twice by Kansas Jayhawk's Community College Conference as Division II Player of the Week ahead of the Team's Conference, District and National Championship titles.

Kallie has committed to Drury University to continue her education and volleyball career.

She is the daughter of Tribal citizen Corrie (Lankford) Fenske and husband Brad and is the great-niece of Chief Douglas Lankford.

Myaamia Artist Katrina Mitten's Work on Display at Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery of American Art

Myaamia artist Katrina Mitten of Huntington, IN, is no stranger to winning awards for her beautiful, handmade Myaamia beaded designs. Her creative works have won prizes at prestigious shows including the Heard Museum and Santa Fe Indian Market.

In April 2020 First American Art Magazine hosted a mask contest with up to 3 entries per artist. Mitten entered the following pieces "You may NOT kiss the bride", "Waiting for Spring" & "MMIW" (missing and murdered indigenous women.) She won a Judges Choice Award with "You may NOT kiss the bride".

Because of this contest, curators with the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery of American Art saw her mask titled "MMIW" and acquired it along with two other masks from other artists. The masks were displayed at the top of the Grand Stair case of the Renwick Museum of American Art Washington, D.C.



Katrina Mitten



Made by Myaamia artist Katrina Mitten, this mask is titled "MMIW" (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women). The mask is in the collection of the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery of American Art in Washington, D.C.



Josephine Cirullo, grand-daughter of Myaamia artist Katrina Mitten, models her grandmother's mask which is now in the collection of the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery of American Art in Washington, D.C.



Myaamia citizen Ivalah Allen and her husband Randy took social distancing seriously during the 2020 annual General Council meeting, placing their chairs on the Tribe’s lacrosse field located right behind the meeting pavillion. Ivalah, who is Associate Professor of Vocal Music at Fort Hays State University, sang the Lord’s Prayer at the opening of the meeting as Miami Nation Princess Tabby Watson performed the prayer in sign language. Photo by Karen L. Baldwin.

Kweehsitawankwi - Honoring the Memory of Dr. Richard Nault

By Bobbe Burke, Honorary Tribal Member and Friend

Miami University and the Miami Tribe lost a dear and special friend with the passing of Dr. Richard Nault on October 21, 2020 at his home in Oxford, Ohio. Dick was a valued leader and integral member of the team from Miami University that helped build the strong Miami-Miami Tribe partnership that exists today and will be 50 years old in 2022.

Dick came to Miami in 1983 and in 1992 moved to Student Affairs, the branch of the University assigned in 1983 to shepherd the young relationship with the Miami Tribe. Dick served as Dean of Students (1992-2002), working closely with Vice President Dr. Myrtis Powell, and after Dr. Powell’s retirement, was appointed Vice President (2002-2008). The position of Vice President for Student Affairs was the official university liaison to the Miami Tribe during Dr. Powell and Dick’s years in that position.

Two significant events occurred during Dick’s tenure that solidified this unique relationship. Miami University and the Miami Tribe signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2006 committing to continue collaborative and educational initiatives of value to both into the future. In 2008, a jointly signed Memorandum of Agreement established specific details about the operation of the Myaamia Center on the Miami University campus. A great deal of credit for the growth leading to what we know today is a result of Dick’s leadership, personal investment and support.

In 2004, Dick’s introductory remarks before Chief Leonard, Julie Olds and Daryl Baldwin made a presentation to the MU Board of Trustees expressed how proud he was about the Miami-Miami Tribe relationship.

“In 1972, Forest Olds, Chief of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, visited the Miami campus and began conversations with President Phillip Shriver that established a relationship between Miami University and the Miami Tribe that, in my view, is one of the most distinguished and meritorious chapters in Miami University history.”

Dick’s first trip to Oklahoma was in June 2000 to attend the very first Miami Tribe Powwow held in the large arena of the Miami Fairgrounds. An added bonus during that trip was the early morning breakfasts at the old Townsman restaurant where Dick had a chance to catch up with Kimberly Wade who had recently returned home after graduating from MU in 1999. Kimberly shared these comments.

