

Miami Nation officer receives award for actions during Main Street shooting

Read more on 7A

Navigating & Advocating: A Survival Story

Read more on 6C

Interview with Kathy Carter Young, Curator of Awakening Exhibit

Read more on 2B



MYAAMIKI NEWS

aacimwita akima
‘The Chief’s Report’ 3A

...General Council & Annual
Gathering Week Recap 4A

HISTORY & CULTURE

MHMA Hosts 4th Eugene V.
Brown Memorial Art Show 1B

Revitalizing Myaamia La-
crosse 4B

COMMUNITY

Two New Honorary Tribal
Citizens 1C

Prairie Sky Processing to Sup-
ply USDA-Inspected Beef 6C

MYAAMIA CENTER

Myaamia students reflect on
internship experience .. 1D

Dialects of Miami-Illinois..
5D

EEMAMWICKI

SummerFest was a splash! 1E

Looking Back at the
Eemamwiciki 2025 Sum-
mer Programs 3E



aatotankiki myaamiaki

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TRIBAL CITIZEN IDENTIFICATION AND ENROLLMENT CARDS

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Section A: News

The Chief’s Report	3A
2025 General Council & Annual Gathering Week Recap	4A
Oklahoma legislators stand up for MMIP	6A
Officer graduates from CLEET Academy	6A
MNPD swears in new officer	6A
Miami Nation officer receives award for actions during Main Street shooting	7A
Tribal Historic Preservation Office Update	7A
New Miami Tribe of Oklahoma District Courtroom Ready for Use in October	8A

Section B: History & Culture

MHMA Hosts 4th Eugene V. Brown Memorial Art Show	1B
Interview with Kathy Carter Young, Curator of Awakening...	2B
Myaamia artists at Taste of the Arts Festival in Fort Wayne	3B
Revitalizing Myaamia Lacrosse	4B
Operation Feather Give	6B
Myaamia Artists and Cultural Staff Invited to Ganondagan	6B
Myaamionki Kiihkayonki Peehkahkionki – Land of the Myaamiaki – the Beautiful Place - Fort Wayne	8B
New Book Release: Our People Believe in Education Now Available for Pre-Order	8B

Section C: Community

mihkaweelimaataawi ‘let’s honor them’	1C
toopeeliyani ‘You accomplished it!’	2C
weekintiiciki ‘They are married’	3C
peenaalinta ‘One who is born’	3C
waanantakhšinka ‘Lying quietly’	3C
keešhtooyankwi ‘We make it!’	4C
Programs for Tribal Members within the ICW Prevention Program	4C
Prairie Sky Processing Set To Supply USDA-Inspected Beef	5C
Navigating & Advocating: A Survival Story	6C
ICW Department Events of 2025	7C
Scholarships and Back-to-School Funds	8C

Section D: Myaamia Center

Myaamia students reflect on internship... at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival	1D
Letter from the Director of the Myaamia Center, Fall 2025	2D
Myaamia Heritage Program at Miami University: Fall 2025	2D
Myaamia Arts & Culture Education Partnership: Indigenizing Classroom Creativity May 16, 2025	3D
Save the date for the 11th biennial Myaamiaki Conference on April 18, 2026!	4D
Dialects of Miami-Illinois: What’s the Difference Between the Myaamia and Peewaalia Languages?	5D
Community Resources	8D

Section E: Eemamwaciki

SummerFest was a splash!	1E
Miami Tribe contributes to this year’s TCAP experience	1E
Looking Back at the Eemamwiciki 2025 Summer	2E
Cultural Corner	3E
Eemamwiciki Events	8E

aacimwita akima ‘The Chief’s Report’

Aya, aya! Greetings to all Myaamia citizens from our Nation’s headquarters, on the Myaamia-Peewaalia Reservation in Ottawa County, Oklahoma. It is mihšiiwia kiilhswa “elk moon”, and, in Oklahoma in late August it means it is very hot, dry weather. It also means our young folks are returning to school. I wish them all very well!

Since my last report in the digital spring on-line edition of our newspaper, the busiest season of our Myaamia year has passed. The month of June brings our summer youth programs in Oklahoma, and our National Gathering Week events, highlighted by the annual meeting of the Miami Nation General Council. The weeks leading up to June and those following are a blur of preparation, followed by cleanup, and packing away supplies and equipment until the next year. July brings the summer youth programs in Indiana, with the same busy schedule. My sincere gratitude to our amazing staff for the hard work, long hours, and tremendous commitment to making these events a wonderful experience for our citizens.

On Saturday, June 28th, the annual meeting of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma/Miami Nation General Council was held in the Nation’s Council House in Miami, OK with attendance of over 220 voting-age citizens and approximately 400 people in total. The business of the meeting proceeded smoothly, with reports from Lance Theobald, CEO of Miami Nation Enterprises, and Daryl Baldwin, Director of the Myaamia Center at Miami University. In elections, William “Nate” Poyfair was elected to serve a three-year term on the Business Council as Second Councilperson. More about the meeting, elections, and the National Gathering Week events is included in this edition of our newspaper.

1795 Peace Medal

During the meeting, it was my great honor to announce to our citizens in attendance the return of the 1795 Treaty of Greenville Peace Medal presented to Miami War Chief, Mihšihkinaahkwa (Little Turtle) at the conclusion of the Greenville Treaty Council 230 years ago. The medal was on display during the meeting.

This monumental and historic return of this invaluable piece of Miami Tribe history was the result of the determined and collaborative efforts of Miami Tribal Leadership, our Cultural Resources Office, Tribal historians, lineal descendants, and our legal team.

In 1795 the Miami Tribe signed the Treaty of Greenville with the United States. The Treaty marked the end of a decade of war led by Little Turtle and was a turning point in the history of the Miami people. At the successful conclusion of the Treaty, General Anthony Wayne awarded Washington Peace Medals to each of the Tribes. The Miami medal was bestowed on Chief Little Turtle and became part of his official regalia. The medal was to be passed to successor war Chiefs in memory of the day the two sovereigns made peace.

When Little Turtle passed in 1812, the Medal was in his possession but was not buried with him as it belonged to the Tribe. In 1825, the Medal was lost from Tribal possession under uncertain circumstances. That was not an uncommon story during those times of dynamic change and stress on the Miami people.

Almost 200 years later, the Medal reappeared. Early last year, Julie Olds learned that a gallery in California was planning to sell the Medal at auction. The Tribe, as the rightful owners of the Peace Medal, requested that the gallery withdraw the Peace Medal from the auction allowing the Tribe time to speak with the individual listing the Peace Medal. The gallery and owner did not withdraw the medal, and the Tribe sued the gallery, and eventually the people who claimed ownership of the Medal in California state Court and obtained a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) prohibiting the sale of the medal at auction. Our historians provided deep and insightful information about Miami history and the Medal, which the legal team incorporated in pleadings and briefs to educate the defendants and the Court about the Medal.

The defendants and the Tribe came together in February for an all-day mediation and reached an agreement for the return of the Peace Medal to the Tribe. This was another example of the Miami people reclaiming their history and telling their own history better and more accurately than anyone else could. The team of experts who contributed to this effort included Miami Tribe Member and Myaamia Center Director Daryl Baldwin, our Miami University friend and colleague Dr. Rob-

ert Wicks, and longtime expert consultant for the Tribe, Tim McKewon.

The return of the Peace Medal, which was first placed in the hands of Mihšihkinaahkwa in 1795, and now 230 years later, has been restored to tribal possession, is truly a momentous occasion for all Myaamia people.

Illinois Legislation

The Tribe persists in our governmental work in Washington, D.C. to secure Congressional approval of legislation permitting the Tribe to bring a land claim for loss of historic tribal lands in southeast Illinois. Senator Markwayne Mullin (Cherokee), a staunch advocate for the Tribe for the past eight years, reintroduced the bill this session - H.R. 2827 – entitled *A Bill to provide for the equitable settlement of certain Indian land disputes regarding land in Illinois, and for other purposes*.

