

myaamionkonci  
meeloohkamike

# aatotankiki myaamiaki



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## TRIBAL NEWS

- Chief Reports Pg 2
- McArthur Internship Pg 3
- J. Baldwin, LLC Pg 3
- Willard Pg 6
- HUD Update Pg 7
- Employee Spotlight Pg 7
- Color Code Pg 9

## Community

- Ironstrack, contrib. Pg 4
- Baldwin, contrib. Pg 5
- Don Cass Pg 10
- Births Pg 11
- Deaths Pg 11
- Anniversary Pg 11

## Culture & History

- Ironstrack, contrib. Pg 4
- Baldwin, contrib. Pg 5
- Willard, arts Pg 6
- Arts Pg 12

## Events

- Event Notices Pg 6,7

## INSERTS INCLUDED



**aacimwita akima**  
*The Chief Reports: pg 2*

### ABOUT OUR BANNER IMAGE:

Beginning with the 2010 Winter edition of aatotankiki myaamiaki, we elected to use a revolving banner theme incorporating photos that were ecologically based and in keeping with the seasonal distribution of the paper. The banner selected for this Spring edition honors the time of the spring migration of the cecaah-kwa (Sandhill Cranes).

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## Myaamiaki Gather To Preview New Story Book

By Julie Olds

Myaamia citizens and guests gathered at the Ethel Miller Moore Cultural Education Center (longhouse) on January 28, 2011 to herald the publication of a new book of myaamia winter stories and traditional narratives.

“myaamia neehi peewaalia aacimoona neehi aalhsooh-kaana: Myaamia and Peoria Narratives and Winter Stories” is a work 22 years in the making and therefore a labor of love to all involved, especially the editor, and translator, Dr. David Costa.

Daryl Baldwin, Director of the Myaamia Project, worked closely with Dr. Costa throughout the translation process. Baldwin phoned me (Cultural Resources Officer Julie Olds) in late summer of 2010 to report that Dr. Costa had completed the editing process and that the collection was on its way to the design and layout phase. I discussed the need to host an event to introduce the book with Baldwin and THPO George Strack. It was determined that a community gathering designed to afford Dr. Costa the opportunity to discuss the magnitude of the work involved in bringing this publication to the Miami people, and to answer questions directly from Tribal members was much needed.

January 28 found approximately 125 people gathered, on a balmy 72 degree evening. Daryl Baldwin took the podium first and spoke personally to the audience about the book and the life of the stories included in it within his own life and the lives of his wife and children. Dr. Costa followed with a Power Point presentation that included historical information and linguistic records of the materials used for the book. Dr. Costa answered questions from an audience overwhelmed by the content of the book, and, possibly more so, by the incredible work represented in the publication.

Following the presentations a meal of wild rice and mushroom soup, beef stew with sun chokes and squash, salad and drinks was furnished by the

Tribal Traditions Committee and Cultural Resources Office with the wonderful assistance of our dear friend Laurie Shade and her Title VI crew.

Following dinner it was finally story time. George Ironstrack, Assistant Director of the Myaamia Project, hosted the evening of myaamia storytelling. Ironstrack, joined by his father George Strack, opened by giving the story of where the myaamia first came from. Ironstrack gave a number of other stories to the audience and spoke passionately, and knowingly, of the characters, cultural heroes, and landscapes intertwined to the stories. The audience listened in respectful awe.

To honor the closing of the “Year of Miami Women”, two women were asked to read. Dr. Ivalah Allen, daughter of Clarence and Helen Hayward, and Linda Donati, daughter of Mildred Watson Walker and the late Freeman Walker,

*Continued on page 8*



*Right: Dr. David Costa, linguist, addresses the crowd of Tribal members and guests gathered for the story book presentation held at the Nation's longhouse on January 28, 2011. Photo by Andrew Strack.*

## Chief Richardville House To Be Considered For National Landmark Status

By George Strack, THPO

Miami Chief Jean Baptiste Richardville's home located near Fort Wayne, Indiana is being considered for National Historic Landmark status by the National Park Service.

Chief Richardville was the principal chief of the Miami from 1812 until his death in 1841. Final review of the nomination will take place in Washington, DC at the end of May, 2011. The Richardville House is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. National Landmark status for the House is an important step forward to recognize the important contributions that the Miami people have made to the history of Indiana.

The Chief Jean Baptiste de Richardville House was built near Fort Wayne, Indiana in 1827. Subsidized by the U.S. federal government through the 1826 Treaty of Mississinwas, it is believed to be only one of three treaty houses built east of the Mississippi River.

The Richardville House architecture reflects both Greek Revival and Federalist styles. When completed, using both

the government's and his own funds, Richardville's Fort Wayne home was the equal in style and grandeur of the homes of prominent white residents of the area at that time. The Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society acquired the house in 1991 with money donated by the Foellinger Foundation and the Ropchan Foundation.



*Chief Jean Baptiste de Richardville House, near Ft. Wayne, IN. Photo by Joshua Sutterfield.*

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA GENERAL COUNCIL WILL BE HELD AT 9 A.M., SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2011 IN THE MYAAMIA COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING LOCATED AT 54401 E. 65 ROAD, MIAMI, OK.

## aacimwita akima: The Chief Reports

By Chief Tom Gamble - katakimaankwa

Aya ceeki eweemakiki – greetings to all my Myaamia relatives and fellow citizens of the Sovereign Myaamia Nation. Once again it is my honor to come before you to report to you, the General Council, the state of this great Nation, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. This has been an exciting year of new opportunities, growth, and recognition of our great Tribe and our people.

Many positive and meaningful events for the Tribe took place over the past year. Among the events that stand out in my mind, and gave national recognition to the Tribe, was the recognition of the Tribe and the Myaamia Project at Miami University by his holiness, the Dalai Lama, who visited Miami University in the fall of 2010. Additionally, in the fall of 2010 Miami tribal leaders were invited to attend the dedication of a new facility, The Center for the Families of the Fallen, in Dover, Maryland, in a building constructed by the Miami Tribe at Dover Air Force Base. Finally, it was a great honor to the Tribe last fall, for the National Indian Gaming Association in Washington, D.C. to announce that it would name its main meeting room in their new facility, “The Miami Room.” These events and others demonstrate the positive relationships and contacts the Tribe has established and maintains on a national level.

The Tribe continues to foster and maintain the outstanding relationships we have with Federal, State and County personnel, and the Tribe remains active in the support of our State Representatives and Congressmen. These relationships are built and maintained by working closely with the agencies. The Tribe has many strong supporters in the Federal government including the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the U.S. Department of Interior.

Because the Miami Tribe is supported by a strong Constitution and a stable government, many business opportunities come to the Tribe. This year, new and exciting business opportunities arose specifically due to our close alliance with individuals from the governmental departments named above. At this time, the Tribe has put in motion strategic plans for a lucrative business partnership with a nationally-known company which, if successful, will increase the economic development growth of the Tribe, and more importantly, provide significant funding for our tribal programs. The continued growth of the economic development arm of the tribe remains a priority and much success is taking place in this area. Economic development is a main focus for the Tribe. Diversifying and growing our business opportunities is the key to success for our Tribe. During this past year, after a trust application process that spanned over a decade, a valuable piece of property owned by the Tribe was finally placed into trust by the Department of Interior. The building, which we referred to as the P Street Property, is located at 3410 P Street NW, in Miami. This 22,000 square foot building houses the Miami Business Development Authority and provides opportunity for expansion in business for the economic development branches of the Tribe, and we are very excited about this.

In addition to our vigilance in the expansion of economic development opportunities, the Tribe has changed direction in an effort to streamline its way of doing business. In certain areas where there is a proper fit, the Tribe has opted to hire consultants or contract with individuals with business expertise instead of hiring for full-time positions. This has worked to the benefit of the Tribe in obtaining the professional expertise in certain areas while saving the Tribe the costs associated with benefits packages.

Along with business development and economic growth, a priority for the Tribe this year is the completion and implementation of a strategic 5-year plan. The process of creating this plan is a real value to the Tribe because it involves thinking ahead and anticipating potential impact from outside influences. For this task, the Tribe has assembled a team comprised of department directors who have been meeting regularly to establish and implement the goals of a long-term plan. This is an immense project considering the Tribe now governs and oversees some 40 plus tribal programs, and in addition to this, nearly a dozen businesses. A long-term plan will change over time, but the true value of a long-term plan is that it provides a source of reference and direction for the Tribe as we move forward in our continued growth.

The primary goals of focus for this leadership remain as follows: economic development; health, welfare and safety of our people; education of our tribal youth; and cultural awareness and cultural preservation of the Miami people. Because membership continues to grow, we must remain ever vigilant to opportunities that bring funding for our tribal programs and for our people.

The Miami Tribe and its leadership has had, and still has, an incredibly strong and positive relationship with other Tribes in the northeast, with officials and leaders for the City of Miami, with the President and board of NEO College, and with our state and federal legislators. Community relations are very important to the Tribe and several projects that have evolved over this past year are a reflection of our many successes in this area as well.

The Miami, along with five other area Tribes, consolidated HUD grant funds to construct a new Indian Health Services (IHS) building on Peoria lands on Highway 69A. Construction for the 51,000 square foot facility is expected to commence this summer.

Additionally, the Miami and Peoria Tribes participated as the two founding tribes to enhance public transportation in Miami through the Pelivan Service. In partnership with other local tribes and Grand Gateway, the expansion of the Pelivan Service fleet includes the addition of 3 Minivans, 1 eleven passenger shuttle bus, and two 14 passenger buses.

The Myaamia Wellness Center has become a big hit with tribal members and the community with the many successful exercise programs offered with the therapeutic pool and exercise equipment in the facility. Classes provided by the staff are well-attended and leadership plans to address the requests by attendees for more classes. This opportunity for therapeutic exercise for elders and others who choose to participate is of utmost importance to the Tribe.

The Gordon House too has bolstered the Tribes connections with the community. The Gordon House has provided a popular forum for public meetings with local colleges and schools, for political candidates, and many Miami businesses. In addition the house is frequently booked by private parties for various types of receptions, showers, meetings, and gatherings of all sorts.

During the 2010 Census the Miami Tribe filled a vital role as an outreach center for tribal members, tribal elders, and Native Americans to assist with completion of census documents. The Tribe provided two locations (the Myaamia Center and Title VI at the headquarters building) to set up Census displays, to distribute Census materials, to provide assistance with completing materials, and to distribute information for Census employment. We were very successful with this endeavor and are proud to be a part of the Native American tribes who made an effort to make our numbers count.

Tribal leadership is specifically proud this year of outreach the Tribe provided

to its members, employees and the community through our Motive Matters Color Code grant project. The Color Code is about people and the power of Motive. Understanding human core motivations helps create successful relationships in all areas of life. The Miami Tribe was funded to provide workshops for 600 people this year. The Tribe has already met this target number and has 12 more workshops scheduled before September 2011. This important project, which focuses on understanding yourself and those around you, is offered to other tribes, churches, businesses, teachers, families, students, and couples. This has been an extraordinary experience for those who have participated and the Tribe is so proud to have provided this program to the community.

In an effort to provide more information to tribal members about the history of the Tribe, the space once occupied by the library is being transformed into an extension of the Archives Department and will house a valuable research area and archival display for the use and enjoyment of the Miami people. Having retained all books and materials related to the Miami Tribe, these materials will be available for research projects. Additionally, display cases will be constructed to provide viewing for ever changing displays of historical Miami artifacts, photos, and/or displays of artwork by Miami artists. This exciting new project will provide an opportunity for tribal members and the community to view Miami tribal items of antiquity that heretofore, have not been available for view.