“Dr. Nault embodied Grace beyond that of anyone I ever encountered. He always had the time for a friend and was fully engaged in everything he did. He remembered every detail

of your conversations and had an unparalleled ability to make you feel loved and cherished. Often I would find a heartfelt handwritten card in the mail, with the only special occasion being that he wanted me to know how valued our friendship was to him. After I left Miami, he brought my nephew and me to the University for a recruitment trip, and instead of feeling pressured to become an MU student, Dr. Nault made it clear that he wanted what was best for my nephew whether Miami U was his choice or not.”

Dick invested personally in getting to know the Myaamia community and he enjoyed mingling with everyone at July Annual Meetings, especially before that event was combined with the Pow wow weekend. In 2003, he went home with a lovely inlaid wooden box that the Tribe gifted him for being such a valuable university leader and friend. Receiving that gift was a special honor for him.

Additional trips Dick made included helping host a dinner at the Longhouse that celebrated the Honorary Degree of Humane Letters that Chief Leonard received at the May 2005 Miami University commencement. Guests on another trip included Fred Wall, Chair of MU Board of Trustees, and his wife Bonnie, and a year later Dick traveled with the new MU President David Hodge and his wife Valerie.

For his last Pow wow trip in 2008, Dick invited Mike Scott, the president of the student body to accompany him. Mike shared these comments about that trip.

“To this day, I retain the file that Dr. Nault encouraged me to assemble prior to the trip, filled with documents and articles that afforded me a degree of cultural competency, and ultimately primed my mind and my heart for the lessons I would soon learn. We met with tribal leaders, fellow Miami students and their families, and community members at large while enjoying the annual Tribal Powwow festivities. One of his superpowers was his incredible ability to identify those moments when students were open to transformation, and gently guide them down the path of discovery.”

The only Winter Gathering trip Dick made was in January 2014 when he joined a large contingent of MU faculty and staff who participated in the ribbon cutting festivities at the Geboe property.

It was impressive to me that in 2008, he rearranged his very busy calendar to attend the funeral of Chief Leonard with several of us.

Long after his retirement, Dick continued to attend Myaamiaki Conferences and spoke often of how touched he was when the Men’s Glee



The late Dr. Richard “Dick” Nault and late Myaamia Chief Floyd Leonard. Two highly influential advocates for the relationship between the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and Miami University. Archived photo.



The late Dr. Richard “Dick” Nault and Tribal citizen and Miami University graduate Kimberly Wade. Archived photo.

Club first sang the two new verses of the Miami alma mater in the Myaamia language.

For a personal note, I thank Dick for being such a supportive and encouraging supervisor, for personally nurturing both students and staff, for being the gracious and loving person he was to everyone, and for always caring about my children with me. His many notes of encouragement, filled with profuse compliments, helped me believe that my work at Miami did make a difference. Dick Nault was a blessing in my life and I miss him greatly. I sweetly remember his incredible and infectious laugh, and I will forever feel fortunate that he was my friend.

Notice: Due to construction, camping spaces may not be available during the 2021 annual General Council meeting. Contact Tera Hatley at thatley@miamination.com, or by phone at 918-541-1324, for information

waanantakhšinka “Lying quietly”

Christopher Joseph Nagy, age 60, passed away early on Saturday morning, Dec. 5, 2020, at his home rural Kendallville, Indiana, after years of battling cancer.

Chris fought cancer like a warrior until his last breath. He is at peace now and resting comfortably in the arms of Jesus.

Chris was born in Allen County, Indiana, on Aug. 17, 1960, to Augustus and Catherine (Strack) Nagy.

He married Susan Marie Bushong on Aug. 20, 1982, in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

He was employed with Parkview Health System in Fort Wayne.