Oklahoma Congressman, Tom Cole (Chickasaw) joined the bill again this winter as a sponsor. Congressman Cole is a longtime advocate for tribes and Indian Country and has been a good friend and staunch supporter of the Tribe for years. I traveled to D.C. in May and again at the end of July to discuss efforts to move the bill this session.

Once the bill is authorized by Congress, H.R. 2827, a bi-partisan bill will grant jurisdiction to the Court of Federal Claims to consider and decide the Tribe’s land claim. The Tribe hopes to see movement on the bill this session. We are committed to continuing our important work on this bill to get our day in Court.

Federal Litigation

The Miami Tribe remains active in its efforts to obtain a federal court ruling to confirm that its reservation lands constitute Indian Country. Following the United States Supreme Court’s 2020 landmark decision in *McGirt v. Oklahoma*, which held that the Muscogee Creek Nation reservation was never disestablished by Congress, the Miami Tribe, like other Oklahoma tribes actively assumed its governmental responsibilities policing and exercising jurisdiction over its reservation lands. The Department of Interior, post *McGirt*, without any federal directive, tied federal funding allocated for Oklahoma tribes for policing and court needs to tribes with formal court rulings upholding a tribe’s reservation.

In December 2023, the Miami Tribe, joined by the Eastern Shawnee Tribe, Ottawa Tribe, and Seneca Cayuga Tribe filed federal lawsuits in Northern District Court in Tulsa, requesting that the Court declare the reservation lands of the plaintiff tribes to be intact, never having been disestablished. A decision from the federal court will help the Tribe to secure essential federal funding for the Tribe’s court to address its criminal docket, which has increased nearly 2,000 percent.

The Tribes are awaiting the Court’s decision, which has been under advisement for over a year. The Court’s delay has resulted in adverse funding impacts on the tribes and lack of funding may result in future court funding and public safety implications. The tribes have had positive discussions with Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond and hope to work towards a resolution of the parties’ differences. These discussions are ongoing.

SAUSA

As reported previously, he Miami Tribe and other Northeast Oklahoma Tribal Consortium Tribes (Eastern Shawnee Tribe, Wyandotte Nation, Ottawa Tribe, Seneca-Cayuga Nation, and Shawnee) contracted in May with David Youll, an esteemed legal professional in Tulsa who will serve as the Special Assistant United States Attorney (SAUSA) representing the interests of the Consortium Tribes for federal criminal charges for federal offenses occurring on the tribes’ reservation lands. David Youll brings years of legal experience serving as a prosecutor, Judge and as SAUSA in the Eastern District.

Mr. Youll has completed background checks and training with the US Attorney’s Office in Tulsa and has been meeting with tribal police, City and County law enforcement in Miami, Oklahoma and the Ottawa County District Attorney. The Consortium Tribes look forward to having representation at the federal level through the SAUSA for crimes occurring on Consortium Tribes reservation lands. Funding for this position is through a Justice Department Coordinated Assistance Solicitation (CTAS) Grant. We are pleased to have David Youll working with us as our federal representative in



Akima Eecipoonkwia
Chief Douglas Lankford

the United States Attorney’s Office.

Miami Tribe District Court

The Tribe has nearly completed remodeling a large storage area at the rear of its headquarters building into a new, state-of-the-art courtroom. The new Miami Tribe of Oklahoma District Court space includes a courtroom with a new Judge’s bench large enough to seat three Appellate Justices for cases appealed to the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Appellate Court, a witness stand, clerk desk, a jury box and seating for those attending court. New courtroom furnishings are ordered for the space and new audio video recording equipment will be installed to record and maintain hearing records for the Tribe. The courtroom will be enhanced with traditional myaamia design inlay custom woodwork made by tribal member Jody Gamble. New court signage, a portico, landscaping and fencing are planned to enhance the space outside of the court entryway. The new court remodel is funded by a Department of Justice Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS) Court Remodel Grant. The Tribe is hopeful that the space will be ready for court use this fall. The Tribe’s District Court holds a criminal docket twice a month and family court and civil dockets once a month, or more frequently as needed. The Tribe holds trial dockets twice a year in the fall and spring. The Tribe looks forward to using this new space in its work to exercise the Tribe’s inherent authority on its reservation lands.

The Tribe continues its important work moving fee land owned by the Tribe to the United States to be held in trust for the benefit of the Tribe. A fee-to-trust land acquisition, or “land into trust” involves the transfer of land title from the Tribe to the United States, to be held in trust for the benefit of the Tribe. Trust land will be held in perpetuity for the benefit of all tribal members and enhances the Tribes jurisdiction over the land.

Federally recognized tribes are eligible to apply for trust land acquisitions for any land owned by the tribe in fee simple status. Fee simple means the landowner may sell or encumber the land. Once land is in trust status, state law, with a few exceptions, does not apply, nor is a tribe required to pay state property taxes associated with the land. Fee to trust land acquisition applications are evaluated by the Secretary of the Interior according to criteria published in the Code of Federal Regulations (25 CFR 151).

Since September 2017, the Tribe has successfully moved into trust status 11 parcels of land including the Fritz Road property in Ft. Wayne Indiana – the first Miami lands in the Tribe’s historic homeland owned and under the jurisdiction of the Miami Tribe in almost 180 years.

The 11 parcels now in trust represent some 370 acres. Currently, the Tribe has seven more parcels in process for fee to trust applications. These in-process applications represent an additional nearly 450 acres to be moved into trust status.

This summer has seen several important events, which are covered in this edition. Our next edition will be an online-only publication (spring & fall) and can be found in the news section of our website at www.miamination.com.

Wishing you all the very best. Enjoy the remainder of lacrosse season and remember to wait on those winter stories until the first killing frost!

Akima Eecipoonkwia Chief Douglas Lankford

2025 General Council and Annual Gathering Week Recap

Stella Beerman

Communications Specialist, Myaamia Center

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma held its Annual General Council Meeting on Saturday, June 28, in nooŝonke siipionki ‘Miami, OK’ to hold elections and share important updates with Tribal citizens. This year, two seats on the Business Committee and three seats on the Grievance Committee were up for election.

The meeting opened with a prayer, the Myaamia community song, and a round dance, followed by Akima ‘Chief’ Douglas Lankford’s State of the Nation Address. Aacimwa ‘Secretary-Treasurer’ Donya Williams presented the financial report before Daryl Baldwin shared updates on the Myaamia Center, the Tribe’s research office at Miami University. Finally, Lance Theobald, Myaamia citizen and CEO of Miami Nation Enterprises, shared updates on the Tribe’s businesses.

With 229 voting members present, elections began promptly after the updates. Akima Lankford was re-elected to his position as Chief, a 3-year term, uncontested. Nate Poyfair was elected as Aacimwa ‘Second Councilperson’, a three-year term. Nate, a 2019 graduate of the Myaamia Heritage Program at Miami University, a member of the grievance committee, and the Tribe’s ARPA projects manager, will be a great addition to the Miami Tribe’s leadership team. Many in attendance, including Akima Lankford and Nate Poyfair, expressed extreme gratitude for the work of Scott Willard, who served the Miami Tribe in this position for 15 years.

Nate’s election to the Business Committee meant his seat on the Grievance Committee was now up for election in addition to the two that we’re already scheduled for this year. Michael Watson, Nick Henson, and A.J. Alsbaugh were each elected to these positions.

As votes are counted by a team just off the stage, members of the Business Committee raffled off door prizes to the crowd waiting for results to be announced. Lucky winners left the meeting with lacrosse sticks, community flags, wool blankets, and other prizes.

The final election of the day was for the Jr. Tribal Ambassador, a position for a young female leader to represent the community at public events, often alongside the Tribal Ambassador. Hazel Malinski Shoemaker was elected as the Jr. Tribal Ambassador for a one-year term. Hazel is a long-time participant in the Eemamwiciki Summer Youth Programs: Saakaciweeta and Eewansaapita.

