



# GIIWEDINONG

TREATY RIGHTS AND CULTURE MUSEUM

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Dagwaagin (Fall) ᑕᑭᐱᑦᐱᑦ

SEPTEMBER 2024

## NEWSLETTER

WE ARE PLEASED TO BRING YOU OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER,  
SHARING HISTORY WHILE WE MAKE IT.

### In This Issue

Giiwedining Introduction, Pages 1-3.

Manoominikewag, Page 04.

Sweet Corn Treaty, The Progress, Page 05.

Enbridge 5.0, Page 06.

Daughters of the American Revolution Award, Not  
Afraid To Look Exhibit, Page 07.

Land Back, First Draft of The Constitution, Page 08.

Land Back, Page 09.

Honoring Water Protectors, Page 10.

Upcoming Events, Page 11.

What Else? Page 12.



With great enthusiasm, we present our inaugural year, dedicated to "sharing history while we make it." The museum is a dream and story unfolding. Anishinaabe people have a long history on this land, in relationships with other nations, and in transforming our worlds. We wish to honor this history and tell our stories.

**There are many museums about Native people, but few by Native people. This is our story.**

**WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SHARE OUR STORY WITHOUT HELP.**

We are very grateful to the good hearts and hard work of our community members who made this museum possible. We are grateful to our funders- the **Minnesota Humanities Commission**, **Blandin Foundation**, the **Mellon Foundation**, the **Knight Foundation**, the **Minneapolis Foundation**, and many **individual donors** for making this dream a reality.



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TREATY RIGHTS AND CULTURE MUSEUM



**Who are we?** We are Anishinaabe community members and friends who came together to honor our history and ancestors and share our stories.

**We call ourselves the Little Museum that Could.**

With great pleasure, we announce that on July 24th, the board officially appointed Sarah "Miskwaa-ens Migiziwigwan" Kalmanson as the executive director. Since February 2024, Sarah has served as the board's interim executive director and we are honored she has accepted this well-deserved position.

Our staff includes **Winona LaDuke (Co-Curator)**, **Mary Crystal Lopez Lopez Goggleye (Youth Programs)**, and **Waseyabin Kapashesit (Events Coordinator and Merchandise)**.

We also have our young friend **Kiley Knowles** in the Gift Shop and our wonderful maintenance volunteer, **Ross Karvonen**, who donated endless hours renovating the building.

Board members include Board Chair **Don Wedll (Historian)**, Secretary/Treasurer **Danette Larson (Educator)**, **Travis Zimmerman (Museum Director)**, and **Gina Peltier (Anishinaabe water protector)**.

*Indoonjibaamin omaa akiing - we are from here.*



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TREATY RIGHTS AND CULTURE MUSEUM



Our mission is to honor, empower, and inspire Anishinaabe and Dakota through immersive exhibitions, dynamic public programs, and transformative education. We will ignite awareness, foster respect, and drive meaningful change.

We envision Giiwediningong is Mino Bimaadiziwin (to live "the good life") for all Indigenous peoples as a gift from the Creator and as carried by generations before and after them. Our cultural knowledge is grounded in our relationship to Akiing, the land to which we belong.

The museum is housed in what was once the Carnegie Library, which was funded by Andrew Carnegie, who amassed a fortune from the Iron Range, our land and waterways. This library was to be a place to bring the world and knowledge to the northern country, **Giiwediningong**, which means "in the north."

The library moved, and Enbridge, the Canadian multinational pipeline company, purchased this building as a headquarters for their expansion in the 1855 treaty territory.

Many people in the north country opposed that pipeline, and many people came to stand outside the Enbridge office with signs of Water Protectors. We opened our doors on October 12, 2023, and are proud of our work.



## Manoominikewag- They Are Harvesting Wild rice



This season, our people travel from the south to the north, looking for lakes or rivers ready to harvest as the wild rice turns from milky to green and then to kernels that fall into the canoes as we “ knock “ the rice with *baawaa’iganakag*, or wild rice knockers.