Our 2010 Winter Gathering, commenced years ago by Chief Leonard, Sharon Templin, and other Miami members, was a big success this year. After the unfortunate weather last year which caused the Gathering to be cancelled, it was nice once again to meet and enjoy a day with fellow tribal members, other tribal friends, many students and professors from Miami University, and our talented tribal members involved in the Myaamia project. It was a fun, successful event. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of all the tribal members involved with the Myaamia Project at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. The unique and profound work from the Myaamia Project has resulted in national recognition of the program. As a result of this recognition, many colleges and universities have expressed an interest in modeling the program. We are so proud of our tribal members who have participated in this project, and would like to thank them, as well as the other professionals, who have made the project the success that it has become. Revitalizing and maintaining our culture and language is essential for our Tribe, and the books, websites, games, and other cultural/language education materials created by the Myaamia Project staff instill pride and respect in our people and a deep appreciation and love for our ancestors. It truly is an amazing atmosphere in the Myaamia Project office. Their enthusiasm for their work on behalf of the community is

It is a goal to provide information to tribal members about the events of importance to the Tribe both here and with the Myaamia Project at Miami University. In addition to our tribal newspaper we have implemented a tribal website which is updated regularly to provide information about upcoming events or notices of interest to tribal members. Please remember to check the website and utilize this valuable resource to keep updated on upcoming events and other information. Before I close, I would like to mention three books that were published this year and provide a wealth of information and perspective of our People. The first book *myaamia neehi peewaalia aacimoona neehi aalshoohaana* – Myaamia and Peoria Narratives and Winter Stories, edited and translated by David J. Costa and developed through the Myaamia Project at Miami University is the first collection of native texts ever published. The texts are collected from the mid-1890's through 1916, and include many types of Miami stories. This is a fabulous book and a work of art by Dr. Costa and Daryl Baldwin and the Myaamia Project staff. The layout and design is attributed to Pamela Dean with Miami University and the cover art created by Julie Olds, Cultural Resources Officer. The second book, *The Lost Years: Miami Indians in Kansas*, by Clarence E. Hayward, describes the trials and strengths of the Miami people who found a way to live in an area so foreign to them. This book too is an informing book to read and gives such insight to the period our ancestors spent in the Kansas lands following removal. Lastly, a beautiful book, which is a tribute to the talent of a beautiful Miami woman, was published this year entitled “Nancy Toot’s Children, Selections from the inspirational poetry of Emma Moore Baty”. This book captures the rich life events, reflections and emotions of Emma Moore Baty. This amazing work was Co-edited by Ann S. Updike and an Introduction and biography are by Ms. Baty’s niece, Carol Larkin. The layout and design is, again, attributed to Pamela Dean with Miami University and the cover art created by Julie Olds, Cultural Resources Officer. We clearly have many talented people to thank for these literary works that honor the Miami Tribe.

As I said above, this has been a busy, exciting, and successful year for the Miami Tribe. We have maintained through the tough economic times, along with the rest of the country. We have directed our attention and energy to the areas of importance: economic development; health and welfare of the people; education of our tribal youth; and cultural awareness and preservation of the Miami people. The strategic 5-year plan will be completed and implemented in the new fiscal year, 2012, beginning in October 2011. We are excited about new growth and new opportunities. Since June 2010 to the date this document goes to press in March, tribal membership has increased by 78. We continue to grow and we continue to thrive as a people.

It is the intent of members of leadership to again visit the ancestral lands of the Miami people both in Kansas and Indiana, and to continue to reach out to tribal members across the Nation. With continued hard work, the future of the Tribe remains bright. *mihšineewe* for your trust and your support. *Meenapiyankwi* - We are one people.



Tom Gamble, Chief

**COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS** - Now is the time to begin filling out applications for colleges and applying for financial aid and scholarships. Miami Nation scholarship applications are due in the office by May 1, 2011. Late applications will not be considered. Check the Tribal website at <http://www.miamination.com> under “Education” to find out about scholarships offered for Tribal members. Links to other scholarships and the Collegiate Loan Program are also listed.



## Internship Helps Jessica McArthur Decide Career

### Staff Article

OKLAHOMA CITY – Jessica McArthur, a junior at Oklahoma City University and a member of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, said her internship last summer in Washington, D.C., enabled her to not only assist Native Americans, but it also encouraged her to pursue a career in clinical psychology.

During the months of June and July 2010, Jessica interned at the Office of Minority Health within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington D.C. Among her projects at OMH, McArthur updated and contributed to the DHHS website for American Indians/Alaskan Native which works to promote education about health disparities within the ethnic minority, such as high blood pressure and diabetes. She also helped create a new addition to the website which compiled the first complete listing of all the locations of American Indian health clinics throughout the United States. This portion of the web site will be added to the web later this year. McArthur, who is from Wichita, Kansas, is an American Indian Scholar at Oklahoma City University, a program partnered with the Clara Luper Scholarship aimed at bringing a diversity of ethnic minorities to the OCU campus. Recipients receive tuition scholarships.

She is a member of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma through her mother, Jodi McArthur (Waugh) and she is the grand niece of Louis Moore, who was Miami chief in the early 1970s. Under his leadership, the Moore family donated part of their original Miami land to the tribe for the construction of the Tribe's Longhouse.

McArthur earned her eight-week position through the Washington Internships for Native Students partnership at American University. In addition to her 40-hour week in the office she also took two night classes at American University. One class, Professional Internships, dealt with how to work with different generations and in hostile environments and the other, Indian Policy, explained the history of American Indian sovereignty and what it provides for individuals and for tribes.

She said the experience taught her how to live and work in a professional environment where she was treated as an equal. It also convinced her to pursue graduate studies in clinical psychology once she receives her undergraduate degree.

As an American Indian Scholar at Oklahoma City University, McArthur completes 150 hours of community service each school year. She has spent those hours tutoring English and mathematics to middle school students as well as making crafts with young patients at OU Children's Hospital in Oklahoma City.

This year, she is working as an investigative interviewer for Big Brothers Big Sisters, pairing adult volunteers with underprivileged children in the big brother/ big sister program.

If tribal members in their second year of college would like to apply for a Washington Internships for Native Students Program for this summer, she suggested they do it quickly as the deadline is April 1st. The website address <http://www1.american.edu/wins/> McArthur said applicants can ask her advice by contacting her at her e-mail address: Jessica McArthur [jmcArthur.stu@my.okcu.edu]

Her work with OMH on health disparities in the American Indian/Alaskan Native Community can be accessed by going to: <http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=3&lvlid=26>



Tribal Member Jessica McArthur, second from left, completed a 2010 summer internship at the Office of Minority Health within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington D.C. Photo supplied by Jessica McArthur.

## Jessie Baldwin To Develop Language Materials For Leonard Learning Center

By George Ironstrack and Jessie Baldwin

This semester at Miami University, Jessie Baldwin will be working on a project to bring the Myaamia language into the Leonard Learning Center (LLC). Jessie is a Tribal member and a senior in Early Childhood Education. In her capstone course, Jessie is going to develop a Myaamia language pre-school curriculum as well as a program for training the staff of the Learning Center. At MU, a senior capstone is a class designed to test what a student has learned by putting his or her knowledge and skills into practice.

To successfully achieve this goal, Jessie will learn about the excellent curriculum that the LLC currently has in place, interview LLC leadership and staff, speak with tribal officials, and conduct extensive research on second language acquisition and similar programs in other tribal communities. This research will be used to develop the Myaamia language curriculum and the staff training materials. Jessie will then travel to Miami, Oklahoma this summer to work with LLC staff and help them begin to implement the curriculum.

Jessie is ideally suited for this task. She has been learning Myaamia language since she was three years old. Jessie has participated in Miami Tribe youth programs for much of her life as first a student, then a mentor, and most recently a counselor. Additionally her studies in early childhood education have prepared her to take her experiences with our heritage language and help other young children learn to love speaking Myaamia.

A team of individuals representing the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma will be involved in helping Jessie implement this project. These will include Second Chief Doug Lankford, First Councilperson Donya Williams, LLC director Tracy Williams, and Cultur-

al Resources Office staff member Gloria Steed. At Miami University Jessie will be assisted by Dr. Lena Lee, Dr. Karen Montgomery, Dr. Melissa Schulz, and by the Myaamia Project's Education Coordinator George Ironstrack.

Jessie has always enjoyed working with children, as well as contributing to her community. She especially relishes the opportunity to complete a capstone that is meaningful to her community and produces a tangible product. One of her hopes is that this project could serve as a template for other educational efforts in the future.

Jessie's work is important for a variety of reasons, but two key points stand out. First, research shows there is a critical language developmental "window" that begins to close by the time most children reach seven years of age. By placing Myaamia language lessons in our daycare, we ensure that some of our children will have language contact during this critical period of learning. Language learning is of course possible after this point, but it typically becomes more difficult the older we become. Second, by exposing all of the children in the daycare to our heritage language, our young people will experience a phenomena we call "language prestige". By doing this we clearly demonstrate to them that our language is important. For non-Myaamia children, learning to speak Myaamia will likely encourage them to learn their own tribal languages, which is a natural outcome of positive peer pressure and language prestige.

We hope our community will continue to support the cultural education of our youth. If you have any questions, suggestions or concerns regarding this project don't hesitate to contact us.



Jessie Baldwin teaching young Myaamia women to play meelotakahaminki (straw game) during the Eewansaapita youth gathering in 2009. Photo by Andrew Strack.

## HPF "Myaamia Removal Route" Grant Update

By George Strack, THPO

As presented in the spring 2010 Tribal newsletter the National Park Service awarded our tribe a Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grant titled "Cultural Exploration of the Myaamia Removal Route." The purpose of this grant is to research historical documents and inventory significant places along the Removal Route of the Myaamia to, hopefully, reconnect our people with this historical event and to help preserve sites along the route.

The Cultural Resource Office, together with staff from the Myaamia Project and Miami University,

is utilizing Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to produce a poster-sized "Myaamia Removal Map" that will be distributed to the tribal community. Once completed each tribal household will receive a copy of the Myaamia Removal Map for their use. Related information including documents, bibliographic information, pictures and associated information about this project will be available on Nation's website in the near future. A large version of the map will be on display at the Tribal Office and for viewing at the 2011 Annual Meeting.

## Miami University IES To Conduct Summer Workshop In Oklahoma

Staff Article

Miami University's Institute of the Environment and Sustainability (IES), with the Myaamia Project and the departments of Geology and Geography will jointly run a workshop in May 2011 on environmental contamination, assessment, hydrogeological field methods and the relevance of these topics to the environmental health and cultural revitalization of the Miami Nation.

The course is a 4-credit summer workshop and will run from May 9-17. Students will be working on Tribal lands located in the Geboe allotment area in Oklahoma.

## NEO College Wins Exclusive Title III Grant

Staff Article

Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College (NEO), in Miami, OK, has been awarded a \$2 million competitive Federal Title III grant from the Department of Education to help serve Native American students.

The Title III grant is designated for Native America serving non-tribal institutions. NEO's Native American enrollment makes up 20 percent of the student population as a whole.

The award marks the first time in over 25 years that NEO has received a Title III grant of this type.

NEO was one of only 13 nationwide that applied for the grant, including 6 in Oklahoma.