As the meeting wrapped up, everyone was invited to the Prairie Sun Event Center just down the street for a community meal, before the Miami Nation’s Annual Pow Wow in the evening. While the General Meeting takes place on Saturday, events are hosted throughout the week for citizens and their relatives to spend time with one another, celebrating Myaamia culture.

Starting on Wednesday, June 25, Myaamia community members gathered to learn about ribbonwork with Kristina Fox, Myaamia education coordinator. About 15 participants learned to craft a ribbonwork keychain, a project that is generally small enough to finish in one workshop while still teaching many of the important basics of the craft. On the same day, Myaamia citizen Jody Gamble led a seensewinki ‘bowl game’ workshop at the Myaamia Makerspace, where participants had the opportunity to design their own set of pieces and a bowl for the game.

That evening, Myaamia community members were invited to the opening reception of the Eugene Brown Memorial Art Show. This biennial event celebrates the creativity of Myaamia artists of all ages, with works submitted in various categories and mediums. Awards were given in each category, and visitors spent time admiring the talent of their fellow community members.

On Thursday, June 26, Family Day was hosted at the Miami Tribe’s lacrosse field. Friendly competitions in archery and lacrosse drew all ages, while others tried their hand at non-competitive tomahawk throwing. Multiple rounds of each activity allowed everyone to join in, and the fun continued well into the evening.

After dinner, a fire was lit for stomp dancing. The dances began with the Lead Caller starting a song and the Shakers keeping rhythm with their cans. The other dancers fell behind them as their ever-growing line spiraled around the fire. After several songs, the Shakers and Callers grew tired and wrapped up their dancing.

The next morning, Friday, June 27, community members gathered at the Tribe’s lacrosse field for the annual community lacrosse game. Despite the summer heat, Myaamia people of all ages played a spirited game, with intense moments often followed by the sounds of laughter from the players. Following the game, everyone was invited back to the Prairie Sun Event Center for a well-deserved meal and cultural education presentations.

This year’s presentations included updates on the Tribe’s newly constructed building in Fort Wayne, Indiana, which will serve as a hub for community gatherings, educational programs, and office space for the Cultural Resource Extension Office. Nate Poyfair also gave an insightful talk on the Tribe’s relationship with the Peewaalia ‘Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma’ throughout history.

That evening, the Miami Nation’s Annual Pow Wow began with the Grand Entry at the Prairie Sun Event Center, due to the weather. Dances and food went late into the night before everyone went home to rest for Saturday’s events.

While voting for leadership is a crucial part of exercising tribal sovereignty, participating in opportunities to learn about Myaamia culture continues to strengthen bonds within the community. This annual week of events would not be possible without the support of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma’s leadership, the hard work of employees and staff, and the support of tribal members, the local community, and guests.

Once again, this year brought new shared memories and relationship-building within the community. Looking forward, tribal members should keep an eye on miamination.com for more opportunities to gather, learn, and create together, like the Winter Gathering in January 2026.



Hazel Malinski Shoemaker (middle) with Sophie Olds, Tribal Ambassador, and Abigail Pollock, 2024 Jr. Tribal Ambassador.



Tribal youth (under 13 years old) are honored during the General Council Meeting. Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Tribal elders (over 75 years old) are honored during the General Council Meeting. Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



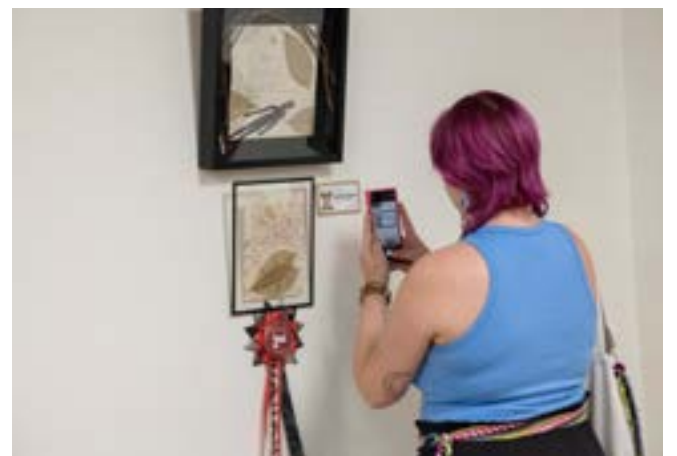
Akima Lankford surprised the community by suggesting the meeting start with a round dance. Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.



Community members learn to make ribbonwork keychains with Kristina Fox. Photos by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.



Community members enjoying artwork at the Myaamia Heritage Museum and Archive. Photos by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.





Newly elected members of Tribal leadership are sworn into their new roles. Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



“Once again, this year brought new shared memories and relationship-building within the community.”



Check out these other photos taken throughout the week. Photos contributed by various photographers.



Winners of the archery and lacrosse shoot-out competitions. Photos by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.



Oklahoma legislators stand up for MMIP *Override governor's veto of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons funding*

Jordan Zabel

The Oklahoma legislative body took a firm stance against Governor Kevin Stitt's slew of vetoes in an unprecedented final day of session, where they overrode 47 of the 68 bills initially vetoed by the governor.

One of the more notable bills included in the dramatic demonstration of checks and balances was HB 1137, a bill that would allow state funding for the Office of Liaison for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP).

Stitt's veto caused waves of backlash from across the state, especially from tribal leaders and advocates, as the announcement came on Tuesday, May 6 – MMIP Awareness Day. Stitt said in his veto message that “justice must be blind to race.”

“Gov. Stitt's breathtaking ignorance of the issues facing tribes and existing teamwork to resolve those issues reached an absurd level today with his veto of HB 1137,” Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. said following the announcement of the veto.

Research shows that Indigenous women experience disproportionate rates of violence, experiencing the second-highest rate of homicide in 2020, according to a survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The survey shows that more than two in five Indigenous women were raped in their lifetimes. Oklahoma ranks second in the nation for the number of Indigenous people who have gone missing.

There are currently 880 Native missing or murdered

Indigenous persons cases logged in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs), and the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation lists 88 missing Natives, though it is believed that far more cases often go unreported. NamUs was created in 2005, and is the only national centralized repository and resource center for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed person cases across the United States.

HB 1137's author, Rep. Ron Stewart (D-Tulsa), celebrated the veto override.

“Today, the Oklahoma Legislature demonstrated its unwavering commitment to justice and accountability by overriding the Governor's veto of House Bill 1137,” Stewart said. “I am deeply grateful to my colleagues in both chambers—Democrats and Republicans—who stood together to prioritize the safety and dignity of Indigenous communities across our state.”

“This vote is more than a legislative victory—it is a moral affirmation that missing and murdered Indigenous persons will not be forgotten or ignored in Oklahoma. I want to especially thank the families, advocates, and tribal leaders who have fought tirelessly to ensure this moment became possible. Your voices were heard.”

“Together, we have sent a clear message: Our shared future must be built on respect, equity, and action. The work continues, but today, we took a bold step forward.”

Chief Hoskin likewise praised the Oklahoma Legislature for overriding the veto.

“Today MMIP families, advocates, and tribes praise the Oklahoma legislature for taking the right step and overruling Governor Stitt's veto of HB1137, a bipartisan housekeeping amendment to the historic Ida's Law,” he said. “This amendment to Ida's Law was about ensuring our missing and murdered cases of tribal citizens are kept at the forefront at the state level, and today it is.”

“The bill had overwhelming support by both

the House and Senate and should've been signed into law in the first place. The Governor's decision to veto the Ida's Law amendment – both his shifting and flimsy reasoning and timing it to coincide with National MMIP Awareness Day – was as heartless as it was thoughtless. Thankfully the legislature did the right thing, and turned this meaningful act into law.”

Hoskin has been exceptionally vocal in his critiques of the governor since the veto was announced on MMIP Awareness Day.

“Policies that dismantle tribal governments by executive actions, military action, or congressional action lead to circumstances in which Native peoples are valued less – particularly when they're in need of the most help. That's why we must examine the origin story of this crisis and acknowledge that shackling tribal nations for generations kept us from keeping our brothers and sisters, our aunts and uncles, our sons and daughters, safe,” Chief Hoskin said at the May 2 gathering.