The Anishinaabe have defended this rice, including opposing the proposed genetic modification of wild rice, and have even challenged the University of Minnesota’s research into wild rice genetics. Indeed, once all the wild rice came from here, and today, 75% of all “wild rice” sold comes from California, where it is grown in diked paddies and harvested with combines. We call that tame rice. In 2007, due to tribal advocacy, Minnesota enacted legislation opposing the genetic modification of wild rice.

The State of Minnesota acknowledged the harvesting rights of the Anishinaabe people in 2016 in the 1855 Treaty Territory and beyond. This means that tribal members can still harvest throughout our territories without a license from the state. The Anishinaabe people harvested before Minnesota was even a state in 1858.

Climate change impacts our wild rice, as torrential storms blow the rice down, drown out the delicate ecosystems, and sometimes droughts make it impossible to harvest. This year, there is much less wild rice, as high water levels and recent storms have decimated the wild rice beds in most lakes. Nett Lake, for instance, known for its bountiful crop, is open water.

The Sandy Lake Flowage and Minnewawa Lake, two of our most important wild rice areas, are now in danger from nickel mining. Canadian junior mining corporation Talon Minerals is core drilling in a fragile ecosystem in the hopes of bringing a massive mine to the surface. The company has the backing of Rio Tinto Zinc and government financing for “green energy.” The poisoning of aquatic ecosystems and the destruction of a great deal of wild rice in that area are possible outcomes.

Yet, keep up your hopes. Wild rice is resilient and returns when the conditions are right. This year, the Ottertail River near Fergus Falls is full of *manoomin* for the first time in decades. Similarly, Onamia Lake and Ogeche Lake had wild rice return after 17 years and 50 years.

For our part, all we have to do is take care of the water and hold our ceremonial feasts to recognize the wild rice. And, today, we must also work together to address the causes of climate change, transform consumption, and make the way to the 8th Fire of our prophecies.



## Honoring the Sweet Corn Treaty



Photos by Ta Pejuta Wicahpi Win

For many years, Anishinaabe and Dakota people have acknowledged our relationship through the affirmation and reaffirmation of the **Sweet Corn Treaty**.

This year, as in previous years, youth from the Red Lake and White Earth Anishinaabe joined with Dakota riders to acknowledge the Whitestone Massacre of 1863 in a memorial horse ride.

Referred to for many years as a "battlefield site," a statue remains of a soldier atop "Whitestone Hill."

The Dakota remember this as the place where the US Cavalry opened up fire on a Dakota camp that was preparing for winter, **killing 400 people**, mostly women and children.

We honor their memory by riding for the spirits and future generations.

## The Progress (White Earth, Minn.) 1886-1889

"The Progress" was the first Anishinaabe newspaper in Minnesota, published by Gus H. Beaulieu and later by Theodore Beaulieu. The paper provided news of the community and often challenged government corruption.

The phrase "A Higher Civilization: The Maintenance of Law and Order" was printed on every front page of the paper. In its final issue of July 13, 1889, the newspaper's publication was suspended during negotiations on the Nelson Act, a very destructive law. In 1903, the Beaulieus re-introduced their paper as the White Earth Tomahawk.

The four-page, six-column Tomahawk newspaper proclaimed itself the official organ of the Minnesota Ojibwe, featuring the moniker "Truth before Favor." Beaulieu wrote, "Believing the pen is mightier than the sword, we start on the war path with a paper tomahawk."

In 1915, Beaulieu expanded his vision of equal rights to include all American Indians of the United States. He increased the newspaper's length, giving space to world news, fiction, fashion, and travel features.

This is one of the first Native newspapers on Turtle Island.