Chris was a member of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

He enjoyed hunting and target shooting. A Sunday well spent for Chris was watching a Chicago Bears football game. He was also a longtime Komets Hockey fan and enjoyed going to the Komets games.

Chris also loved summertime and he was always ready for a good party. He enjoyed outdoor barbecues, great music and a beer in his hand.

He will be deeply missed by so many that loved him. His bravery will never be forgotten.

Survivors include his wife of 38 years, Susan Nagy, of Kendallville; daughters, Brandi and Giovanni Thieme, of Lawrence, Indiana, and Gabrielle Nagy, of Kendallville; son, Aaron Nagy and Jackie Greer, of Fort Wayne, Indiana; one granddaughter, Harper Nagy; father, Augustus “Gus” Nagy, of Fort Wayne; brother, Matthew Nagy, of Fort Wayne; sisters, Laura Nagy, of Fort Wayne, Mary Gatton, of Fort Wayne, Catherine Mowry, of Fort Wayne and Julia Rhoades, of Fort Wayne; and several nieces; nephews; great-nieces; and great-nephews.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Catherine, in 2013.

Visitation was held on Thursday, Dec. 10, 2020, from 3-7 p.m., at Hite Funeral Home in Kendallville.

Mass of Christian Burial was held on Friday, Dec. 11, 2020, at 11 a.m., at St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Avilla.

Memorial donations may be made to his family.



Christopher Joseph Nagy

OBITUARY, BIRTH MARRIAGE, GRADUATION AND OTHER FAMILY SUBMISSIONS

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma citizens and family are encouraged to submit obituaries, birth and marriage announcements, graduation and other achievements to this Myaamia Community publication. Send detailed text and a color, or black and white, photo to the Cultural Resources Office at mtocro@gmail.com
Photo resolution - 300 dpi
Minimum photo size 3” x 3”
Formats: tif, jpg, pdf, psd

Virginia Lee Underhill, lifetime Miami resident and a member of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, was called home to be with the Lord on October 3, 2020. She was preceded in death by her husband Jack Lee Underhill, her parents, Tom and Ethel Moore, her sisters Pearl Goomda, Little Dee Moore, Emma Moore Baty, Esther Jay, Mary Gensicke Cline and Her brother Chief Lewis Moore and Clarence Moore and sister – in – law Ethel Moore which passed on September 30, 2020.

Virginia is survived by her two daughters, Pearl Kay Underhill Russell of Commerce, OK and Carol Larkin of Miami, OK. 5 grandchildren Kaprina Means, Wesley Easter, Richard Dixon, Lee Nunn and T.C. Madill, 12 great grandchildren, 10 great great grandchildren, 3 nieces and 6 nephews.

Virginia most affectionately known as “Nannie” was a woman of many talents. She was a world renowned cook, master seamstress and comedian extraordinaire. She loved gardening and being in her garden. But her life’s crowning achievement and greatest joy was her family.

Graveside services were held at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at G.A.R. Cemetery in Miami, OK. Pastor Howie Moss officiated. Native American Rites were conducted by Chief Doug Lanford. Wesley Easter, Zack Means, Richard Dixon, Allen Ray Easter, Levi Means and Thomas Oliver Nault served as pallbearers. Virginia’s family sat up with her at the Miami Tribe’s longhouse, also known as the Ethel Miller Moore Culture Educational Center in Miami, OK. The building sits on land that was a part of her grandmother Ethel Miller Moore’s original allotment. The Services were placed in the care of the Paul Thomas Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Miami, OK. Online condolences may be made at www.paulthomasfuneralhomes.com



Virginia Lee Underhill



Jon A. Marks, 67 passed away suddenly Friday January 15, 2021 at his home in Fort Wayne, IN .

He was born July 30, 1953 in Fort Wayne, IN., to the late John and D. Elaine (Farr) Marks, whom survives.