“It's likely there are 3 million Indigenous people who have experienced violence. The way that colonialism, systemic injustice, and historical trauma has contributed to this ongoing crisis, this

ongoing epidemic, is immeasurable,” said District 2 Councilor Dr. Candessa Thee at the May 2 gathering. “Survivors are often treated with skepticism, and that's one way we fail individuals and perpetuate cycles of violence. We need to educate and empower not only ourselves to fight for justice, to reclaim that future, to protect our children and to bring them home, we also have to educate

the larger mainstream, non-Indian community in which we are situated. I'm proud to be part of a Nation where the legislative and executive branch work together along with a strong judiciary to create wrap-around services and to aggressively prosecute domestic violence where appropriate.”

Chief Hoskin stressed the importance of Ida's Law, named for the mother of four who was 29 years old when she went missing, which prompted changes within the state's top law enforcement agency to include an agent to track and investigate cases of missing and murdered indigenous Oklahomans and a victim advocate to support their families. Stitt previously signed Ida's Law in 2021.

“The existing ‘Ida's Law’, a bipartisan reflection of the sort of teamwork needed to address missing and murdered Indigenous persons cases, is an effective law that enables tribal law enforcement and OSBI to work better together on MMIP cases.”

Hoskin said HB 1137, a bipartisan amendment to Ida's Law, was a necessary housekeeping measure designed to strip an unnecessary federal funding requirement.

“Gov. Stitt's veto message, issued on a day we raise awareness across the country on MMIP issues, exposes that he lacks the foggiest idea that Ida's Law is on the books, what it does on a low-budget, high-impact basis, or what the simple amendment was designed to do,” said Chief Hoskin. “He also continues to conflate the political status of tribal citizens with ‘race’, a tired old subject meant to divide and confuse people.”

“Native Americans are disproportionately victims of violent crime and disproportionately so in cases that go unsolved. Serious leaders across the state and the nation understand that and are taking action. Gov. Stitt should do more thinking and less thoughtless reacting when the lives of Native people are at stake.”

Officer graduates from CLEET Academy

MTO Police Department (MNPd)

Officer Corey Miller graduated from the Oklahoma CLEET basic academy on Friday July 18th, 2025. The academy training took place in Ada Oklahoma, consisted of 600 hours of instruction and lasted 16 weeks.

He will be completing phase 2 and 3 field training after coming back to the police department and should be on solo patrol starting in September 2025.



MNPd Officer Corey Miller and his family.
Photo courtesy of MNPd.



Chief of Police Abel Stose with Officer Corey Miller of the Miami Nation Police Department.
Photo courtesy of MNPd.

MNPd swears in new officer

MTO Police Department (MNPd)

Official Announcement

Miami Tribal Police Officer Joshua Heilig was sworn in as a Miami Nation Police Officer next to Judge Scott Goode. Heilig comes to us as a certified peace officer in Oklahoma and has five years of experience and extensive training.



MTO Officer Joshua Heilig being sworn in next to Judge Scott Goode. Photo courtesy of MNPd.

Miami Nation officer receives award for actions during Main Street shooting

Miami Nation Officer C.J. Weaver receives a Life Saving Award and formal letter of commendation for his actions during the active shooter incident at a Main Street restaurant on May 31.

Jordan Zabel

Officer C.J. Weaver of the Miami Nation Police Department was one of the first on scene when shots rang out on Main Street in Miami the evening of Saturday, May 31. His quick-thinking and selfless dedication to protecting his community has earned him a Life Saving Award and formal letter of commendation from Miami Nation Chief of Police Able Stose.

“It is with deep respect and sincere appreciation that I issue this formal letter of commendation in recognition of your courageous and life-saving actions during the active shooter incident ,” read the letter from Chief Stose.

At approximately 9 p.m. on May 31, Central Dispatch in Miami reported shots fired on North Main Street, followed by an investigation that led to an officer involved shooting. The suspect, Michael Anthony Cook III, 25, of Kansas City, was taken into custody and no officers were injured in the incident.

City of Miami Police Chief Stephen Sigmon said at the time that Cook’s weapon was a 9mm Glock handgun that was legally registered to him, and it is believed he has had the weapon for several years. Cook had no ties to the area and no criminal history. He is charged in Ottawa County District Court in Miami with discharging a firearm into a dwelling, felony pointing a firearm, and two counts of shooting with intent to kill.

According to the arrest affidavit, several Miami police officers responded to the scene. Body camera footage shows several officers giving Cook multiple commands to drop the pistol, the affidavit states. Officer Weaver can be seen standing on the southeast corner of the house, at which time Cook is observed pointing the firearm towards Officer Weaver and firing the pistol in his direction. Several officers on the scene returned fire. Afterwards, officers once again told Cook to drop the gun. Cook picked up the pistol again and pointed it at the officers.

“Officers return fire while on the scene, wounding Cook,” the affidavit states. Cook was taken to a Tulsa hospital.

The motive behind the shooting is under investigation, and due to Cook’s lack of a criminal history background, Sigmon said, “We think it might be a possible mental health episode.”

Chief Stose said Officer Weaver was on scene within 10 minutes. He echoed sentiments that District Attorney Doug Pewitt and Ottawa County Sheriff David Dean recently expressed; that despite



Officer Weaver with his Life Saving Award.
Photo courtesy of MNPD.

the seeming complications that arose following the McGirt decision, departmental cooperation in northeast Oklahoma runs smoothly and all the various departments “work really well together.”

Chief Stose said it’s been “an honor to serve with and next” to Officer Weaver.

“When shots were fired at Mia Bella’s on North Main Street, you responded immediately – without hesitation – to a rapidly evolving and highly dangerous situation,” said Stose in the letter of commendation. “Your pursuit of the armed suspect, alongside officers from the Miami Police Department, demonstrated exceptional bravery and tactical discipline under fire. Amid continued threats to the public and responding officers, your engagement during the final confrontation helped bring the suspect into custody and prevented further harm.

“Your decisive and selfless actions directly contributed to saving lives that night. You embodied the very mission of this department – to serve and protect – even at great personal risk. For this reason, you are hereby awarded the Life Saving Award in recognition of your valor and commitment to duty.

“Your conduct reflects the highest standards of our profession and serves as an example to others within this department and throughout the law enforcement community. On behalf of the Miami Nation Police Department and the community we serve, thank you for your outstanding service.”

Tribal Historic Preservation Office Update

Staff Article

WOSU Documentary

Logan York was chosen to host a documentary focusing on the eight Hopewell Earthworks, which were recently added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. This documentary promises to shed light on the intricate history and cultural significance of these remarkable structures. Throughout the film, Logan will conduct in-depth interviews with various experts, including indigenous knowledge bearers, archaeologists, and historians, to explore the history surrounding what scholars call the Hopewell Earthworks and the ancient peoples who constructed them. As Logan visits each of these awe-inspiring sites, he will emphasize not only the architectural brilliance that went into creating the earthworks but also the social and cultural dynamics of the societies that thrived in their shadow. By connecting the rich historical narrative with present-day perspectives, the documentary aims to celebrate the human ingenuity that made constructing these monumental earthworks possible. The film seeks to engage viewers with the profound legacy of the Hopewell people, inspiring a deeper appreciation for this significant part of human history.

Octogan Earthwork

The Octagon Earthworks, one of the eight Hopewell Earthworks recently added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2023, is now open to the public as of January 1, 2025. This marks the first time in over a century that these remarkable human achievements have been accessible for public tours. This development represents a significant step toward increased Tribal participation at the site. To celebrate the opening, Logan York, the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) for the Miami Tribe, delivered a brief TED Talk. In his talk, he emphasized that Tribal participation and inclusion benefit everyone and create a more accurate and ethical experience for the general public.