### Source:

[www.mnhs.org/newspapers/hub/tomahawk](http://www.mnhs.org/newspapers/hub/tomahawk)



# GIIWEDINONG

TREATY RIGHTS AND CULTURE MUSEUM

## Enbridge 5.0

*"...They are a Canadian company taking Canadian oil from Canada to Canada through my backyard.... a company like Enbridge should not be trusted at all. If they are trespassing over Bad River land, If I did the same thing, they would probably lock me up for years and years. You watched them breach aquifers in Minnesota over the past few years, and you want us to accept their studies and their word. This is a stronghold of water..."*

- Pete Rasmussen, Army Corps of Engineers Hearing, Enbridge Line 5



Enbridge's Line 5 became operational in 1963, back in the day when you could throw a pipeline across the reservation with little regard. It transports over 20 million gallons of oil and gas through Michigan, Wisconsin, and Bad River Band Territory. Line 5 has leaked 29 times and also crosses under the Straits of Mackinac, where it's precariously anchored.

The Anishinaabe and the state of Michigan are suing Enbridge in state and federal courts. The pipeline has lacked an easement since 2013, through the Bad River reservation and under the Straits of Mackinac, where Michigan's Governor has demanded a pipeline shut down.

***"These oil pipelines in the Straits of Mackinac are a ticking time bomb, and their continued presence violates public trust and poses a grave threat to Michigan's environment and economy,"*** Whitmer's office said in a statement.

Federal Environmental Impact Assessment hearings were held across the region, as Enbridge has proposed a 44-mile loop around the Bad River reservation, crossing 200 separate stream beds, in the horizontal drilling, which caused many aquifer breaches and frackout leaks in Minnesota. Dawn Goodwin from the RISE Coalition spoke from experience.

***"I am here today to warn you all.... You are all here because we signed treaties to live in peace. We are in a climate emergency, and we need to protect what's left. The monitors of Line 3 construction reported frack outs and aquifer breaches, and still, Enbridge was allowed to take 5 billion gallons of water in extreme drought..."***

Anishinaabe elder Debra Topping from Fond du Lac put things simply, ***"No means no."***



# GIIWEDINONG

TREATY RIGHTS AND CULTURE MUSEUM

## Daughters of the American Revolution Award.

On July 11th, the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented the Giiwedining Museum with the Historic Preservation Recognition Award. Giiwedining co-curator and founder Winona LaDuke additionally received the Women of History award from the Society.

Missy Hermes, Regent of the Fergus Falls Chapter of DAR, stated:

*“Our chapter was honored to present this award recognizing the staff and volunteers of the Giiwedining Treaty Rights Museum, not only for their hard work preserving this landmark building, but also for their tremendous efforts as culture bearers, preserving and presenting the art, history, and traditions of the Indigenous people of Minnesota.”*

Giiwedining Museum Director Sarah LittleRedfeather Kalmanson accepted the award on behalf of the organization, noting:

*“It is a great privilege for us to be recognized with this prestigious award. We are honored to have the chance to make a meaningful impact on the preservation of our community's rich history and beloved cultural heritage. This award serves as a powerful source of inspiration for us to stay engaged in our mission of preserving these precious components of our history for the benefit of future generations.”*



Missy Hermes and Sarah LittleRedfeather

## ‘Not Afraid to Look’ comes to Giiwedining.

On May 17th, "Not Afraid to Look," a world-famous icon of the Water Protector movement and a tribute to the resilience and courage of Native people, came to the Giiwedining Museum.

Charles Rencountre and his wife Alicia Da Silva delivered the four-foot-high statue from their studio in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The installation, sponsored by Giiwedining, the City of Park Rapids, and the Park Rapids Arts and Culture Commission, is part of the city's sculpture trail program. Special donors for the installation included Betty LaDuke and others.



The sculpture is based on a traditional Native prayer pipe, known as an “effigy” pipe.

Rencountre shared, “I had a dream when I was 17. There were cases and cases of chanupas. And in my dream, I was breaking the glass and trying to get them all out.”

Rencountre explained that the sculpture was created “through a lot of grit, long days, and goodwill. It was a collaborative effort between himself, as the sculptor, and the communities that recognized the importance of building it to confront the Energy Transfer Partners pipeline crossing the Missouri River above the Standing Rock Sioux Nation.”