Jon was a Vietnam War Veteran with the U.S. Marine Corp, with four years of active service and six years with the Army National Guard.

He was a member of the SW Conversation Club. Jon worked at Halls Restaurants until he retired on a disability.

Jon loved fishing, spending time outdoors, telling stories and picking on his nieces and nephews. He made friends wherever he went and was always a very generous person.

Jon was especially proud of his Indian heritage and was a member of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

He is survived by his mother Della “Elaine” Marks of Fort Wayne, IN; siblings Vickie Iron, Ricky (Heidi) Marks, Bruce Marks, Leonard Marks, sister Judy (John) Slatton.



Jon A. Marks

Veteran



Margaret Adelaide “Peggy” McCord of Miami, OK passed from this life Sunday, April 11, 2021 at her home. She was 83.

Peggy was born December 27, 1937 in Miami, OK to Joseph Van and Dolly Ruth (Fell) Olds. She was a descendant of Chief David Geboe. She had lived in the Miami area most of her life.

Peggy worked as a Deputy Court Clerk in Small Claims and Traffic Court at Ottawa County Courthouse for 22 years retiring in 2000. She was a member of the First Baptist Church in Miami, OK.

Peggy was preceded in death by her husband Bill McCord in 2013, 1 great granddaughter Serenity Dorey, her parents and 1 brother Joe Don Olds. Survivors include 1 daughter Melisa Palmer and husband Tony of Miami, OK, 1 sister Linda Prater of Miami, OK, 2 grandchildren Kalo Price and Matthew Dorey, 4 great grandchildren Spencer Dorey, Jensen Dorey, Ethan McDonald and Josiah Dorey and 3 great-great grandchildren.

Peggy’s family sat up with her in the Chief David Geboe Allotment House located on the Geboe allotment, NW of Miami in the Miami Tribe Reservation area.

Graveside services were held at 1:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at the Myaamia Heritage Cemetery, N.W. of Miami, OK.

Rev. Geoff Buffalo officiated and Native American Rites were conducted by Miami Tribe Chief Douglas Lankford. The family received friends from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesday evening at the Geboe House. Services were placed in the care of the Paul Thomas Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Miami, OK. Online condolences may be made at www.paulthomasfuneralhomes.com.

To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of Margaret Adelaide “Peggy” McCord please visit our Tribute Store.

MYAAMIA HERITAGE CEMETERY

Tribal citizens may reserve burial plots at no cost at the Myaamia Heritage Cemetery. Contact Tera Hatley at thatley@miamination.com or by phone at 918-541-1324.



peenaalinta “One who is born”



Olive Asami Gall

Myaamia citizen Mika Leonard and husband Ryan Gall announce the birth of their daughter, Olive Asami (Morning Beauty in Japanese) Gall. Olive was born in Denver, CO on September 2, 2020. She weighed 6 lbs, 7 oz and measured 19.5”.

Olive’s maternal grandparents are Myaamia citizen Joe Leonard and wife Etsuko. Her paternal grandparents are William and Cheri Gall.

Olive’s maternal great-grandparents are the late Chief Floyd Leonard and wife Pat.

Mika Leonard is a graduate of Miami University and is a member of the Board of Directors of Miami Nation Enterprises.



Bodie Ann Alexander

Myaamia citizen Kealey Alexander and husband Aaron announce the birth of their daughter, Bodie Ann Alexander. Bodie was born on November 21, 2020 and arrived weighing 7 lbs, 5 oz and measured 19.5”.

Bodie’s maternal grandparents are Mitch and Sandra Johnston. Her paternal grandparents are Lewis and Lacy Alexander.

weekintiiciki “They are married”



Kara Strass & Kristoph Kleiner

Tribal member, Kara Strass, married her partner of five years, Kristoph Kleiner on September 6, 2020. Both the ceremony and the reception were held in Camden, Ohio.