Check out the updated Tribal website at <http://www.miamination.com>



# myaamiihkanawe peempaalink: Walking a Myaamia Trail

By George Irontrack, Assistant Director, Myaamia Project

OXFORD, OH - In our last article we explored how Myaamia people first settled the Waapaahšiki Siipiiwi (Wabash River). That article left off with the question: what held all these unique villages, spread over hundreds of miles, together as a group? Prior to contact with Europeans, each village had their own leaders and made most of their own decisions, and no village could command the allegiance of any other village. Yet, when the need arose, these villages could come together and work for a common purpose. Our ancestors recognized their interdependence and interrelatedness. They saw themselves as relatives of an extended family of villages physically connected by the rivers and trails that ran throughout Myaamionki. They saw this Myaamia family as unique and different from other “families” in their area like the Ojibwa, Potawatomi, Ottawa,

have also shared the same overlapping hunting and gathering grounds. Hunting and gathering regularly occurred as far west as the Mihšisiipi (Mississippi River), as far east as the Scioto River, and as far south as the Kaanseenseepiiwi (Ohio River). This was a landscape shared by many villages and the use of these resources required a lot of negotiation and communication.

The Wabash River Valley was also pocketed with hundreds of wetland areas where Myaamia people gathered tubers, roots, and greens for their daily diet as well as medicinal cures to typical ailments.

Each village along the Waapaahšiki Siipiiwi would have differed only slightly from the others in terms of available plants and animals. These variations were noted in the names of some villages. For example, Aciiphkakhkionki – the place of roots – was unique for the abundance of edible tubers that could be found in the surrounding wetlands (see “Walking Myaamionki” from the last edition of the newspaper for more on this village). These differences would have given each village a unique flavor, but they would not have created a radical sense of difference between the related villages.

All of the Myaamia villages of the valley used nearly the same lunar calendar system. The lunar calendar was used to track the ecological changes occurring over the course of the year. It was this system that helped each village know when it was time to plant, hunt, harvest, and rest. The lunar calendar embodied our ancestors’ knowledge of the rhythms of climate, weather, plants, animals, and humans that was key to thriving in Myaamionki. The villages lived in tune to the same rhythms and as a result their collective lives – the things they did every day – ran parallel to each other. These habits contributed to the sense of sameness established by shared language and a similar historical experience.

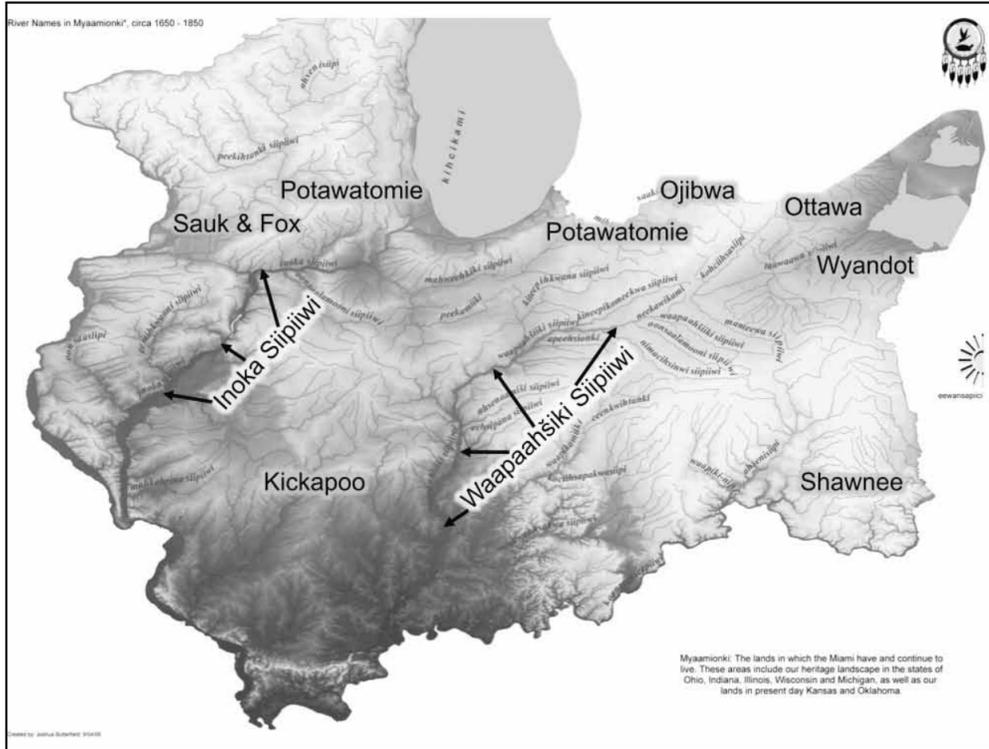
Within Myaamionki (the place of the Miami) most of the rivers and trails linked villages together in a peaceful way. Most of our ancestors’ near neighbors were considered relatives. The Inoka (Illinois) were considered close siblings; the Ojibwa, Potawatomi, Shawnee, Ottawa, and Wyandot were elder brothers; and the Delaware we called grandfathers. These alliances were reaffirmed on a regular basis by exchanging gifts, visiting each other regularly, and giving long speeches that recounted the history of the alliance and reaffirmed each community’s commitment to the relationship.

Outside of Myaamionki, most of the rivers and trails were utilized for less than peaceful purposes. At rare moments our ancestors left Myaamionki to hunt or trade, but more commonly they journeyed beyond Myaamionki to make war. Prior to contact with Europeans, war usually involved groups of twenty-five to thirty men. This group, or war-party as it is often called in English, would journey for weeks in order to attack an enemy village and take a few captives back home to their village. In cases of revenge, the war-party might make the journey with express purpose of killing a few adult males in an enemy community. Most captives were brought back to the home village in order to be adopted into the community, thereby adding new strength to the village.

Prior to contact, the groups our ancestors most commonly made war against were the Osage, Quapaw, Lakota, Dakota, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, Cherokee, and Haudenosaunee. These groups would often make revenge raids on the villages of our ancestors as well. These back and forth raids often led a cycle of violence, which historians have called “mourning wars.” In these kinds of conflicts, the grief and loss of power caused by the death of community members pushes the community to seek vengeance or to replace the loss with captives.

When these conflicts cycled out of control, a community could choose to send an ambassador to negotiate a peaceful settlement. This dangerous task was undertaken by an akima (civil leader) at the request of his village. He would then journey via river and trail to the village of an enemy and request a peace negotiation. This was a dangerous journey and the akima had to travel unarmed as a visible sign of his community’s peaceful intent. If he arrived safely at his destination he would then have to convince the leaders of that village that peace was desirable. If this initial meeting was successful, then the communities would come together at a later date to exchange gifts and give formal speeches that would firmly establish a new peace.

In many cases, but not all, Myaamia villages would communicate with each other regarding issues of both war and peace. Enemies may have been unable to distinguish between Myaamia villages and as a result a revenge raid could hit any village. In the same vein, a sustainable peace required that other Myaamia villages were also in agreement. Without unity among Myaamia villages no peace agreement would be lasting. In this way, both war and peace served to keep Myaamia villages in communication with each other and unified to certain degree. This unity had to be constantly negotiated and required a lot of compromise, but we know that for the most part our ancestors were successful in maintaining the close ties within the Myaamia family and their extended ties to the related families who lived all around them.



*This map is based on approximately where people were living in the early years of French interaction (1720-61). It shows the Illinois and Wabash River Valleys (in white) and the other tribal families that were our neighbors and relatives in our historic homelands.*

Shawnee, Wyandot, and Kickapoo.

This map is based on approximately where people were living in the early years of French interaction (1720-61). It shows the Illinois and Wabash River Valleys (in white) and the other tribal families that were our neighbors and relatives in our historic homelands.

So what made our Myaamia family unique, and what held us together as a separate group from other neighboring families with whom we shared our homelands? In these early years, there were two foundational elements that made us unique: the language we spoke and the specific place where we lived.

Today, linguists call our language Miami-Illinois, because both the Miami and Illinois people spoke different dialects of the same language. The Myaamia people of the Waapaahšiki Siipiiwi (Wabash River) and the Inoka people of the Inoka Siipiiwi (Illinois River) both spoke Miami-Illinois. It was the means of communication used by these people in their daily lives. Through their shared language our ancestors preserved the stories of their past experiences and made decisions about what to do in their contemporary lives.

Miami-Illinois was the language in common in these villages, but it was not the only language spoken there. The villages of both these river valleys were always multilingual. Within the village there would have been spouses, adoptees, and captives from other language groups. Each community valued the ability to communicate with groups that spoke other languages. These multilingual individuals helped their home community build and maintain the alliances that established peace and allowed for the exchange of important goods. Often, the children would be taught all of the languages spoken by their parents so that they could continue this important work. These language skills would also allow them to visit with extended family in other villages.

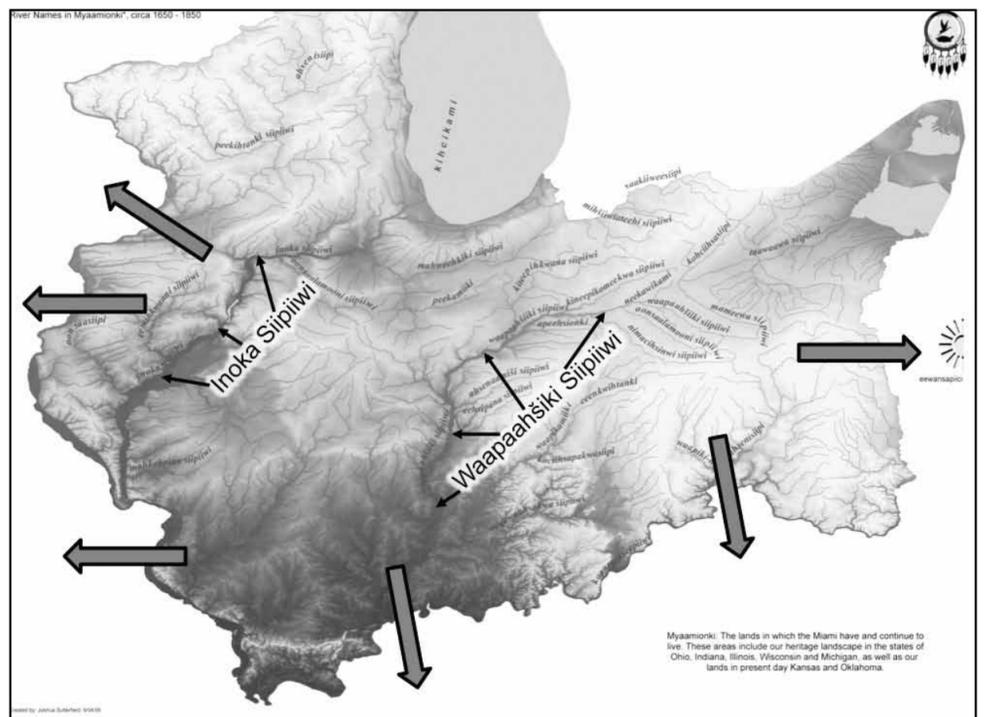
The presence of all of these languages within each village did not, however, create competition among languages. Miami-Illinois was always the central language of the village; it was the communications glue that bound these groups together.

Miami-Illinois also connected all of the Myaamia and Inoka villages of the Wabash and Illinois River Valleys. Through this shared language, the villages passed on information, stories, songs, speeches, and other meaning filled messages. This ease of communication and the feelings of being collectively understood bonded these villages together in a comforting closeness. This linguistic bond is one major reason why the Myaamia and the Inoka (Illinois) saw themselves as extremely close relatives. They often referred to each other as siblings.

The second foundational element that linked the Myaamia villages of the Waapaahšiki Siipiiwi together as a unique group was the place where they lived. The villages of the Waapaahšiki Siipiiwi had much in common as a result of living in nearly the same environment for untold numbers of generations. We call this place Myaamionki (the place of the Myaamia). Myaamionki continues to include: landscape features; the earth beneath the surface of the land; rivers and other bodies of water; the sky and celestial objects like the sun, the moon, and the stars; the plants and animals with whom we share our place; and many different groups of humans.