The statue (pictured above) is now a permanent part of Giiwedining’s collection.

**Learn more:**

[www.giiwedining.org/artists/notafraidtolook](http://www.giiwedining.org/artists/notafraidtolook)



# GIIWEDINONG

TREATY RIGHTS AND CULTURE MUSEUM

## Land Back: Restoring Our Homelands

On July 17, the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe celebrated the transfer of more than 11,000 acres to the tribe. Federal officials at the celebration acknowledged they represent the nation who took the land away and who have now helped enable the return. Senator Tina Smith, one of the leads on this bill, stated:

*"We are celebrating the righting of this incredible wrong. This is a place for people to have a decent place to live. The Leech Lake Reservation Restoration Act was one of the first acts I did in the Senate. Three years later it passed. I never gave up."*

Chair Faron Jackson Sr. described the transfer as *"the largest achievement by the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe to restore the land base of our permanent homeland since it was originally established."*



Leech Lake Land Back Ceremony

Levi Brown, the former Natural Resources Director for the Leech Lake tribe, emphasized the commitment required:

*"When I walked in as an intern in 2002, there were boxes in the corner. Those were the boxes about the land transactions known as the Secretarial Transfers. In 2018, the bill was introduced. That was 16 years of working on it."*

The celebration at the Bugonaygeshig School included speeches from various representatives, including the youngest speaker, Mike Smith, who remarked:

*"A fish keeps moving in order to keep living. People of Turtle Island are the same. Not looking back and saying, I remember what your ancestors did. It's about moving forward."*

## First Draft of the Constitution

As Park Rapids and the north country celebrated American Independence Day, we wanted to share the story of democracy on this continent.



Flag of the Iroquois Confederacy, Ken (Haohyoh) Maracle, 2004

When the Founding Fathers of the United States began to work to create a new country, a colonial government in North America, they looked to the teachings of Native people on governance. In 1987, the Senate recognized the influence of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy on the United States, noting, "the confederation of the original Thirteen Colonies into one republic was explicitly modeled upon the Iroquois Confederacy as were many of the democratic principles which were incorporated into the Constitution itself."

The Haudenosaunee Confederacy established Gayanesshagowa, or the Great Law of Peace, as its governing principle in 1142. The Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, and Onondaga joined in the Great Law of Peace to form a confederacy, and the Tuscarora joined them later. The Law of Peace laid out the role of Chiefs, Clan Mothers, and Faith Keepers as delegates that form the regulatory bodies of the confederacy. "Within Grand Council meet the Chiefs of each nation which then divide into sections of Elder Brothers and Younger Brothers;" the bicameral Congress is similar. A high court analogy has been made regarding the Clan Mothers, who serve lifelong terms, are chosen by consensus, and possess the power to remove council members.

At the museum, we feature a Haudenosaunee Wampum Belt -- the One Dish One Spoon. We recognize the history of the Six Nations as integral to American democracy and North American governance.

**Learn more:**

[www.giiwediniᑎg.org/treatystories/first-draft-of-the-constitution](http://www.giiwediniᑎg.org/treatystories/first-draft-of-the-constitution)





# GIIWEDINONG

TREATY RIGHTS AND CULTURE MUSEUM

*The only compensation for land, is land..."*

*-Oren Lyons, Onondaga Faith Keeper*

## Land Back: Pewaush Land

Some 18 acres of land were returned to the Mille Lacs band from lands that had been designated as School Trust Lands but were within the Reservation and preempted by Band members living on the land.

Don Wedll, former Commissioner of Natural Resources for Mille Lacs band, recalls the day almost forty years ago when "Melvin Pewaush, who was living on that property, came into his office with a letter from the state DNR claiming that he had to move off of that land because:

*"It was public school district lands, and he wasn't supposed to be there."*

All 18 acres are within the Mille Lacs reservation and have been, through error, held in trust by the state.