Versailles Exhibit

As the Minohsayaki Project (the Painted Hide Robes Project) continues, another significant step occurs with an exhibit opening to the public in November at the Palace of Versailles outside Paris, France. This exhibit was created through a partnership between our nation, the Peoria Tribe, Quapaw Nation, and Choctaw Nation, the Musée du Quai Branly, and the Palace of Versailles. In November, staff from the Myaamia Center and CRO Team will be joining a representative from the Business Committee as a part of the delegation traveling to France . This trip will also mark the 300th anniversary of an important Tribal Delegation, which traveled to France in 1725 to visit the French King and many important sites around Paris, including the palaces at Versailles and Fountainbleau. On this trip we will literally walk in that delegation’s footsteps. While no Myaamiaki were present in 1725, our close relatives at the Peoria have a direct connection with this delegation that is worth celebrating. This upcoming trip will also continue to strengthen our rekindled bonds with the French people.

Cincinnati Museum Center Exhibit

In partnership with the Cincinnati Museum Center (CMC), the following individuals are collaborating on a new exhibit focused on Indigenous peoples from the Ohio River Valley: Logan York, the Miami Tribe’s Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO); Logan Pappenfert, a citizen and former THPO of the Peoria Tribe; Keni Hood, a citizen of the Shawnee Tribe and former Tribal Council member; and Gwynn Henderson, a consulting archaeologist. This exhibit will explore the history of Indigenous peoples from the time the glaciers first began receding, into the modern day but will largely focus on contemporary cultures, languages, and initiatives. It will highlight the work of our Culture Bearers as they revitalize traditions and move into the future, rather than looking solely at the past.

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New Miami Tribe of Oklahoma District Courtroom Ready for Use in October

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Official Announcement

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma šaašaašhk-weekaani District Court will hold its first trial docket the week of October 20th in the newly remodeled District Court space at the Tribe's headquarters building. The court remodel is funded by a Department of Justice Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS) Court Remodel Grant. The Tribe has five years to complete the project and will conclude the grant well within this timeline.

The new Miami Tribe of Oklahoma District Court space includes a courtroom with a Judge's bench large enough to seat three Appellate Justices for cases appealed to the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Appellate Court, a witness stand, clerk desk, a jury box to seat eight jurors and seating behind the bar for those attending court. There is a new jury deliberation room behind the jury box, and on the other side of the court space, an office to serve as the judge's chamber with several storage rooms for electronic court equipment and files. The interior of the courtroom will be enhanced with beautiful traditional myaamia design custom woodwork by tribal member Jody Gamble. The Tribe's Occupancy Certification was recently approved by the CTAS funding agency, authorizing up to 89 individuals in the new space.

Safety is key in every courtroom, and the Miami District Court is improved with a new 66 zone walk through scanner and state-of-the-art x-ray inspection system to screen handbags or parcels for those entering the court space. "Our Miami Nation Police do a great job ensuring the court space is secure," said Chief Lankford, "but the addition of new safety technology allows for a heightened level of security which is important to the Tribe."

Inside the courtroom, cases will be recorded through a new high tech video recording system

which will provide a visual and audio record of court proceedings. The Tribe will use the court space for both criminal and civil matters. "The Tribe has operated its own District Court since taking jurisdiction from the BIA back in 2006," Chief Lankford said. "It was important to the Tribe to exercise its authority through its judicial branch as soon as we had the funding and infrastructure to do so," he said.

Tribal Courts are crucial to tribes for the ability of Tribes to enforce tribal laws which are essential for maintaining order and protecting tribal interests. Tribal courts provide a forum for tribal members addressing civil and criminal matters that occur within the Tribe's jurisdiction. Tribal courts offer support and services to tribal members addressing issues such as family law, child protection, and other community needs. Tribal courts play a vital role in the governance and legal framework of Tribes, ensuring that the Tribe's laws are respected and upheld, and that justice is served within the community.

"Over the past 19 years, our court cases and court staff have increased immensely – especially post McGirt when the Tribe assumed jurisdiction over its reservation lands," said Chief Lankford. "Our Court team is an outstanding group of legal professionals and now we have a beautiful new space for the important work of the court," he said.

Work yet to be completed under the CTAS grant includes construction of a new portico at the entryway into the court space, landscape outside of the entryway, placement of a flagpole and new court signage along the road, in the court parking area and near the building. The Tribe is in the process of ordering new furniture and furnishings for the court space and looks forward to the use of this space for the benefit of the Tribe, its members and the community.



MTO courtroom remodel. Photo by Madalyn Richardson, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



MTO courtroom remodel highlighting the judge's bench. Photo by Madalyn Richardson, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



MTO courtroom remodel highlighting the juror's stand and judges bench. Photo by Madalyn Richardson, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

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MHMA Hosts 4th Eugene V. Brown Memorial Art Show

Meghan Dorey
MHMA Manager

From June 25 to August 25, more than 70 different pieces of Myaamia art from all over Myaamionki ‘Miami lands’ were displayed at MHMA’s newly renovated secondary gallery space in downtown Miami, Oklahoma. This year’s show focused on myaamia peepankišaapiikahkia eehkwaatamenki ‘myaamia ribbonwork.’ Many of the artworks from both youth and adult artists featured ribbonwork and ribbonwork-inspired designs.

Our invited judges enjoyed viewing the diversity of myaamia talent and had some difficult decisions to make. In the end, they chose a beautiful set of clothes sewn by Katrina Mitten as the Best in Show entry. Katrina’s ambitious entry included a Woodlands-style hood adorned with ribbonwork and sequins, a matching skirt, leggings, and moccasins, as well as a blouse with many silver brooches and a waist sash with embroidered beadwork. This compilation, entitled ‘She Who Shimmers’, was recently returned from a loan to the North Carolina Museum of Art, and we are thankful it could make a stop here in Miami to complement the many pieces of historic and modern ribbonwork pieces in the main gallery.

Josiah Dorey’s mihšiiwiayi ahkihkwa ‘elk hide drum’ was chosen as the winner of Best in Show for the youth division. Josiah painted the face of the octagonal drum in a pattern inspired by the colors and shapes of ribbonwork. He adorned the sides with silver tacks to add a slight shimmer, mimicking the silver brooches and sequins often seen in ribbonwork clothing pieces. This piece was chosen for purchase by MHMA and will be added to the permanent collection. Other selections for MHMA purchase were a mixed media painting by Josey Cirullo (which also won the People’s Choice Award), a small, framed piece of hand-sewn ribbonwork by Ruby Malinski-Shoemaker, a colored pencil drawing of a ribbonworked cradleboard by Hazel Malinski-Shoemaker, and an elm bark bas-

ket by Dani Tippmann. Mayaawi teepe to these artists for submitting entries that the myaamia community can enjoy for years to come!

The last special prize awarded was for an entry that best represented the theme of myaamia ribbonwork. The judges chose a gorget made by Scott Shoemaker. The gorget uses red and black silk to create a vertical ribbonwork pattern in the shape of a gorget that would have traditionally been metal. The judges appreciated the way Shoemaker reimagined the gorget form and how ribbonwork can be used in new ways.

Full results are here, and you can find photos of all the entries on the Myaamia Heritage Museum & Archive Facebook page.