The bride is the daughter of Tribal citizen Kirk Strass and Patti Strass. The groom’s parents are Michael and Darla Kleiner. The wedding was officiated by the groom’s paternal grandfather, Karl Kleiner, and there were readings by the groom’s paternal grandmother, Elizabeth Kleiner, and maternal grandfather, Bill Neirman, as well as the bride’s paternal grandmother, Tribal citizen Sue Strass. Additionally, the bride’s sister, Tribal citizen Haley Shea sang a song in myaamiataweenki,

Kara is the Director of Miami Tribe Relations at the Myaamia Center and Kristoph is an Assistant Professor at Indiana University, Bloomington.

About the Tribal Medical Benefit Card

Elders, Disabled Tribal Citizens, Veterans and Active Duty Military tribal members are eligible to receive a Tribal Medical Benefit Debit Card. To apply simply submit enrollment information and documentation validating eligibility status. New applicants contact Tera Hatley, Member Services Manager, with questions or for assistance. Current card holders also contact Tera Hatley for updates to your status or enrollment records.

thatley@miamination.com

Ph: 918-541-1324

ENROLLING IN THE MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

Go to www.miamination.com, under the “Services” tab scroll down to “Enrollment” and click to enter the page - at the bottom of the page, under “Enrollment Resources” click on the Enrollment Application. For assistance, contact Tera Hatley at thatley@miamination.com or by phone at 918-541-1324.

Make a difference today!

In Oklahoma, 65% of native children are in a non-ICWA compliant home.

Foster parents play a critical role in helping children heal. They show children stability and teach them life lessons that last a lifetime—and potentially affect future generations.

Miami Tribe ICW is looking for individuals that are compassionate, understanding, and committed to playing a key role in a child’s life. Every child deserves a family and preserve their culture in an ICWA compliant home.

If you are a Miami Tribal member and are interested in becoming a foster parent or have questions, please call Rachel at 918-961-1395 or Wanda at 918-325-9078.

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Indian Child Welfare Program



MIAMI TRIBE VETERANS BENEFIT

The Miami Nation Veteran's Benefit was announced during the 2014 Annual General Council Meeting. It is designed to work just like the Tribe's existing elders and disability benefit debit cards. Veterans will receive a debit card, pre-loaded with \$500 to help with healthcare expenses. If you are an elder and a veteran, you will receive an additional \$250, a total of \$750 on your card.

Veterans must apply through the Tribe's Member Services Office and provide proof of honorable or medical discharge, or current service status. The application can be downloaded from the Tribal website at www.miamination.com. If you have additional questions, please contact Tera Hatley at 918-541-1324.

MYAAMIA COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Myaamia citizens and families have many language and cultural education opportunities available on the web. The following sites regularly post videos, photos and current news clips from the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and the Myaamia Center at Miami University.

- Myaamia Center Youtube Channel
- MYAAMIAKI Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Facebook Page (closed group for Tribal citizens and their immediate family members)
- AACIMOTAATIIYANKWI - Myaamia Community Blog
- AATOTANKIKI MYAAMIAKI Miami Nation News Facebook
- Miami Nation Events Facebook
- www.miamination.com
- Kaakisitoonkia.org - the Myaamia Heritage Museum & Archive's online archive
- Miami Nation Gift Shop
<https://myaamiagifts.square.site>
- Eemamwiciki Facebook Page (all about our summer youth programs)
- Myaamia Center Facebook Page
- ILDA Myaamia Online Dictionary (Miami-Illinois Indigenous Languages Digital Archive)
<https://mc.miamioh.edu/ilda-myaamia/dictionary>
- AATOTANTAAWI - "Let's Talk About It" Myaamia Community Discussion Group on Facebook - Books, Movies, etc.