Within Myaamionki the soils, earth, and rocks beneath the feet of our ancestors were very similar. This led the villages to farm in the same way and to make their tools from the same materials. The river valleys of Myaamionki flooded regularly and fertilized the flood plains near their villages. The river valley also had a shared climate and nearly the same quantity of frost free growing days. In general, this environment was suited to the farming of Myaamia miincipi (Miami corn). It was something that all our ancestors’ villages participated in and as a result each village would have been heavily influenced by the agricultural cycle of their corn.

The forests of the Wabash River Valley also tended to be either oak-hickory or beech-maple. Within these forested environments all Myaamia people would have generally found the same plants and animals and therefore eaten the same roots, nuts, greens, berries, and animal meats. These villages would



*This map shows the Illinois and Wabash River Valleys in white. The red arrows show the directions that Myaamia men would have typically gone when raiding an enemy village.*



# eehi nakaaniaki pimpaaliciki: Where the Old Ones have Walked

By Daryl Baldwin, Director, Myaamia Project

LIBERTY, IN - For years now I have heard over and over again that culture and language are inseparable. Although fundamentally I believe this is true, often an overlooked third part to this equation is the three dimensional place we call myaamionki. This place we called home for generations has influenced our culture and language just as our ancestors beliefs and long association with their place influenced their surroundings. An example of our human impact on the land can be seen through extensive use of fire that kept a brushy understory to a minimum, but over time certain plants would adapt and even become dependent on human set fires. Because Indigenous cultures are ecologically based there is an even stronger connection between people and place. For this reason we cannot exclude our ancestral home as we try to develop a deeper understanding of our traditional language and culture.

With this basic understanding it may come as no surprise that we have no word for 'nature' in our language, nor are there any phrases comparable to the English expression of 'being outside'. A separation between humans and the natural world around them is absent from our cultural understanding of people and place.

This strong ecological tie between language, culture, and place means that certain aspects of our culture and language do not apply in other places. A good example of this inability to transfer one's culture to another land can be seen in our lunar calendar system. If we look closely at the names of each of our lunar months we see strong ecological ties. Most of our month names reflect a seasonal regenerative cycle in the Great Lakes region of Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois. Breeding, mating and birthing cycles along with migratory patterns are all reflected in the month names.

The month of cecaahkwa kiilhsa 'sandhill crane moon' observes the breeding and nesting time of these important birds after their return north. Their flyways cross several places in North American and one of those migratory routes goes through Indiana. Depending on where you live, you may never see sandhill cranes migrating north making the month of cecaahkwa kiilhsa irrelevant to your location.

Cultural disconnects can also occur with some of our winter stories. Several stories refer to geographical locations along rivers. But if some of us have never lived near these places or ever visited them, then it becomes difficult to connect the stories to real places. This can also happen with our tribal history. It's difficult to 'feel' our history when it only lives between the covers of a history book. It's a very different experience to learn our history from the land. From these examples we begin to see how experiencing some aspect of our culture and language can become challenged when we are disconnected from the places of our past.

All of this points to a fundamental question that many of us as tribal members may have been faced with: "do I practice my culture from afar looking towards the ancestral lands. Or, do I take my culture with me and practice it in a new place?" To answer this question, I will draw on my own experiences having lived both within and outside of our ancestral landscape.

Due to historical circumstances beyond my control, I was born and raised in North West Ohio near the towns of Maumee and Waterville. My family moved to Maumee from Fort Wayne in 1826 (pre-removal). Much of my family still resides there today. We have a deep history in that area stretching back to pre-contact times. The Taawaawa Siippiwi (Maumee River) was well known as a historical trade route with a deep tribal history associated with it. Near its banks are old village sites, sugar camps, agricultural fields, and battlefields. This river was my childhood playground and during most seasons I could be found hunting, trapping and fishing along its banks. Fortunately, my father and grandfather shared much of my family and tribal history while spending time on the land. This place-based way of learning came natural to me because the land I played on was serving as my history book, and I learned it well.

I smoked my first cigarette as a kid perched upon Roche de Bout rock, which was an important landmark for many tribes who would gather there for council. It was historically known as the stopping point of our ancestors before they went into battle at Fallen Timbers. I remember clearly looking up and down the river thinking about the previous generations of my ancestors. It was all right in front of me and I could feel it because the land was part of me just as it was for my ancestors. I attribute my strong affection for place because of this experience and it will always be with me. Thankfully, smoking didn't stick with me.

As an adult in my late 20s returning to school, I chose to move with my wife and children to Montana to attend the University of Montana. My first real exposure to reservation communities was startling. I was not used to seeing the daily struggle of reservation life or the blatant racism against the Indigenous populations that resided in the state. The mountainous terrain was beautiful as were many of the people I came to know from there. I went to school with other native students who were from all over Montana and beyond. I was honored to attend the Thunder pipe ceremony in Browning, Sundance in Ethete, and Sweating on the Flathead. I have a lot of fond memories and good friendships that I

try to maintain to this day. Despite the hospitality and the beautiful landscape I always felt like a stranger in a strange land. The land was not part of me and I could feel that in a strong way. I was only a visitor who had no history with this place.

Six years later, my family and I moved to Miami, Oklahoma. My experience in Miami was somewhat similar to my experience in Montana. The only difference is that I was among my relatives within the tribe and that made it easier to feel some connection. Another major difference was the lack of reservation conditions and a more pan-Indian cultural identity that I didn't experience living in Montana. What was important for me during this time was to feel the difference between living in our ancestral lands in the great lakes and residing in this southern Midwestern plains landscape. It made me think of the removal and the changes in the land that our ancestors experienced as they were moved west. I enjoyed experiencing the Ozarks, remnants of the tall grass prairie, and the people who claim that place as 'home', but for me I had not lived there long enough for it feel like home.

Shortly afterwards, I moved back to Indiana near waayahtononki (Lafayette). Immediately I found myself back on that cultural geography so familiar to my language and culture and I could feel it. Having been away from it for almost eight years made my feelings for home stronger. I visited the village sites of kineepikomeekwa (Eel River), kiikhayonki (Fort Wayne), wiipicahkionki (Hun-



Roche De Bout Rock in Maumee River near Waterville, Ohio. Circa 1900.

tington), and many others. It felt good to sit beside aasipehkwa waawaalici (Seven Pillars) and to see and hear cecaahkwaki overhead as they made their way north. It felt good to feel my history emanate up from below my feet, a force I have come to appreciate.

As I grow older I am feeling my circle close beyond the halfway point. I have become more aware of the 'power of place' as it relates to who I am, much in the same way my language and culture has impacted me. I am also beginning to realize that in order to fully experience my heritage I must continue visiting myaamionki, which includes Kansas and Oklahoma. My feelings for Oklahoma continue to deepen and grow, but I have yet to visit our lands in Kansas. Its next on my list but I need more time to 'know before I go'. What I mean by this is to know our people's history in a place before visiting that place. It makes the visit much more meaningful.

Reflecting back on my earlier question of whether I should practice my culture from afar or take it with me, I think the answer hinges on the individual. For me, I have never felt like I could not take my culture with me. My language and culture thrived just fine while living in Montana and Oklahoma. Some aspects of my culture and history will always remain with the ancestral homeland, but I am ok with that because it forces me to remember that important part of my heritage and that important place. We have always been adaptable and our survival today is testimony to that ability. Moving is about adapting and no generation understands that better than our grandparents who took the journey west. They adapted and so will we.

As I sign off I am thinking about going home to continue boiling ahsenaamišipowi 'tree sap' during this mahkoonsa kiilhsa 'little bear moon'. I should be hearing kookaki 'spring peepers' any night now. Soon ciinkwiaki 'thunder beings' will arrive bringing our season of story telling to a close. Our cultural life is derived from the land and the life around us and we use our native language to express that experience. That is why language, culture and place are inseparable to me.

nipwaahkaalo

## myaamiihkanawe peempaalink: Walking a Myaamia Trail *Continued from page 6*

The rivers and trails that crisscrossed Myaamionki were the pathways by which communities were connected to each other. Some of these connections were peaceful, filled with exchange, good words, and negotiated agreements for how to share the resources of our homelands. Other connections were violent and were used to achieve revenge, vent grief, and to steal power from an enemy community through capturing their people.

These connections combined with a shared language, a common place, and a similar historical experience created a sense of family unity among Myaamia villages. This close-knit Myaamia family was unique and separate from other groups, but it was also loose and flexible. No village could be forced to do anything. The family stayed together because they worked diligently to create compromise within the group. This Myaamia family is what Europeans encountered and gave the foreign label: tribe.

Today, Myaamionki has grown to include our place in Kansas and the sovereign center of our Nation in Oklahoma. Our population lives just about everywhere in the United States and even beyond, and as a result the trails that link us together have stretched and expanded far beyond Myaamionki. Some of these trails are highways and interstates, while others pass through the sky by

airplanes or by along the rails by train. Some of these linkages are virtual, as a lot of our communication occurs on aacimwaapiikwi (the internet). Much has changed for us as a people, but these paths still link us to Myaamionki and to each other. These connections are used, just as our ancestors used the trails of their time, to maintain our big Myaamia family.

If you would like to comment on this story, ask historical questions, or request a future article on a different topic, then please visit our Myaamia Community History Blog at: <http://myaamiahistory.wordpress.com>. This blog is a place for our community to gather together to read, learn, and discuss our history. Our history belongs to all of us and I hope we can use this blog as one place to further our knowledge and or strengthen connections to our shared past. You can also email me at [ironstrgm@muohio.edu](mailto:ironstrgm@muohio.edu), or write me at

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## An Interview With Councilperson, and Tribal Artisan, Scott Willard

By Hugh Morgan

Miami, OK—When Scott Willard attended his first annual meeting of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma in 2004, he discovered a life-changing experience.

Not only did it alter the direction of his life, it also gave him the opportunity to learn about his Miami heritage by using his newfound skills as an artisan. He learned how to make moccasins and medicine bags as well as sew shirts and coats of the type worn by his ancestors hundreds of years ago.

In addition, he is completing his first year of a three-year term as the second Councilperson on the Miami Nation's Business Committee.

Willard, who assists patients as the lead technician in the equipment room at Freeman Hospital in Joplin, Mo., moved with his mother from Toledo, Ohio, to Joplin 18 months after his first excursion for the annual meeting and powwow.

Willard grew up in Toledo, proud of his Miami heritage, which includes being a direct descendant of the famed Miami Chief Little Turtle. Chief Little Turtle was known for his achievements in battle and in peace in the late 1700s and early 1800s in both the Toledo area and well as Eastern Indiana. In the area, Willard would attend the yearly solstice gatherings sponsored by the Great Lakes Intertribal Council.

"I did not really know what to expect," he recalled about his first trip in 2004. "But I was excited to come down and take it all in and learn something about how the tribe functions"

"The overall impression of the experience was how friendly and happy everyone was and how it seemed like a large family reunion. There were many educational opportunities, especially on Family Day, and I tried to absorb as much as I possibly could. It was on the trip back to Ohio that the idea of moving down closer to the tribe began to form. A year and a half later, both mom and I moved to Joplin," he continued.

During the first trip, Willard went on a bus tour of the tribal lands mainly with tribal members from out-of-town. On the bus, he heard cultural resources officer Julie Olds tell another passenger about how a friend of hers was going to make her a pair of Miami moccasins, as soon as she found some leather.

"It sparked my interest enough that when I returned to Ohio, I searched the internet and found instructions for Great Lakes Center Seam Moccasins," Scott explained, adding he decided to learn how to sew.

Willard purchased some leather and made his first part of moccasins, which were the type the Miami people once wore.