Adult, Painting & Drawing:

Catherine Mowry, The Twau Twau
Dylan Estes, Chicago Waterfront
Catherine Mowry, Miami Moccasins

Adult, Photography:

Rachel Cirullo, Tapestry of Tradition
Donya Williams, A Sunset on Life’s Path
Jordan Williams, Fading into the Hunt

Adult, Mixed Media & Diversified Arts:

Kayla Becker, Kiiloonaa myaamiaki
Kayla Becker, Journey to a Better Earth
Catherine Mowry, Miami Corn Husk Doll

Adult, Textiles and Clothing:

Katrina Mitten, She Who Shimmers
Jean Richardville, ribbonwork punch needle
Rebecca Walker, Camo Scarf

Adult, Jewelry and Accessories:

Scott Shoemaker, ribbonwork gorget
Scott Shoemaker, ribbonwork earrings
Lolita Casiano, leather bag

Adult, Customary Cultural Items:

Jared Nally, silverwork brooch
Kirk Strass, cutting board
Dani Tippmann, Ribbonwork: Past to Future

Adult, Performance and Creative Writing:

Jonathan Fox, Weentamoolankwiki nee-
mankwi (they tell us what to see)
Greta Sirois, Smokey Burning Moon

Youth, Painting and Drawing:

Hazel Malinski-Shoemaker, tihkinaakani
Riley Seddlemeyer, eehkawaapamakihciki
(we care for them)
Caleb Nicholson, Shepherd Herding Sheep

Youth, Photography:

Josiah Dorey, mahsihtaakani neehi aamaawia
Jensen Dorey, Life Inside a Bromeliad
Nico Cirullo, Roots

Youth, Mixed Media and Diversified Arts:

Josephine Cirullo, Tradition
Josiah Dorey, Beaded Wall Hanging

Youth, Textiles and Clothing:

Ruby Malinski-Shoemaker, eehkwaatamenki
Josiah Dorey, Ribbonwork Hatband
Josephine Cirullo, Juniper

Youth, Jewelry and Accessories:

Josephine Cirullo, mihkawilo
Nico Cirullo, Bear Claw Necklace
Avery Scott, Ribbonwork Purse

Youth, Customary Cultural Items:

Josiah Dorey, mihšiiwiayi ahkihkwa
Lucy Nicholson, gourd rattle
Frank Nicholson, My Favorite Rattle

Youth, Sculpture:

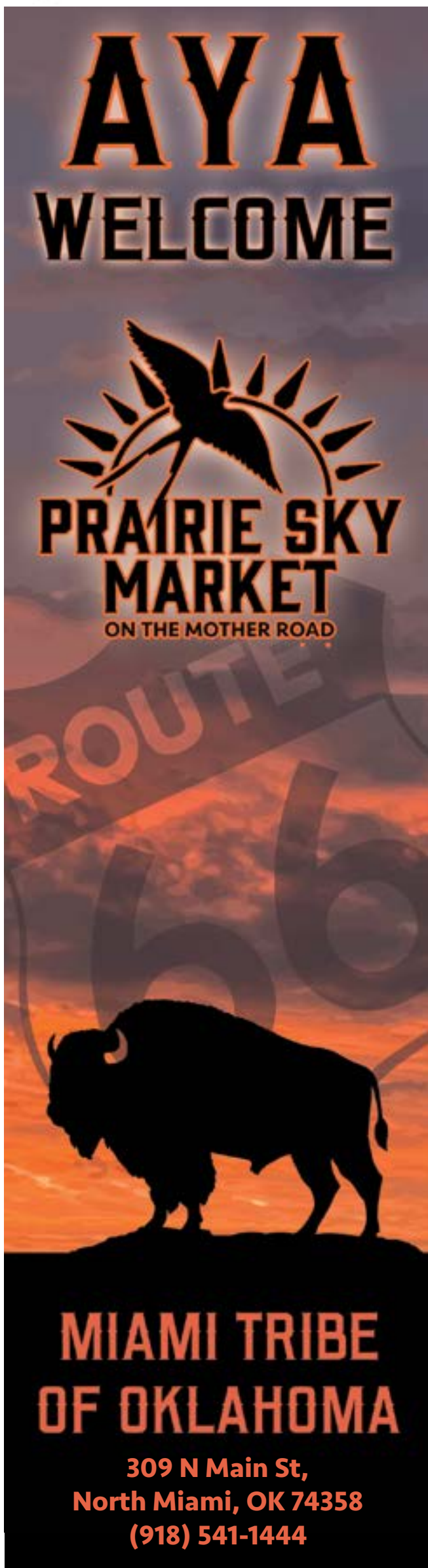
Caleb Nicholson, My Favorite Dessert
Riley Seddlemeyer, ahsenhkihkwi
Dakota Scott, Greeny



Adult Best-in-Show, “She Who Shimmers” by Katrina Mitten. Photo by Meghan Dorey, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Youth Best-in-Show, “mihšiiwiayi ahkihkwa” by Josiah Dorey. Photo by Meghan Dorey, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



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Interview with Kathy Carter Young, Curator of Awakening: A Sacred Story of Contemporary Myaamia Art

Morgan Lippert

MHMA Curator of exhibitions & Programming

Established in 2017, Crete Creative Gallery & School is a non-profit organization dedicated to arts accessibility and education. Located in Crete, Illinois, roughly 40 miles from šikaa-konki 'Chicago,' the organization operates out of the Crete Public Library. Along with hosting art classes, workshops, and art markets, Crete Creative curates six exhibits each year in the library's second floor gallery.

From May 9 – June 21, Crete Creative hosted Awakening: A Sacred Story of Contemporary Myaamia Art. Curated by Myaamia citizen and Crete Creative President Kathy Carter Young, the exhibit sought to not only honor the revitalization of Myaamia language and culture but also bring awareness of the Miami Tribe to the Crete general public. It featured the works of over twenty Myaamia citizens from across the United States, each sharing their own story of reconnecting with their Myaamia heritage and identity through mediums such as beadwork, ribbonwork, painting, and basketry.

At the very beginning of the exhibit's development in 2024, I had helped Kathy get in touch with Myaamia artists, talk logistics, and in her own words, "get her little ducklings in a row." I travelled to Crete in late May with my mother, and it was so great to see Awakening in-person after months of emails, phone calls, and Zoom sessions. The art was as beautiful as it was moving, and it makes me very excited for the future of Myaamia art. Kathy did a wonderful job—props to her and the rest of the team at Crete Creative for a great exhibit!

After my visit to Crete, I had the pleasure of interviewing Kathy about the exhibit and future plans for Crete Creative:

Morgan: What inspired you to develop this exhibit?

Kathy: I was inspired during a Scripps/Avid program conversation I had with Madison Angelo!

M: This art show is described as sacred. What about this art show is sacred to you?

K: The artists' stories are sacred. The art is a physical manifestation of their journey of discovering and identifying with their cultural heritage. The art is tremendous but when framed along with the story, it takes on a sacred meaning. The story is a glimpse into that artist's soul through their very words. In a mystical way, I truly believe it honors the struggle of our ancestors. The threads that were laid down are being picked up by the next generation. The stories live on and are moving forward.

M: The title of the exhibit is Awakening: A Sacred Story of Myaamia Contemporary Art. What was your own awakening like?

K: My awakening occurred simultaneously with my son Ian's awakening. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Myaamia Center, Miami University, and the university's Heritage Program. I had a little knowledge growing up about my dad's family living in Peru, Indiana, and that we were members of the Miami Tribe. I heard my parents talking to my aunt about pedigree charts and establishing that my grandfather was the orphaned son of Christine Mongosa, waapankihkwa, my great-grandmother.

That was my connection to the Miamis, until



Kathy Young presenting at the Crete Creative Gallery. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

I learned that Myaamia students could apply for a scholarship to Miami University. Our son Ian applied and was accepted, and he started attending Miami and the Heritage classes. Our world expanded quickly. Our family story took on a depth we could not have imagined. It was like being separated from a whole segment of our family at birth and being reunited years later. We had no idea about the removal. We had no idea we had family in Kansas, Oklahoma, and all over the globe. I cried when I first heard our language spoken by ciinkwia [Jarrod Baldwin] telling the Coming Out Place story. I have often said that the Heritage Program tells our children a hard story but gives them the emotional support they'll need to hear it, process the grief, and transform that grief into what I feel has become the Great Awakening.

M: How has this exhibit affected you as a Myaamia person?

K: Names now have faces with locations attached! I have been given loving support and assistance from my myaamia family that made "Awakening" a reality. (Nate, I owe you big time!) I have connected with "cousins" who have similar awakening stories; some knew more than I did, but we all gained insight as our students came home from Miami with more information to share. I noticed we seem to share this crazy sense of humor; I identified a myaamia family trait! I am not alone!

M: Myaamia people live in a diaspora, spread across the United States. What does it mean to you that Myaamia artists from across the nation came to submit their work for this? What do you think this says about the strength/resilience of the Myaamia community?