MIAMI NATION GIFT SHOP

The Miami Nation Gift Shop is once again open for in-store shopping, online sales and pick up. We want to encourage all Myaamia customers to place orders online for pick up at the Annual Meeting on June 25, 2021. When shopping online, be sure to choose the 'pickup' option and make a note at checkout that you will be at Annual Meeting. We will have a booth at the meeting and will have your packaged order ready for pickup. From May 1 to June 18, enter code AM2021 for 20% off store-wide! (Excludes t-shirts and hooded sweatshirts, consignment items, and art prints.)

918-544-6049

<http://www.myaamiagifts.square.site>





FALL SOCIAL GATHERING AND TRIBAL COMMUNITY REUNION SEPTEMBER 24 & 25, 2021

Due to ongoing COVID 19 concerns, and to provide community members more time for vaccinations, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma will not hold community events or the annual Miami Nation Pow Wow during the week of the Tribe's General Council Meeting in June, 2021. Instead, a great Myaamia community reunion event is scheduled for September 24 & 25, 2021 in Miami, OK. The gathering will take place outdoors, weather permitting, and will include community lacrosse games, archery competition, mahk-sina tournament, social dances, stomp dance and arts and crafts vendors. A full listing of the events, times and locations will be finalized soon and will be mailed to tribal households and posted to social media and the tribal website.



MYAAMIA EDUCATION OFFICE BACK-TO-SCHOOL FUND AND SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

NOTICE! CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE. PLEASE READ THIS INFORMATION CLOSELY.

Back-to-School Funds

First and Second Semester Back-to-School applications will be mailed to all enrolled Miami Tribe of Oklahoma children ages Pre-School (minimum age 4 years) to Seniors in High School (maximum age 19 years). Back-to-School applications must be filled out completely. Please read the instructions on the application and make sure the bottom of the application is signed before returning to the Myaamia Education office by the deadline stated on the application. **FALL APPLICATIONS WILL BE MAILED IN MAY OF EACH YEAR AND SPRING APPLICATIONS WILL BE MAILED OUT IN SEPTEMBER OF EACH YEAR.** If you do not receive an application, the application can be downloaded from the miamination.com website under Education/Back to School fund or

call for a new application to be mailed. Please make sure your address has been updated with the Member Services Department.

PLEASE NOTE THAT LATE, INCOMPLETE OR UNSIGNED APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED. THE MYAAMIA EDUCATION OFFICE IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR RETURNING INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS TO BE SIGNED OR COMPLETED.

First Semester Applications must be postmarked by **July 15**. Second Semester Applications must be postmarked by **December 1**. We will not process late applications.

Eligible tribal members may apply for funding as listed below: Awards: **Pre-School (minimum age 4 years) \$50.00. Kindergar-**

ten through the 6th grade. \$75.00, 7th & 8th grade. \$100.00 and 9th through 12th grade (maximum age 19) \$150.00.

If you have questions, contact the Education Office at 918-541-2176. You must complete an application for each semester to receive Back to School Funds. Checks will be mailed within three weeks after the First semester application deadline, and after Christmas for the Second semester.

The Tribe may require, at any time, the recipient of back-to-school-funds to produce receipts for items purchased with said funds as a requirement for receiving future funding. *The policy of the Miami Tribe related to any matter involving a tribal member who is a minor is to communicate with the biological parent or legal guardian

Scholarships

The Miami Nation is committed to supporting the education of Myaamia people of all ages through the funding of scholarships and continuing education programs. The Myaamia Scholarship Selection Committee is made up of three Tribal members appointed by the Business Committee and given the responsibility of awarding the following scholarships on behalf of the General Council. Scholarships are awarded by the Committee through a blind application process. All scholarship applications must be fully completed upon submission, or the application will not be considered. Note: All scholarships offered by The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma are for enrolled members/citizens of the tribe only. Scholarships are available only for Spring and Fall semesters.

Scholarship Applications

Submit Fall Scholarship Application Deadline October 1st.

Submit Spring Scholarship Application Deadline April 1st.