"I still own them and after four different cuffs, they are still in great shape," he said. "After my success with that project, I branched out to making bags and gloves. Today I can make almost anything from small bags to clothing."

Among his work are period shirts and capotes, which are blanket coats, used in the Colonial period and during the French and Indian War. Included are Colonial drop-sleeve shirts, a close relative to the traditional ribbon shirt, with the exception that shoulder is tighter on the ribbon shirt.

He has an array of moccasins, medicine bags, other clothing, and even golf club head covers. He recently began working on portable chairs made of leather which can be used for seating at a powwow.

Speaking of golf, Willard worked in a golf shop in Toledo after obtaining his degree from Bowling Green State University in physiology.

At Freeman Hospital, Willard heads a staff of four that controls day-to-day activities for patients, including equipment such as beds, IV pumps, breathing tubes, and devices to prevent blood clots in legs.

He rarely sells any of his craft, but he has donated many times to Freeman Hospital to raise money for medical needs through the Children's Miracle Network.

Willard, who previously served on the Miami Tribe's Grievance Committee, said he was a bit surprised to be elected to the Business Committee last June.

"I felt that I needed to get my name out there and wait an election or two before my time came. It a great honor to serve the tribe and all of our family



Scott Willard is an elected official of the Miami Nation serving as Councilperson on the Nation's Business Committee. Willard is pictured above with a some of his handmade artwork. Staff photo.

members," he noted.

"My main philosophy is to do the right thing every time, be honest with myself, the BC and the members and try to make the tribe better and stronger before my service comes to an end," Willard explained.

"All tribes have their standout moments or people who are remembered through time. What I am proud of in being a Miami is that the Miami lead. "Throughout our early history it was always the Miami Chiefs and leaders who organized the other tribes in a time of war, or in peace. Miami's directed the decisive battles up until Fallen Timbers and always came out successful.

"It was also strong Miami leaders who kept the tribe going through the Kansas and Oklahoma years, bringing us to where we are today. To those people who know, when you say 'I am a Miami,' they understand there is something special there to respect," Willard concluded.

## Archery Instruction Scheduled

Tribal members who are interested in participating in the archery activity scheduled for Thursday, June 2nd, 2011 are invited to a free instructional activity on Wednesday, June 1st at the Cultural Grounds located on S 540 Road just south of the Myaamia Center. Directions will be available at the Tribal Office. All ages are invited. All equipment will be provided and no archery experience is necessary. Instruction will cover safety protocols, basic shooting form, intermediate shooting form, and recreational archery equipment. Contact George Strack with questions at [gstrack@miamination.com](mailto:gstrack@miamination.com) or phone Gloria Steed at 918-541-1366.

## Enrollment Office Now Lists 764 Members With No Contact Info On File

Staff Article

The Tribal Enrollment Office has reported 764 members have either no address on file for contact, or are among those whose address is not current based on returned mail tracking.

Tribal members are solely responsible for supplying current contact information to the Enrollment Office. Without current contact information, Tribal members do not receive regular mailings from the Tribe, announcements, newspapers, and do not receive the language and cultural publications distributed to the community free of charge.

A printed list including the names of those on the "bad address list" has been inserted in this publication mailing. Tribal members are encouraged to review the list and should you find relatives listed we ask that you encourage them to contact the Enrollment Office by phone or email to update their contact information.

**SMOKESHOP SUCCESS** – Staci Walker says it's a pleasure every day to come to work as the manager of the Miami Tribe's smokeshop, which opened at the tribal headquarters last Sept. 15. Hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week. She and Jim Goldman of Miami wait on both drop-in customers at the shop located at the rear of the cafeteria, as well as at the convenient drive-up window which is on a small drive behind the tribal building. "Most of the customers use the drive-through window, but if you want to come inside our shop and say hello, I would be happy to talk with you," she said. Walker previously worked at a smokeshop in Joplin, Missouri, for 20 years. Second Chief Doug Lankford said as more people learn of the smokeshop, business has continued to grow. It is the only full-service drive-through, containing not only a wide range of cigarette brands, but items such as cigars, chewing tobacco, and smoking accessories such as lighters and papers. Lankford said, "If I am going to buy tobacco myself, I'm just glad I can buy it at the Miami Tribe."



Miami Tribe Smoke Shop Manager Staci Walker. Staff photo.



## Employee Spotlight: Callie Lankford Social Services Manager

By Hugh Morgan

When Callie Lankford began counseling people needing help at her Miami Tribe office nine years ago, she would quickly give answers to problems.

But as she grew in her work with families and individuals, she learned a different approach she discovered that also is part of the American Indian culture.

"If I do not have the time to sit with them and see what they really need, it takes away from them as persons and makes them less significant," explained Lankford, who manages the social services and housing department for the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

"Oftentimes, people need you to listen," she explained. "They need compassion. They need a pat on the back and for you to hold their hand and walk beside them and just encourage them."

The tribe serves primarily tribal members, but it also assists other American Indians when there are openings for assistance. While only a small percentage of tribal people need help for personal problems, the office takes every case as important and does the best to help the person one step at a time.

The office also has programs such as a widely advertised one on helping improve marriages, giving American Indians on-the-job training in maintenance, and providing rental housing for those requiring assistance.

Lankford grew up in nearby Joplin, Mo., in a white culture in which she said she never learned it was anything special. This changed after she married Aubrey Lankford, a member of the Miami Tribe.

"I began learning about Miami history," she explained. "It was very unique."

She said she was very proud of being able to carry her learning onto her daughter Grace, who is almost 10 years old, and she will continue educating her second daughter, Isabella, who is 2.5 years of age, on the Miami culture.

"I think that the Miami culture has taught me there is such an importance on rearing your children and being responsible as family members for your nieces and nephews and to treat others as your own," Lankford explained.

She also learned the importance of looking at family in a more holistic approach, including extended generations rather than just looking at a single-family unit.

During her work at the tribe, she was able to complete her education. Lankford earned an associate degree in psychology from Crowder College in Neosho, Missouri, a bachelor's degree in social work from Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kansas, and a master's degree in social work from Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri.

Chief Tom Gamble said, "Every time we deal with her on any subject, we deal with her A game. She does the best she can do. We benefit greatly because of her personality and her education. She is a community builder."

"It is important to note as a social worker that I am most hopeful that children can be reunited with their families, that families can be put back together and that the broken are going to be healed," she explained.

"Our department is proud of even the small steps that the families make," Lankford explained. "We acknowledge even the smallest things that a mother and father do that moves them toward making a better life for their children. Families don't get healed all at one time. It takes many small steps in the right direction until they get to a place where they achieve their goals."

She said some of the biggest issues she sees involve lack of financial responsibility, attributed in part to the many area casinos, an abundance of drug abuse and drug addiction, particularly with methamphetamine and prescription pills, and alcohol abuse.

"Stress from poverty and drug addictions leads to domestic violence and child abuse and neglect and to mental health issues," she said.

Part of the counseling includes having financial budgeting workbooks for clients, which help them understand the best benefits for monthly bills and recreational spending.

"We are not against anyone not having their own choice to entertain themselves as long as it is within their budgets," Lankford said.

The department also provides many family functions, such as a weekend outing during the summer to build relationships between Miami families so they can lean on one another in times of stress. The department has some funds available for private treatment.

It also holds preventive substance abuse classes for students. The office makes literature and other information available on programs for narcotics anonymous and alcoholics anonymous as well as on support groups.

"Although it is a very small number of people, it is essential that the funding be available for those persons for which it is necessary," Lankford explained. "This not only helps the people, but it keeps the problems from becoming intergenerational. We don't want them to pass on problems to their children."

"For those addicted, they must be willing to acknowledge they have a problem," she explained. "They have to be willing to take one day at a time and to have an open mind."

"We are willing to try many approaches to helping a client reach sobriety," she said.

Family members need to acknowledge they have no control over those who are affected by alcohol or drug dependency.

"As a social worker, I believe that every person is worthy of being treated with dignity and respect regardless of any struggles they may be enduring," she said. "Each day I challenge myself to not be judgmental but to be available to people."

Strict confidentiality is maintained with the exception if the client or the community are endangered.

In another program, Lankford said the Marriage Matters Project is in its third year of funding from the Administration for Native Americans. She said it has been very successful, with 650 participants the first year, 600 the second, and another 600 for this year.

"In a survey that I conducted of past participants, we had over 90 percent response from persons willing to commit for more training," she said.

The program has a Color Code that helps participants understand why they act and feel and think the way they do. And it helps people to understand why others, especially spouses, act as they do.

Tammy Cruzan Benson, a former princess of the Miami Tribe, and her husband, Van, are the consultants for the program devised by a psychologist from Utah, Dr. Taylor Hartman. The Bensons live in Joplin.

The color code is based on what motivates people. Red is motivated by power, blue by intimacy, white by peace and yellow by fun. The sessions tell how people can relate to one another depending on how they are motivated.

While the housing program is relatively new to the department, it fits well into the social services department because it helps assist families to obtain housing and to budget better. In addition, the department has rental properties that are tribally owned as well as a four-plex for low income Native Americans supported by the U.S. Department of Housing Development.

An additional program involves on-the-job training for maintenance work. It allows people with little or no work skills to work part-time with the Miami Tribe for a year. Those who complete the program become eligible for jobs in maintenance for tribal properties as well as for the outside work force throughout the Northeastern Oklahoma area.

This has led to workers obtaining jobs for careers and to assist students in obtaining degrees or technical certificates while obtaining work experience. Charlie Kempel, a retired Miami city employee, supervises the program. Lankford said Kempel, who has a lot of expertise as well as people skills, "has been a wonderful asset to the program."

She also cited the work of other colleagues including Kendra Rhatigan, who is the administrative assistant and particularly works with children and families, and Felicia Chuckluck, receptionist and housing coordinator.

"I get a lot of recognition for the department, but it is the employees that I work with make that make it possible for us to do the good that we do," she explained. "Every day I appreciate each of them for the unique abilities they bring to the table."

"We feel by helping others in the community, you are bettering the area for the Miami people," Lankford concluded. "You are strengthening bonds with other tribal people. And, remember, you can do this only one step at a time."



Miami Tribe Social Services Manager, Callie Lankford. Staff photo.

## Public Hearing Held For Change In Scope To HUD Funded Assisted Living Center

Staff Article

Chief Tom Gamble submitted a letter to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Southern Plains Office of Native American Programs on January 26, 2011 requesting a change to the intended use of the facility built with ICDBG funding, Grant Number: B-05-SR-40-2012 for an Assisted Living Center. The building, located on E. 65 Road, in the Miami jurisdiction area, was erected with FY2005 funding awarded through an Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG).

Following completion of the structure, a planned Assisted Living Center, a number of issues and concerns caused Tribal leadership to consider changing the intended use of the structure. In March 2010, according to HUD guidelines, a "Public Notice" was posted in four Tribal service areas regarding a planned public hearing scheduled for Monday, March 15th, 2010 for the purpose of presenting the proposed change of scope from an Assisted Living Center to a Childcare Facility intended to support overflow children not be served by Leonard Learning Center due to lack of space in that facility. The outcome of the public hearing indicated lack of support for such a change. Tribal leadership revisited the areas of community need and after long deliberation concluded that a need that would serve members of all ages, especially elders, was to change the scope to use of the building as a Community Activity Center.

On March 1, the Miami Tribe again followed HUD guidelines by publishing a "Public Notice" in the Miami News Record (a Miami city publication). The notice was printed in the News Record on March 1 and 2, 2011. A HUD required "Public Notice Hearing" was held on Tuesday, March 8, 2011 at 2 p.m. in the Title VI Dining Room at Miami Tribe Headquarters in Miami, OK.