K: As I have learned more, I am feeling my connection and commitment to the growth and well-being of my myaamia community. As a pastor's wife, I have been accused of having and using the "spiritual gift" of persuasion. I worked with a beginning list of about 8 myaamia artists. In my letter of introduction I wanted to establish some credibility with my community - that I could be trusted with their work and their stories. Once that relationship was established, and artists agreed to participate, they recommended other myaamia artists. Anna Collins, who is studying at Harvard, but in Europe when we connected, asked her Dad to send her art collage from California. It was amazing! Richard and I made 3 trips to Indiana. Nate Poyfair brought

Continued on page 4B >>



A case displaying art created by various Myaamia artists and featuring different mediums and skillsets. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

<< *Continued from page 3B*

artwork from Miami, Oklahoma. It was incredibly humbling. The time was right. Myaamia artists caught the vision.

M: What has the response been by non-Myaamia visitors?

K: A retired docent from the Chicago Art Institute sat in stunned silence with tears in his eyes when I showed him the dirt from Seven Pillars in the pocket of the ribbonwork skirt made by my cousin Becky Pugh-Musser. He said he had no idea when I told him about the myaamia removal in 1846. A gallery director from a neighboring community said how truly sacred it felt seeing the artwork and reading the stories. A homeschool class made ribbonwork bookmarks and laughed at Cathy Mowry’s depiction of Fox tricking Wolf. The Crete Public Library Director has nothing but praise for the exhibit, and the other librarians have said it feels like it’s museum quality. Humbling for sure.

M: What has the response been by your Myaamia relatives, both artists and visitors?

K: My daughter was very impacted when all the myaamiaki present introduced themselves

in myaamia before caahceensa [George Ironstrack] and ciinkwia [Jarrid Baldwin] spoke. Megan Sekulich was impressed with the 35 foot chalk mural of her depiction of the Coming Out Story. Everyone seemed to like the fry bread, corn soup & blueberry corn meal muffins my Italian friend made for the opening. The recipes came in the package with our myaamia calendar. Greta Sirois’ story has been particularly moving by all who read it.

M: Why is it important to have Myaamia representation in places like the Chicagoland area that are far away from the government seat in Oklahoma?

K: This area is our native home. We are a resilient people and have realized home is where community is. But this is where removal took place. We have ancient graves and sacred sites here. Our stories come from this area. Our ancestors were forced to travel to a new place with this dirt in their pockets. This is our history and it needs to be told in this area, the area around šikaakonki ‘Chicago.’ It needs to be told where the hurt happened. It needs to be told so healing can continue to take place.

M: What do you see as the future of Myaamia art?

K: I think the creative thread will continue to be picked up and moved forward. We are learning from the old ways and adding our own personalities and stories into every thread and brush stroke. Art is being created by methods that our ancestors could never have imagined. Like a story that can have many tellers...it’s not diminished but expanded upon.

M: What’s next for Crete Creative Gallery? Do you think another Myaamia art show/Myaamia content is in the future?

K: That’s a very good question. I have been on the board since the first meeting 8 years ago asking for people interested in an art gallery in Crete. I’ve been president for almost 3 years. My name is also waapankihkwa, white swan woman, like my great-grandmother. Maybe “Awakening” was my swan song? It might be time to hand the reins over to someone else. We shall see. If not at Crete Creative, I’m sure other galleries would welcome a similar exhibit. Actually, I’m sure of it.



Other items created by Myaamia artists on display in the Awakening exhibit at the Crete Creative Gallery. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Myaamia artists at Taste of the Arts Festival in Fort Wayne

Morgan Lippert
MHF Board Member

On Saturday August 23, the Myaamia Heritage Foundation (MHF) sponsored booths for Myaamia artists Doug Peconge, Dani Tippmann, and Megan Sekulich at the 17th Annual Taste of the Arts Festival in Kiihkayonki ‘Fort Wayne, Indiana.’

Along with selling some pieces of their work, the artists also led demonstrations and shared with festivalgoers information about their respective crafts and areas of expertise. Dani, along with her daughter Ingrid Nicholson and granddaughter Cecilia Nicholson, shared with visitors the process of making traditional Myaamia elm bark baskets, and Megan demonstrated how she makes fingerwoven keychains and belts. With the help of Dani’s grandson Frank Nicholson, Doug shared with visitors how he creates traditional Myaamia lacrosse sticks.

The festival provided a valuable platform for Myaamia artists to gain recognition and to educate the broader community about Myaamia art and the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. Through this event, MHF was able to connect with non-Myaamia neighbors and raise awareness of the Tribe’s presence, culture, and history.

About the Myaamia Heritage Foundation

Founded in 2024 by tribal leadership, the Myaamia Heritage Foundation (MHF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established under the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Non-Profit Corporations Act with the mission of “providing opportunities for Myaamiaki to share cultural knowledge with each other and their communities.” The Foundation is dedicated to supporting the cultural revitalization efforts of the Miami Tribe, and seeks to promote and fund research that advances Myaamia cultural knowledge, support Myaamia artists and scholars, and provide educational opportunities for both Myaamia citizens and the general public. Through its initiatives, the Foundation encourages greater awareness and understanding of Myaamia history, language, and traditions. MHF is committed to fostering cultural education, preserving Myaamia heritage, and strengthening community engagement through programs, events, and collaborative partnerships. For more information, visit miamination.com/myaamia-heritage-foundation/



Myaamia artist Megan Sekulich displaying and demonstrating fingerweaving. Myaamia Heritage Foundation.



Dani Tippmann displaying and demonstrating elm bark basket making with her daughter and grand-daughter. Myaamia Heritage Foundation.



Doug Peconge displaying and demonstrating how he creates traditional lacrosse sticks. Myaamia Heritage Foundation.



Revitalizing Myaamia Lacrosse

aacimotaatiiyankwi, April 16, 2025

George Ironstrack

Education Director, Myaamia Center

On June 28, 2019, almost sixty Myaamia-ki ‘Myaamia people’ took to the field ready for a fierce game of peekitahaminki ‘stickball/lacrosse.’ For the first time in over two hundred years, each player was holding a wooden pakitahaakani ‘lacrosse stick’ made by a member of their community. The crowd quickly divided into two teams and gathered at the center of the ball field to hear a short speech that focused everyone on the importance of the day. It had taken over two decades of work to arrive at that day, and the positive energy generated by that game is still rippling forward, impacting the Myaamia community in a positive way.

What follows is a recounting of my personal experience participating in the revitalization of peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’. I do my best to describe my role in this story, and the important roles played by other Myaamiaki as well as friends and allies from other communities. I apologize if I’ve left anyone or anything out of this story, and encourage community members who were a part of the process to correct or add anything through the comments feature on this blog.

More than two thousand persons assembled in a great plain, each with his own racket; and a wooden ball, as large as a tennis-ball, was thrown into the air. Then all that could be seen was the flourishes and motion through the air of all those rackets, which made a noise like that of weapons which is heard in a battle. Half of all those...endeavored to send the ball in the direction of the northwest, the length of the plain, and the others tried to make it go to the southeast; the strife, which lasted half an hour, was doubtful.

—Nicolas Perrot, 1667

Beginnings

In the mid-1990s, I began attending Myaamia language and culture camps with noohsa ‘my father’ George Strack. At these camps, I met many of the people who are still central to my life today as a Myaamia person. Daryl Baldwin, the primary teacher of Myaamiaataweenki ‘Myaamia language,’ was one of those people. At one of these early camps, Daryl asked Scott Shoemaker and me to help with organizing chil-

dren’s games that we could play while using the language.

In the process of researching the history of Myaamia games, I bought a copy of Steward Culin’s Games of the North American Indians. Culin’s volume includes descriptions of many different Myaamia games. Each entry usually includes a short quote or snippet from a primary source describing Myaamia people playing each game. Culin’s book includes two quotes describing Myaamia peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ and many really good images of the type of pakitahaakana ‘lacrosse sticks’ used by our ancestors. I remember being blown away by one of Nicolas Perrot’s quotes (see above). Over two thousand players in one game! Even if Perrot was exaggerating a little, which he likely was, it still painted an impressive picture in my imagination. At the time, we didn’t have the equipment necessary to teach peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ at our language camps, but the seed of an idea had been planted. This was long before YouTube and Amazon.com, so learning how to do something and acquiring the right equipment took a bit more effort than it does today.