At the time of statehood, the federal government granted two sections of land from every township to raise money for public education. Trust lands earn revenue through mining, timber sales, or real estate transactions. The designated sections in every township were numbered 16 and 36. Those lands happened to be preempted on the treaty-protected Mille Lacs reservation.

*"And tribal members have lived there not knowing they were in section 16 but lived there since before the reservation was created, and as such, they lived there, and that was their home,"* Wedll explains.

Don Wedll is also a board member of Giiwediniŋg. With the passage of legislation this spring, the Mille Lacs Band becomes the first tribal nation in the state to see land from the Minnesota Office of School Trust Lands restored by the state Legislature.

Sen. Mary Kunesch, DFL-New Brighton, sponsored the legislation that restored title after reviewing the school trust status. The parcel had not earned significant revenue for the school trust fund in many years. Kunesch however, ensured the legislation passed this spring allocates money to the state's school trust fund. Mille Lacs County is opposing this transfer.

## Land Back: Yellow Medicine

The Dakota land of *Pezihutazizi Kapi Makoce* (Land Where They Dig The Yellow Medicine) was returned this March. This was the historic site where Andrew Myrick, the US Indian Agent, denied food to starving Dakota people and sparked the 1862 Little Crow War.

Tribal elder Elitta Gouge had this to say:

*"The park is not just recreational. I consider it Wokiksuye k'a Wanagi Makoce — a land of memories and spirits. It is to be walked upon with respect and reverence. Pezihutazizi Dakota Nation has had to reclaim it, and the Minnesota State had to return it."*

Upper Sioux Community held a public ceremony, where local tribal members gathered to witness the signing of the necessary documents to transfer the land.

Tribal members present donned shirts that read "161 Years," representing the timespan it took for the land to be returned to the Dakota people. This historic Dakota land has been known as Upper Sioux Agency State Park, a recreational park, since 1963.

Before the land was transferred, Dakota people had paid entrance fees to visit the place where their ancestors had perished.



*"Everyone in this room knows, the Yellow Medicine people know, our Dakota and Ojibwe brothers and sisters know, when there's an official treaty signing or official documents, that almost always ended in sorrow and tears for your community."*

Governor Tim Walz told the Dakota community: *"Today is not that day."*



## Honoring Water Protectors:

*"By 2030, an ounce of water will cost the same as an ounce of gold,"*

-Bawdwaywidun, Edward Benton, Three Fires Midewin



Photo by Ayse Gursoz

Josephine Mandaamin, inspired many water protectors. Her memory lives on in our hearts.

The late Thunder Bay-based Elder Josephine Mandamin, a member of **Anishinaabe Awaazisii doodem** (the Ojibwe Catfish Clan) from Manitoulin Island, with a pail of the sacred copper filled with water in one hand and an eagle feather staff or a bear staff in the other walked around the great lakes, to honor the water. Her lessons in the Midewin Lodge served as inspiration for her.

She led this movement for 18 years, walking around each of the Great Lakes and inspiring us all.

**Ogimaa-Nibi-Ogichidaakwe** (Chief Water Warrior Woman) Josephine is known all around the world as the "Water Walker."

Each walk is a prayer for life; for Nibi the water, for Mother Earth, for the trees, the animals, the birds, the insects, and for us, all the two-legged. By walking the perimeter of all five Gichigamiin, the Great Lakes, each year around springtime, the walkers raise awareness of the importance of preserving the water quality and quantity and helping people recognize that water is life.

*"Water has to live, it can hear, it can sense what we're saying, it can really, really, speak to us. Some songs come to us through the water. We have to understand that water is very precious...If we discontinue our negligence, we can change things around. That's why I am really embodying the (Midewiwin) prophecy. You've heard of 'Walk the Talk,' this is why I walk."*

- Josephine Mandamin (1942-2019)



# GIIWEDINONG

## TREATY RIGHTS AND CULTURE MUSEUM

### Upcoming Events

#### August: Water Protector Opening

- Date: August 15 - 16
- Details: Free entrance for Water Protectors, special evening and reception honoring Water Protectors, and information on continuing water protection work.