PLEASE NOTE THAT LATE, INCOMPLETE OR UNSIGNED APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED. THE MYAAMIA EDUCATION OFFICE IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR RETURNING INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS TO BE SIGNED OR COMPLETED.

Scholarships on the Spring Scholarship Application are:

***CASINO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AWARD- DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.**

Application Eligibility: Full-time, undergraduate status (enrolled in 12 credit hours) Must have 2.5 cumulative GPA.

Award: \$2000 per academic year. Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester, or if amount should be split between Fall or Spring. Pays up to eight consecutive Fall/Spring semesters (4 years)

Renewable annually. Must submit Spring Application, due April 1.

Renewal Requirements: Maintain full-time status (complete minimum 12 credit hours each semester) Maintain 2.5 cumulative GPA - Submit Spring Application by April 1 of each year.

JOSEPHINE GOODBOO WATSON MEMORIAL BOOK SCHOLARSHIP - DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

(Established by the surviving descendents of tribal member Josephine Goodboo Watson).

Application Eligibility: Full-time graduate or undergraduate status - Maintain 2.5 cumulative GPA. Submit Spring Application

Award: \$500 per academic year - Renewable annually with Spring Application

Renewal Requirements: Maintain full-time status (12 hrs/undergraduate; 6 hours/graduate) - Maintain 2.5 cumulative GPA - Submit Spring Application each year

TAX COMMISSION CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP - DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility: Full-time (enrolled in at least 12 hours) or part-time (enrolled in at least 6 hours) undergraduate status have 2.5 GPA - Submit Spring Application Award

-Awarded per academic year. Student must advise school if full

amount should be applied to Fall semester, or if amount should be split between Fall or Spring. Renewable annually. Must submit **Spring Application, due April 1.**

Renewal Requirements: Maintain full-time (12 hours) or part-time status (at least six hours). Maintain 2.5 cumulative GPA. Submit Spring Application each year.

CRANE AWARD - DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility: Graduate or post-graduate student

Submit Spring Application each year, due April 1.

Award: \$2000 per academic year (Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester, or if amount should be split between Fall or Spring.) Submit Spring Application each year, due April 1.

NON-TRADITIONAL SCHOLARSHIP - DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility: Full-time undergraduate status

2.5 cumulative GPA (high school or college, whichever is most recent). Must be 5 years since completion of last semester of high school or college.

Submit Spring Application each year, due April 1.

Award: \$2000 per academic year (Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester, or if amount should be split between Fall or Spring.) - Non-renewable.

FRESH START SCHOLARSHIP - DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility: Freshman (apply senior year of high school) This scholarship is for a student that does not carry a 2.5 GPA which is a requirement for all other Miami Tribe of Oklahoma scholarships on the Spring application. Must have 2.0-2.4 cumulative GPA. **Submit Spring Application each year, due April 1.**

Award: \$400, one-time award for Fall semester

Non-renewable

Scholarship on the Fall Scholarship Application:

Vocational or Trade School Scholarship

DUE OCTOBER 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility: Must be enrolled full time in a state-accredited vocational or trade school. Must have 2.0 cumulative GPA. Submit Fall Scholarship Application each year, due October 1.

Award: \$2000 per academic year (Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester, or if amount should be split between Fall or Spring.) Renewable annually with Fall Scholarship Application

Renewal Requirements: Maintain full-time status. Maintain 2.0 cumulative GPA. Submit Fall Scholarship Application each year, due October 1.

***All awards are subject to change per the Business Committee.**

If you have any questions please contact the Myaamia Education Office. Donya Williams - dwilliams@miamination.com. 918-541-2176.

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma community members are encouraged to submit family news to this publication. Submit News to: mtocro@gmail.com Photos should be supplied as tif, jpg, pdf or psd files measuring at least 3" in width x 3" in height at a resolution of 300 dpi.

This newspaper is available as a PDF at www.miamination.com. Choose "News & Events" from the menu bar.