The information presented at the hearing informed the audience of the history of the project, and supplied the proposal for change of intent/scope from the Assisted Living Center to a Community Activity Center. The audience was told that the center will be largely for elders who meet the criteria set forth in 24 CFR §1003.2. It will also enhance the use of the neighboring Senior Nutrition Center and Wellness Center. The center would house a craft room, computer room, library room, and kitchen area. The kitchen could be used to teach diabetic cooking classes and provide teaching of the preparation of traditional foods.

The public response was positive with no negative comments. Following the hearing the Business Committee passed a resolution calling for change in the original intent/scope of the building to that of a Community Activity Center. A letter, and copy of the supporting resolution and the Public Notice posts, were sent to HUD on March 9, 2011.

On Thursday, March 17, 2011, the Miami Tribe received approval from HUD for the requested change in intent/scope. Work will begin immediately to prepare the building, programs, and personnel for service to the community in the approved capacity.

## Social Services Office Welcomes Practicum Student

By Callie Lankford, SS Manager

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Social Services and Housing Department is proud to introduce Mrs. Cindy Griffith, as a Social Work practicum student in the department.

Mrs. Griffith began her volunteer status with the Social Services and Housing Department on January 10, 2011 and will complete 525 hours of supervised on-the-job-training. Mrs. Griffith is pursuing her Master's degree from Missouri State University and anticipates graduating in May of this year.

"Cindy has been a wonderful asset to the department in the short time that she has been with us. She is eager to learn and is excited to be a part of change for the community" states Callie Lankford, who supervises Mrs. Griffith.

Cindy is a member of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee.

Check out the Myaamia Project on  
Facebook and now on YouTube!  
<http://www.youtube.com/myaamiaproject>

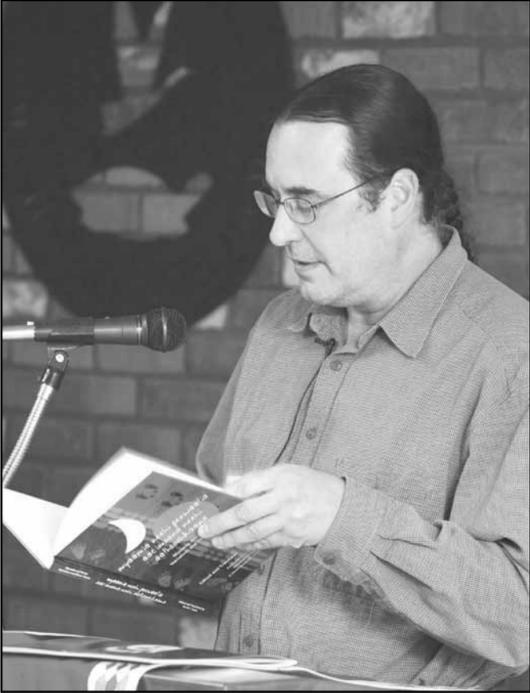
## Daryl Baldwin Scheduled Speaker At Native Language Summit

Staff Article

Myaamia Project Director Daryl Baldwin will be a speaker during the third annual Native American Language Preservation Summit set for March 28-30, 2011 in Phoenix, AZ.

Baldwin is scheduled to deliver his presentation, titled "neetawaapantamaanki iilinwiaanki: Searching For Our Talk" at 10:45 a.m. (MT) on March 29th.

According to Baldwin the presentation will reflect on the growth of the myaamiki 15-year language reclamation and restoration effort and captures communal benefits and impacts of language and cultural education on the identity of a new generation.



Daryl Baldwin speaking during the recent story book gathering in Miami, OK. Photo by Andrew Strack.

## Story Book

Continued from page 1

both read versions of the story of paapankamwa neehi mahweewa (fox and wolf) as collected from George Finley.

The evening was completed with a song to honor the closing of the year of Miami women. Ironstrack and Strack took up hand drums and were joined by myaamia women in the audience in the singing of a women's song in myaamia.

After the events of the evening concluded my brother, Daryl Baldwin, asked me what I thought about the presentations and George's handling of the story time we had all shared. My response to him was "we are going to be OK". What I meant in that statement my relative knew instantly. To you, the reader, the interpretation is this; we have worked hard and have come to the dawn of a new day. Only 15 years ago, here in Oklahoma, our stories were quiet. Our human resources were few. The return of our language and culture has awakened our community. We now have many resources. Young people who are learning and participating. Even taking the lead to host evenings of sharing among our people. Listening to George Ironstrack tell stories assured me that we really are going to be OK, culturally, and that is a restful thought to me.

**WATCH THE COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD LOCATED ON THE NATION'S WEBSITE FOR UPDATES TO THE NATIONAL GATHERING WEEK EVENTS LISTING.**

### LOCAL HOTEL INFO:

**Holiday Inn Express:  
918-542-7424**

**Hampton Inn: 918-541-1500**

**Microtel Inn & Suites:  
918-540-3333**

## Tribal Gift Shop Gets Makeover

By Hugh Morgan

Glenda Fetter of Seneca, Mo., had been retired for a while after a lengthy career in business, communications and government when she decided it would be good therapy to go back to work.

"When this job came open I said I would like to help them open the gift shop and it has been great therapy to return to the work-world," explained Fetter, a tribal member who was born and grew up in nearby Commerce, Okla.

And the tribe has benefited in return as the reopened Miami Trader Gift Shop has been quiet successful.

As a child, she remembers the days when she used to catch or else chase the balls hit by the young Mickey Mantle in a field in Commerce. His father would pitch and Fetter was among the youngsters who would field the hit balls or else fetch the baseballs the young slugger missed. She would follow his brilliant career with the New York Yankees.

Since childhood, she developed a very story work ethic and work record. She was secretary to the vice president of Kingsford Charcoal in Louisville, Kentucky, secretary to the construction engineer in Fairbanks for the State of Alaska, worked in television programming and did commercials for KODE-TV in Joplin, Missouri, and then spent 22 years in county government to the Newton County Commission in Neosho, Missouri.

And she missed being of service to people. She knew it was time to go back to work.

Fetter applied for the sales manager position for the Miami Trader Gift Shop last summer when she learned it was to be moved to a slightly different location at the tribal headquarters. You can now enter the brightly designed shop by going through to the rear of the Title Six Nutrition Center cafeteria at the tribal headquarters.

Last July she brought a life-long friend, Dee Ann Gallemore, to the tribal headquarters to help set up the inventory and to shape the revitalized gift shop. Gallemore, who is from Joplin, is a retired school-teacher and is of Cherokee heritage.

The two took the inventory from the closed gift shop, inventoried it, and put on new price tags. They painted the walls golden sunset and Indian red and also set up the merchandise.

"It is a great place to work," Fetter said. "The elders and the tourists have stories to tell and it makes the day so interesting. I have learned about other Indian people who are proud of the clans they belong to and they are always curious to discover what tribe I belong to. They like to share their culture."

She operates the gift shop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

"We have Native American basketry, beadwork, sterling silver, and traditional stone jewelry, especially turquoise," she explained. Other goods in-

clude pottery and knives as well as a large array of Pendleton blankets, clothing and hats. The gift shop is an authorized Pendleton dealer.

"Most crafts come from artisans in the Southwest but we also have goods from a few local artists, including tribal member Peggy McCord."

Miami tribal symbols are on some clothing, stationery, and crafts.

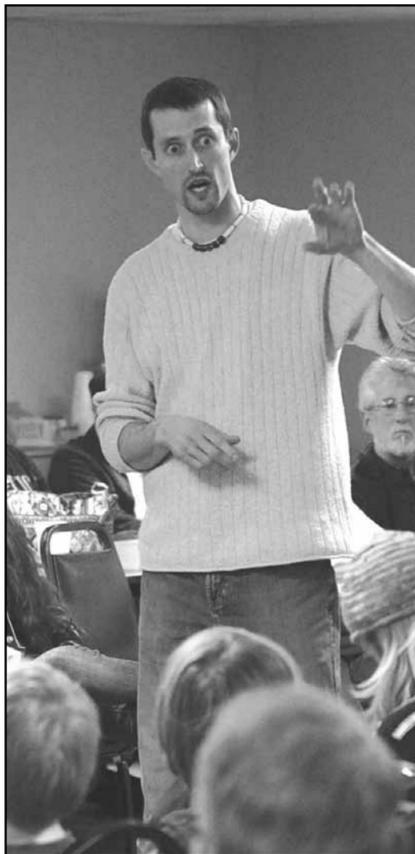
Because of the sizable inventory of thousands of items of high quality, the gift shop runs specials that elders and tourists highly appreciate.

"We have a lot of regular customers who say this is the place to shop because of the deals we have here," she explained. "We are building a reputation for good vibes and the customers are very appreciative. They compliment us on how beautiful the gift shop is. Several people commented it is comparable to shops in Santa Fe and Albuquerque."

They have a Wednesday special for seniors, which has been very successful," she explained, adding that sales from the previous Wednesday were \$1,000 over five hours.



Glenda Fetter works in the Miami Tribe's newly redecorated gift shop located inside Tribal headquarters in Miami, OK. Staff photo.



George Ironstrack

The audience sat in rapt attention during the Story Book gathering, held January 28, 2011, at the Tribal Longhouse. Tribal members sharing stories from the new story book publication are pictured above, viewing clockwise: George Ironstrack, Linda Donati and Dr. Ivalah Allen. See the complete story beginning on page 1 and concluded on page 8. Photos by Andrew Strack.



Linda Donati



Dr. Ivalah Allen

The Cultural Resources Office has begun distribution of the new story book "myaamia neehi peewaalia aacimoona neehi aal-hsoohkaana: Myaamia and Peoria Narratives and Winter Stories". Watch for your household copy in the mail in the coming weeks. If you are head of the household and do not receive a copy by Annual Meeting please contact Gloria Steed at gsteed@miamination.com or by phone at 918-541-1366.



## Social Services Dept Hosts Color Code Retreat

By Callie Lankford, SS Manager

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Social Services and Housing Department provided a weekend-long marriage retreat through the Administration for Native Americans Healthy Marriage Initiative funding over Valentines weekend, February 2011. The retreat was held in Branson, Missouri at the Chateau on the Lake Resort. The weekend focused on strengthening and sustaining healthy marriages by embracing the teachings of the People Code, which the Tribe has been providing workshops on for the last 2 ½ years. Van and Tammy (Cruzan) Benson, licensed People Code trainers, conducted the workshop. Also in attendance as keynote speaker was Dr. Taylor Hartman, developer of People Code, and his wife, Jean.

Dr Hartman said “We were honored to be with you all weekend. I looked around the room and enjoyed the magic that has been created in the lives of people who have discovered light and life in the message of how important relationships are in the legacy we leave our children.” He added, sincerely, “thank you for your devotion to each other and the process of change and growth.”

Van and Tammy said of the weekend, “The people were great! It was a perfect retreat! A special thank you to our project director, Callie Lankford, Chief Gamble, and the Miami Tribe for partnering with us to make marriages and families stronger!”



Married couples who participated in the Miami Tribe sponsored Color Code Marriage Retreat, from left to right: Aubrey and Callie Lankford, Tom and Patty Gamble, Jean and Dr. Taylor Hartman (Author of the Color Code), and Tammy and Van Benson, Color Code Trainers.



The 2011 Annual Winter Gathering & Stomp was attended by over 500 people. Of that number approximately 60 were guests from Miami University and of that number 6 were myaamia students. Chief Tom Gamble is pictured above with the visiting myaamia students during the January 29th, 2011 stomp dance. Pictured from left to right: John Bickers, Jessie Baldwin, Kristina Marks, Chief, Bradford Kasberg, Jeremy Long, and Scott Swaidner. Staff photo.