#### September: Giiwedining Annual Welcome Feast

- Details: Membership and honoring historians at the Armory in Park Rapids, partnered with the Sioux Chef, serving traditional indigenous foods.

#### October 14: Indigenous People's Day Celebration

- Details: Hosted by Giiwedining in partnership with local indigenous peoples.
- On October 12th, Giiwedining is co-sponsoring concert night with Corey Medina at the Armory in Park Rapids.

#### November 1: 3rd Annual Días de los Muertos Block Party

- Details: Partnered with Vallartas Mexican Grill in Park Rapids, artists Guillermo Valadez and Ana Navarro, Park Rapids Arts organizations, and local businesses volunteering.

#### December 2024: Mini Winter Native Film Festival

- Details: Partnering with the Park Theater in Park Rapids and Pickett Pictures as a source to consult on film selections and team event coordinators. Date selection and advertising to begin in October.

#### January 16: National Day of Racial Healing

- Details: The day following Martin Luther King Day, with local schools and using Kellogg Foundation digital platforms.

#### February 17: Chief's Day

- Details: Presentation and special exhibit/event hosted by Giiwedining in partnership with local native historians and local schools.

#### May 1–3, 2025: Indian Month Celebration Weekend

- Details: Gathering in Park Rapids, hosted by Giiwedining in partnership with local native historians.

#### May 2025: Spring Native Film Festival

- Details: Partnering with the Park Theater in Park Rapids and Pickett Pictures as a source to consult on film selections and team event coordinators. Date selection and advertising to begin in December.

#### Giiwedining Indigenous Film Festival

- Details: Partnering with the Park Theater in Park Rapids, Native arts organizations, and Pickett Pictures on film showings and supporting sponsors.

**Stay tuned for more updates and join us in celebrating  
and preserving our rich heritage and history.**



# GIIWEDINONG

TREATY RIGHTS AND CULTURE MUSEUM

## What else?

Giiwedining Museum hopes to support teachers in Minnesota and elsewhere who seek more knowledge and require various forms of certification and or recertification. This past March, in the Pierz School District, - Don Wedll, Giiwedining Board Member, presented on Federal Indian Policy. This training in cultural diversity meets partial requirements for recertification as a teacher. Giiwedining hopes to offer more programs in 2024-25 for teacher certification and to improve Indigenous knowledge and understanding in Minnesota

Giiwedining Museum plans to bring stories to the north country through a collaboration with Nijii Radio, funded by a recent grant from the Mellon and Blandin Foundations.

We will be reading excerpts from *the Progress and the Tomahawk*- two White Earth newspapers published between the 1880s and the 1920s, when White Earth Anishinaabe exercised First Amendment rights, and working to do interviews with tribal historians.

We had the opportunity to share our museum and our stories with many students regionally. Students from school districts in Ponemah, Bemidji, Fergus Falls, Cass Lake and more! Miigwech for coming.

If you would like to schedule a special class visit, please contact us at [info@giiwedining.org](mailto:info@giiwedining.org) or call us at (218) 203-0481 and request to speak with Mary Crystal Lopez Lopez Goggeley.

Join us to become a Founding Member at [www.donorbox.org/giiwedining-members](http://www.donorbox.org/giiwedining-members)



We offer 1855 Treaty Finest, Traditional Harvest, and Parched Manoomin (Wild Rice) at our Gift Shop in the Giiwedining Museum and also online at [www.giiwedininggifts.com](http://www.giiwedininggifts.com). Come and see our Gift Shop for more gifts.

In the Spring and Summer of 2025, Giiwedining will establish a Native Market on our premises, which will be held annual. Prospective Native artists may contact Sarah LittleRedfeather at [littleredfeather@giiwedining.org](mailto:littleredfeather@giiwedining.org) or (218) 203-0481 to inquire about an application and obtain additional information.

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