Councilperson Donya Williams is pictured with Larry EchoHawk, a keynote speaker, during the National Indian Education Association Convention in San Diego, California in October 2010. EchoHawk is the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs. Photo supplied by Donya Williams.



Chief Tom Gamble, right, serves his elder, Bob Doudrick during the 2011 winter stomp dance. Staff photo.



Members of the Tribal Business Committee served up approximately 500 bowls of chili and stew during the 16th Annual Winter Gathering & Stomp Dance held January 29, 2011 at the Ottawa-Peoria Cultural Center in Miami, OK. Pictured from l to r: Secretary Julie Witcraft, Second-Chief Doug Lankford, Chief Tom Gamble, Councilperson Scott Willard and Councilperson Donya Williams. Staff photo.

**NEW At the Myaamia Nutrition Center “HOT COFFEE” with good friends... “THE COFFEE CLUB”**  
Come join the “Coffee Club” on Thursday mornings at the Myaamia Center and Friday mornings at the Nutrition Center from 10 to 11 a.m.

The club will meet weekly for good conversation and, of course, coffee and goodies!

Contact Cindy Griffith @918-541-1380 or Laurie Shade @918-542-1445 for more information.

Remember to check out the Community Bulletin Board at [www.miamination.com](http://www.miamination.com) for upcoming events!

The 12th Annual Miami Nation Pow Wow is set for June 3rd & 4th at the Ottawa Pow Wow Grounds located southeast of Miami on Hwy 10. There will be gourd dancing each evening. Grand entry is set at 8:30 p.m. on both dates. Watch the “COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD” at [www.miamination.com](http://www.miamination.com) for updates or changes.



# World War II Veteran Devotes Life to Family, Tribe

By Hugh Morgan

*During the creation of the Winter Edition of Aatotankiki Myaamiaki, Hugh Morgan was assigned the task to write a human interest story on Tribal member Don Cass of Farmland, Indiana. After granting Hugh the requested interview, our elder soon passed from this life. Don's obituary was printed in the Winter Edition instead of this story. It was held at the request of his family. They have reviewed this article and kindly granted their consent for its inclusion in this edition. kweehsitoolaanki.*

FARMLAND, Ind. -- Sitting in the comfortable and immaculately neat front room on Nov. 12, I asked Don Cass whether he observed any action during World War II when he earned battle ribbons for his naval service in the Philippines and Okinawa.

"Some," he answered.

And that's about all he said about serving as a coxswain aboard an LST – a monster craft which allows its front end to be lowered so troops and tanks can get to shore.

I drove from Oxford, Ohio, to Farmland that morning to interview Cass about his life and his love of family and of the Miami Tribe. I knew him as a regular at the annual family week activities in June held by the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. And I had come to respect the quiet, dignified manner that reminded me of a very successful person, such as a CEO or an admiral.

On that morning, I discovered a man who was not a CEO but who had worked hard all his life to make sure his wife and four children lived a good, secure life. And he would apply his same that same quiet and deep love to his brothers and sisters in the Miami Tribe.

Don Cass had a very trying childhood, which he kept to himself. He told me the outlines of his life at his home while a daughter, Donna, and son, Terry, and his wife June listened. Terry owns a truck transport company in Liberty, Indiana.

The problem with my interview is that Don told me just the outlines of the stories. Humble as usual, he did not go into depth. And his family had an interview scheduled that afternoon with a financial adviser. I knew I had to leave, but had planned to drive the 90-minutes from Oxford to interview him again. A week later, his brain began to bleed internally and he went into a coma, from which he would not recover. He died on Dec. 4.

I went to his funeral on Dec. 7, seeing the same folk I talked with in November. I also met his daughter Luanne, who was a nurse at the facility where he died, and his youngest daughter, Jennifer, who lives in Webb City, Mo., and who works along with his husband for Ozark Christian College in Joplin. I also had a warm chat with the love of Don's life, his wife June. She didn't talk much during the November interview, but I was soon to discover what a whole person she was – warm, caring, intelligent, and so very gentle. I do not use these words lightly. They truly depict her life and the life of her children.

I came to realize that he had so much in common with the many American Indians I've met in my 15 years or so of visiting Miami, Oklahoma. I've learned so much about accepting life as it is and responsibility from my friends there. Don also became one of these people, quietly joyful and content about his heritage.

His son Terry, also a giant with a gentle disposition, told me on Nov. 12 he had heard stories that his father had not told him before. And yet, they were just the basics.

On that day, Don revealed the pain of his young life, with the barest of details. I would get additional facts from his daughters, especially Donna, and son in the weeks after their father's funeral.

He was born Sept. 12, 1926 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the son of Irven and Maude Cass. He had a sister, Juanita, who was a year older, and a brother, Terrell, who was two years younger. His parents were not involved in his young life much and at the age of 4, Don found himself in a serious dilemma. His parents divorced, Irven and the three children went to live with their paternal grandparents, William and Carrie Cass. His grandfather was a night watchman at the General Electric plant there.

A year later, Maude remarried and returned to Fort Wayne to get Juanita and Terrell, but Don was left in Fort Wayne. He felt abandoned, a feeling that would remain throughout his life.

A few months later, his father moved away, and Don remained with his grandparents, who loved him deeply. Still, it was the midst of the Great Depression and there were few funds for many a family. From time to time, Don would live with friends and with aunt and uncles, particularly Uncle Hoobert Terrell in Ridgeville, in Randolph County. But Uncle Hoobert and his wife had a large family to raise, with little room.

Most of the time was spent with his grandparents in Fort Wayne. When Don was 14, however, his grandfather died, and the house went to an aunt. Don had to find a place to live and he did – with his father who was remarried to a woman who owned a boarding house. Don was allowed to live with them on the condition he earn at least \$5 a week to pay for his keep.

Don learned to pass out handbills on the street and to do other jobs he could find, including selling pop-

corn at the Fort Wayne Pistons professional basketball games. The team later would become the Detroit Pistons. He made coils for military vehicles and automobiles at Phelps-Dodge and at the age of 16, he worked at a Fruehauf factory making trailers. After he was laid off, he decided to change his life.

Don had attended three high schools, two in Fort Wayne and one in Ridgeville, but he would never graduate. He was only 17, but he told the recruiters in 1943 that he was 18 and so he was accepted into the U.S. Navy.

Don said nothing negative about his mother to me, but his daughter Donna wrote me recently that when he joined the Navy, his mother Maude made a special trip to Florida to see if he would name her as the beneficiary if he were killed in the war. This caused a wound in Don.

Don told me he was assigned to LST-876. In looking it up on google, I discovered LST meant Landing Ship Tank. It was launched at Evansville, Indiana. Don was there – serving as a coxswain – as the ship sailed down the Ohio River to the Mississippi River into the Gulf of Mexico and through the Panama Canal into the Pacific Ocean.

Don earned battle ribbons for the invasion of Okinawa and for the liberation of the Philippines. As the coxswain, he was the sailor who would take one of the two smaller troop ships to shore – especially in dangerous coral reefs that the LST could not navigate.

He talked little about the war, but also said he was at New Caledonia – and he said that to me more than once without elaboration. As the war came to an end, his ship also sailed to the Korean and China coasts. Donna told me that Don suffered another personal wound after being discharged from the Navy in 1946. Donna would learn from her mother years later that when her father returned to Indiana in 1946, he discovered that his father, Irven, had purchased a lake cottage with the money that his son sent him to save. All Don had was his discharge money. Donna said this was another wound. I need to say that while he told me of his difficult life, he did it factually. Never once did he say anything negative about his parents. Don moved to Winchester, Indiana where he lived with friends and worked at Goodrich Grain Elevator. Don told me he also worked for Anchor Hocking Glass Co. A few weeks after his arrival, Don attended a square dance where he found a dance partner, June Wagner, who was from a large farm family. Within four months, they were married, a marriage that would last until Don's death 64 years later.

"Dad wanted a better life and my mother and her family gave him the chance. Mom had seven siblings and they took Dad in like a brother," Donna told me. Don would learn farming and raising cattle from the family. Since there were so many family members, Don had to supplement his income by working in the Chevrolet plant in Muncie.

From 1951 to 1967, Don and family moved to a farm house near Farmland so Don could farm fulltime on rented land. In our interview, Don called himself a "sharecropper," explaining that half the profits went to the owners. He raised corn, beans, wheat, oats, and cows that the family members would milk twice daily as part of their chores. At times, he would drive a school bus to supplement the family's income.

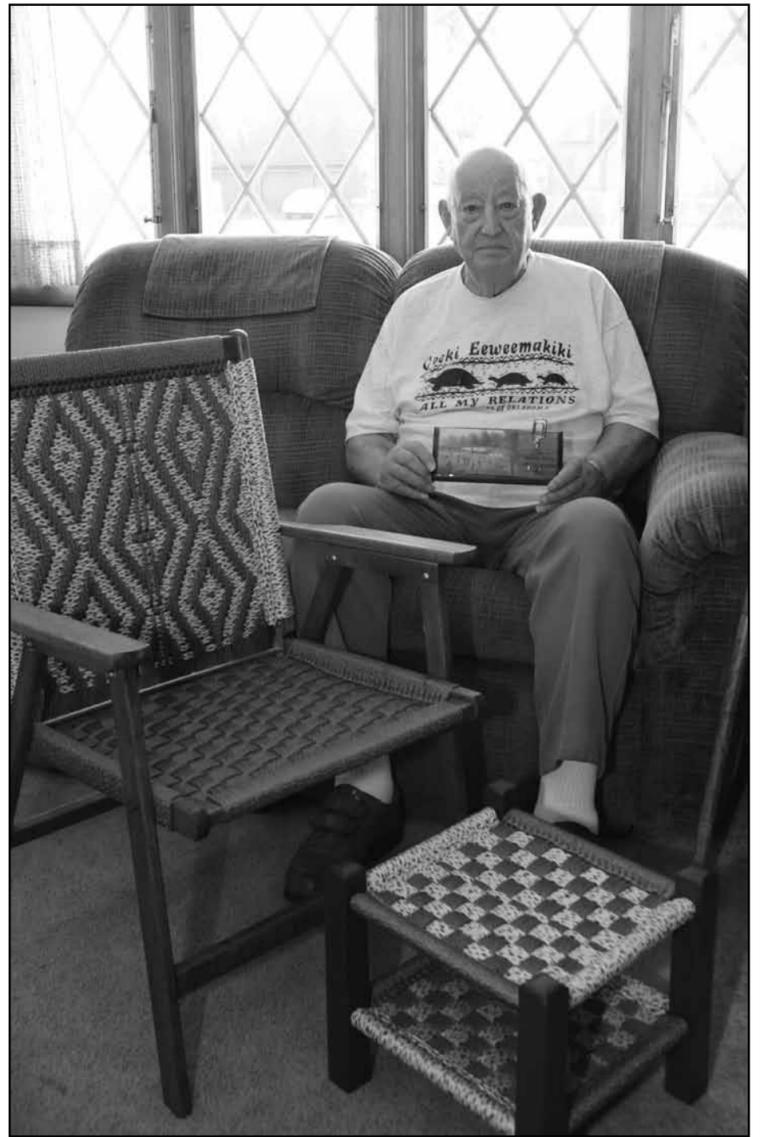
In 1967, Don quit farming and began a career in driving a truck with Marsh Supermarkets that he continued to do until his retirement in 1988.

During a telephone call a week after the funeral, his son Terry told me, "We never knew we were poor." I could tell that Terry was crying while he talked with me.

That was because Don provided for his family and insisted his wife June remain at home so she could take close care with raising the children. Family became the center of their lives. Two daughters, Donna and Jennifer, graduated from Ball State, located in nearby Muncie.

"My siblings and I have great work ethics, thanks to Mom and Dad," said Donna, who retired in 2006 as special education director for public schools near Muncie. "They taught us to always do our best, to be truthful and to save money."

"One of the hardest things Dad had to do was borrowing money in 1967 to buy their home in Farmland. Dad was a gentle giant, 6-foot-2. He had a stern voice and I knew what he said he meant. So there was no reason to argue," Donna said. Well, people at the Miami Tribe who came to know



Late Miami Elder, Don Cass, with some of his beautiful handmade crafts. Staff photo.

Don would never believe this soft-spoken man ever had a stern voice. But they would agree he had a voice of authority.

As he was raising his family, Don began finding time to participate in activities in the Miami Tribe activities in Indiana. And he encouraged it in his children, who would assist him in his research to discover his ancestors.

Don learned that he was a direct descendant of Miami's famous chief, Little Turtle, and through a marriage of cousins in the 1800s, he was also descended from a sister of Little Turtle. Other Miamis in his family tree included Francis Godfroy, the last war chief of the Miami, and Chief Jean-Baptiste Rich-ardville.

He began attending the powwows in Thorntown, Columbia City and Muncie in Indiana. Because of his naval service, he was chosen to carry the American flag during the opening ceremonies.

His ties with the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma began in 1990 while he was visiting his daughter, Jennifer McMillin and her family, in Webb City, just outside Joplin, Mo. Jennifer is the registrar at Ozark Christian College in Joplin and her husband David serves as the executive director of campus operations, handling all the business functions.

Don soon discovered that living nearby his daughter was Floyd Leonard, chief of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and a former associate school superintendent in both Webb City and Joplin. They found out they were distant cousins and they had much in common, including serving in the Navy in the South Pacific during World War II.

Chief Leonard brought Don to Miami, Oklahoma, and got him to participate in many events and meetings. In that November interview, Don told me of the time before the Miami Tribe had its own powwows, but instead participated in the Quapaw tribal powwow in Oklahoma.

Don was surprised when Chief Leonard took him to the powwow arena during the gourd dancing which featured veterans. Don was honored at the dance and given two \$1 bills signed by Chief Leonard, which Don preserved in his home among his collection of American Indian artifacts. He also was proud to tell me that a later time, Chief Leonard formally gave him his grandfather's Miami name, "Pe Con Jah." It means wildcat and the name along with a photograph of Don wearing Miami regalia and a headdress would be on the program for the funeral.

In the last decade, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has incorporated into its membership tribal members who trace their lineage to the time the many Miami were taken to Kansas after being expelled from Indiana. Chief Leonard discovered this applied to the Cass family through its connection to Chief Rich-ardville.

"I wanted to be known as a federally recognized Indian," Don told me. He especially wanted his children and grandchildren to be enrolled members and to honor their Miami heritage.

On Jan 14, 2002, Don Cass completed the paper work for enrollment into the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. For many years before that, he had become



## World War II Vet

*Continued from page 10*

well known by so many tribal members in Oklahoma for his charming disposition and for his donation of many artifacts, such as envelope holders or fountain pen holders on a walnut base containing an embossed photograph of a painting depicting the 1846 exodus from Indiana. They were used as special gifts given out at the tribe's annual meetings. And he continued to do so after being enrolled in Oklahoma.

A talented woodworker and artisan, Don became known for constructing small tables, bird cages and other wooden carvings or for weaving chairs and stools with maxicord.

And his house, especially the comfortable television room behind the living room, is filled with so many American Indian artifacts.

"He has given us and the grandkids real pride in our Native American heritage, his daughter Donna said. "This might not have happened if he hadn't brought it up and kept the fires burning."

As I entered the Cass home in November, I noticed a metal silhouette at the front door that had an image of Kokopele, or the jokester in American Indian folklore. I would know its meaning after meeting his daughter Luanne, at his funeral. A licensed practical nurse, she was privileged to be able to help her father in his last days at Parker Healthcare and Rehabilitation, in nearby Parker City, Indiana, where she is a nurse.

When I first met Luanne, she asked me about my interview with her father. And she told me a story of how he seldom talked about himself. She mentioned she once asked him if he played sports in high school. His answer was the same when I asked him of his war experiences: "Some."

In January, I telephoned Luanne and we talked about a side of his nature known well to his family and to his friends. He was a jokester. I asked for examples.

Dad would meet frequently with friends in uptown Farmland, she explained. One time after he won some money in the Ohio lottery, a friend asked him what he planned to do with it.

"I plan to invest in real estate for a permanent place to live," he said.

The friend pressed him for specifics.

Don explained he and his wife had agreed to use the money for cemetery plots.

A few years later, a different friend asked Don what he would do if he won the lottery again.

"I'll not be giving June any of it because she hasn't used what I got her the last time.

"And what was that?" the gullible friend asked.

"A cemetery plot," Don answered in a dead-pan voice.

At the funeral, Don's son-in-law presided, giving a warm and humorous eulogy as well as reading from the Bible and giving Christian prayers.

As Don also wished, George Ironstrack, a tribal member who works with the Myaamia Project at Miami University, played the drum and sang in the Miami language. Then Daryl Baldwin, a tribal member who directs the Myaamia Project, discussed Miami culture and spirituality.

He said when tribal members die, they find themselves on a road. They walk down this long highway, where they face many challenges. At its end there is a river. Crossing it also involves many challenges. But once on the other side, the deceased are reunited with their ancestors.

I realized that Don would readily face the challenges and reach the other side of the river. I imagine that among the first persons he would meet would be his ancestor, Little Turtle.

I'm sure Little Turtle would ask Don Cass if he had many challenges on his journey.

Don, being who he is, would simply answer: "Some."

## peenaalinta...

*One Who Is Born*

### Jensen Carlyle Dorey

Tribal member Matthew Dorey and his lovely wife Meghan Jensen Dorey announce the birth of a new Tribal member, Jensen Carlyle Dorey. Jensen was born February 13, 2011 at 2:02 a.m. in Miami, OK. He weighed 5 lbs. 15 oz. and measure 20 inches. Mommy, daddy and son are doing very well!

Jensen's maternal grandparents are David and Ardis Jensen of Brownsdale, MN. His maternal great grandmother is Ronnie Heinrichs, also of Brownsdale, MN.

Jensen's paternal grandparents are Tribal member Melisa Palmer and husband Tony, of rural Miami. His paternal great-grandparents are Tribal member Peggy McCord and husband Bill, also of rural Miami.

Little Jensen is a direct descendent of Chief David Geboe. Chief Forest Olds was his great-great-great uncle.



*Jensen Carlyle Dorey*

### Nicholas Lankford Lewis

Tribal member Leslie (Niles) Lewis and her husband Chris announce the birth of a new Tribal member, Nicholas Lankford Lewis. Nicholas was born November 12, 2010 in Nashville, TN. He weighed 6 lbs. 14 oz. and measured 19.5 inches. Nicholas lives in Nashville, TN, with his mommy and daddy and big brothers, Trey (7) and Parker (5).

His "granny" is Tribal Member Carolyne Niles of Nashville, TN. His great-grandmother is the late Julia Gamble Lankford. His great uncle Doug Lankford is Second Chief of the Tribe and his 4th great grandfather was Chief John Roubidoux.



*Nicholas Lankford Lewis*

## waanantakhšinka...

*Lying Quietly*

### James "Jim" Ferrell Watson

Tribal member James Ferrell Watson, son of late Tribal member Josephine Goodboo Watson and husband Ross, passed from this life on February 27, 2011 after a sudden illness. Jim was born July 14, 1933 in Ottawa County, OK. He lived in Albuquerque NM with his wife Diane. Services were held March 9th, 2011 in Albuquerque, NM.

### Sharon Elliott Prescott

Tribal elder Sharon Elliott Prescott of Miami, OK passed away Monday, February 7, 2011 at St Johns Hospital in Joplin MO. Sharon was born Nov. 3, 1938, in Picher, OK to James and Virginia (Billington) Elliott. Sharon was preceded in death by her parents and son Kevin Cordray. Sharon is survived by Kenneth, her husband of 41 years; one son, Mitch and Anna Cordray of Miami, two daughters, Jill and Ray Hengel of Round Rock, TX and Nichole Prescott of San Antonio, TX. Sharon is also survived by seven grandchildren. Sharon was cremated and a memorial service will be held the weekend of Annual Meeting. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to any cancer fighting society or to the Prescott Memorial Fund at the Myaamia Project (Myaamia Project, Miami University, 351 E. Spring St., 200 Bonham House, Oxford, OH 45056).

Sharon was an immense supporter of Myaamia cultural initiatives, very knowledgeable in Myaamia history and genealogy, a talented artist, and a wonderful role model to those around her. She worked diligently to share her knowledge of our culture and history with all tribal members and was instrumental in establishing the Miami Women's Council. She was a deeply loving mother, cherished wife, trusted advisor, and a loyal friend. Sharon will be greatly missed.



*Sharon Prescott was honored as Miami Nation Elder Princess in June 2008 during the Miami Nation Pow Wow in Miami, OK.*

## J.O. & Maxine Downing Celebrate 64 Years of Marriage

*Article Supplied By Family*

J.O. and Maxine Downing celebrated 64 years of marriage on June 9, 2010.

The couple exchanged their wedding vows at the Assembly of God Church in Chetopa, KS.

J.O. graduated from Commerce High School in 1943 and immediately entered the Navy where he served for 5 1/2 years.

Maxine graduated from Chetopa High School. She taught at a nearby country school.

Returning home from military service, J.O. went to work at a Pontiac dealership. Maxine was employed at Boeing Computer Service in Wichita, KS, where they made their home.

Following retirement, the couple moved home to Chetopa, KS. J.O. was elected to the Tribal Business Committee as a Councilperson, a position he would hold for 16 years.

The couple was blessed with two children, Ron Downing of Miami, OK, and Debbie Von Felt of Oklahoma City, OK.

They share the love of 7 grandchildren and 1 great-granddaughter.

J.O. said that serving on the Tribal Business Committee was a highlight to his retirement years.



*J.O. & his lovely wife, Maxine*



There are a number of Miami gourd dancers who travel home to Miami each year to participate in our annual Winter Gathering. On January 29, 2011, our 16th annual stomp dance gathering was held at the Ottawa-Peoria Cultural Center in Miami, OK. Miami gourd dancers who participated are pictured above, from left to right: Larry Daylight, Bob Doudrick, Ken Dagenett, Second Chief Doug Lankford, Mike Rhyneron, and Lester McCoy. Staff photo.



Miami Councilperson Scott Willard is shown with some of his handmade cultural items. See the story on Scott on page 6. Staff photo.



Jody Gamble is the owner of KINALO Fine Wood Designs, a business he operates from his studio/workshop in Neosho, MO. Jody apprenticed under master woodworker, and elder, Bill Watson to learn his craft. He is pictured above with his father, Chief Tom Gamble. The photo was taken by Hugh Morgan during the annual Winter stomp dance in January 2011. Staff photo.

# Native American ARTS & CRAFTS



BY TRIBAL MEMBER  
LARRY DAYLIGHT  
918-961-1440  
918-541-9700

## KINALO

Fine Wood Designs

**JODY GAMBLE**  
OWNER/DESIGNER BUILDER

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### **aatotankiki myaamiaki**

**EDITOR'S NOTES:**  
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Requests for special articles or publication of family information including births, deaths, marriages, anniversaries, etc., are welcomed and encouraged. Special articles are contributed by Dr. Hugh Morgan, retired Journalism Professor, from Miami University.

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