A few years later, I began my studies to become a high school history teacher at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC). One day, while walking to class on a crowded sidewalk, I spotted someone in the crowd wearing a backpack with a lacrosse stick threaded through the straps. I chased him down and asked where I could learn more about how to play lacrosse. This is how I first met Andan Darr, who was just in the process of starting a lacrosse club at UIC. Despite having no experience, he invited me to come out and join the club’s first practices. Within seconds of picking up a stick, I was hooked. Andan and other more experienced players taught me the basics of the game and connected me with mail-order catalogs where I could buy all the equipment needed to get started: stick, gloves, helmet, and other pads. It was also in these catalogs that I found instructional VHS tapes produced by US Lacrosse, which I purchased in order to deepen my knowledge of lacrosse fundamentals (yet another reminder of how the internet has changed things!).

First Steps in Community

The very next summer after I met Andan and started playing at UIC, I brought what I was learning back to the Myaamia community. I quickly began to collect used sticks from local Play it Again Sports and eBay (which was brand new at the time). With this limited equipment and the little bit of experience I had gained, I began to teach others how to throw, catch, cradle, and shoot. When



Myaamia youth start a game of peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse.’ Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

we played at our language camps, we did not use protective equipment, a practice that we maintain to this day.

With time, more community members bought their own sticks, and our pile of community sticks continued to grow. Within a couple of years, we had enough equipment to play fairly large games at language camps, pow wows, and other community gatherings.

We found that peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ was a really effective environment for teaching language. Our youth were often shy about using Myaamiaataweenki in a public setting. However, if you threw them onto the pakitahamahki ‘lacrosse field’ and told them that they weren’t going to get the ball unless they screamed “miililo” at the top of their lungs, then, sure enough, they’d be screaming “miililo” like their life depended on it within minutes of taking the field. Over the years, our peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ vocabulary has expanded, and if you come to one of our games, you’ll often hear folks yelling “naaši!” ‘get ‘em!’, “maahanto” ‘scoop it,’ “ahtoolo” ‘put it (shoot it),’ and sometimes “ankihi” ‘kill ‘em!’ (said in a joking tone when someone needs a hard bump or stick check so they stop showing off).

By the time we started the Eewansaapita youth language and culture program in 2005, we had a solid group of young adult players and a really good sense of how to teach the game. We found pretty quickly that peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ was a big draw for our youth. Many of our young people, especially pre-teen and teen boys, told us that the game was a motivating factor for them to attend our camps. Eventually, they would fall in love with other aspects of language and culture learning, but peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ was the big hook that got them started.

Growth and Intertribal Competition

In the mid-2000s, our summer language and culture programs grew rapidly. This growth increased the number of Myaamiaki who would return to our homelands in Oklahoma and Indiana from our vast diaspora. As a result, our summertime games got bigger and more intense. Folks would often leave these games a little battered and bruised, but always looking forward to the next game. As youth who first learned the game at summer programs grew into young adults, the level of play in our community really took off. Some of the best games in our community occurred at Siipiihkwa Awiiki ‘Jane Drake’s House’ on the Miami Tribe’s reservation during the week of summer programs in Nooŋonke Siipionki ‘Miami, Oklahoma.’ These games occurred in the early evenings in the open yard under the pecan trees and drew in counselors and staff from the programs as well as other Myaamiaki who lived in the area. These games were half jokingly given the title of The Drake House Lacrosse League (DHLL) by tribal spouse Jonathan Fox. These Drake House games still happen every summer and continue to be known as the most competitive and hard-nosed peekitahaminki played in our community.

As our community increased in ability and desire to play peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’, we were also presented with a new opportunity with one of our neighbors: the Seneca-Cayuga Nation. This opportunity developed because noohsa ‘my father,’ was serving our nation as Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) and through this work became friendly with Paul Barton, who was serving in a similar capacity for the Seneca-Cayuga Nation. The two of them came up with the idea of bringing together our youth language and culture program participants with their youth to play a game of

Continued on page 5B >>



Youth from the Miami Nation and Seneca-Cayuga Nation play their annual lacrosse game together, 2019. Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.



Jody Gamble, George Ironstrack, Nathan Gamble, Logan Gamble, Joey Awanohopay, and George Strack on the Menominee Nation reservation in the spring of 2015. Photo courtesy of George Ironstrack.



<< *Continues from page 1D*
peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’. In 2012, the Seneca-Cayuga formally invited us to join them for a lacrosse game at their ball field on their reservation in Grove, Oklahoma.

These intertribal games include elements that help our youth learn about nation-to-nation diplomacy. Before the game, gifts are exchanged, ceremonial wagers are placed, and short formal speeches are given by representatives of each nation. This past summer, the elected leaders of each nation spoke about the importance of the friendship between our nations and the importance of the game.

In 2013, Seneca-Cayuga elder Patty Shinn made a beautiful yarn sash, which is used to keep a record of the game. Each year, the winner of the intertribal game was instructed to take the sash home with them and add a pin or some other marker to serve as a record of that year’s game. The sash is then presented prior to the start of each year’s game as both a record of the history of the game and a sign of the care required to maintain our nation-to-nation relationship. Sadly, Patty passed away in 2024, but the Myaamia community will never forget the important role she played in the establishment of this important game as well as how generous and kind she was to our people whenever we interacted with her in the Miami, Oklahoma area.

Presenting the game sash

Our game with the Seneca-Cayuga took a break during COVID, but was brought back as soon as we resumed face-to-face summer programs. Peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ can get rough at times, but the game can help teach our youth that by competing together, we make each other stronger. Through this competition, we also hope that our youth come to see the similarities in our nations’ work to revitalize our languages and cultures.



The sash presented by Patty Shinn’s granddaughter, Abby Tarrant, at center field at the start of the 2023 game between the two nations. Patty is standing to the left of Abby in the photo.
Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Reclaiming Stick Making

From the very beginning of our efforts to revitalize the game of peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’, we knew that our community originally used the “Great Lakes” style wooden lacrosse stick. In 2015, we started down the path to reclaiming the art of making this style of stick for our community. We tried experimenting on our own making sticks, but it wasn’t until noohsa ‘my father’ met Joey Awanohopay at a stick-making workshop in Šikaakonki that we started making real forward progress. In 2015, Joey was the Director of Menominee Language & Culture for his nation (a position that he holds to this day). This year, Joey was elected to the role of Chairman of the Menominee Indian Tribe. Noohsa asked Joey if he’d be willing to host a small group from our nation to teach us his methods for making peekitahaakana ‘lacrosse sticks’, and Joey generously agreed.

In May 2015, a team of five of us made the trip up to the Menominee Reservation in Wisconsin (see the photo below). Joey was a wonderful host and over a number of days, he took us through all the steps of making a peekitahaakani ‘lacrosse stick’: harvesting a tree, splitting a log into staves, shaping a stave into a stick blank, steaming and bending the hoop of a stick, shaping the handle, and making the leather pocket. Each of us walked away with a completed stick and enough knowledge to run a stick-making workshop at our Eewansaapita youth program the following summer. To this day, we continue to be ever grateful to Joey for his willingness to share his knowledge and experience of stick-making with us.

Stick making on the Menominee Nation reservation

In the years that followed, tribal spouse Larry Hedeem developed a method for using eas-

ily available green (not kiln-dried) lumber. Larry taught this method to Doug Peconge, who works for the Miami Tribe’s Cultural Resource Office as the Kiihkayonki ARPA Project Manager. At the request of Akima ‘Chief’ Douglas Lankford, Doug Peconge took on the monumental task of making enough wooden sticks for our nation to play a large game using only wooden sticks made in the Great Lakes style. In the summer of 2019, we were finally ready to bring together the strands of two decades of work to revitalize peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ for our nation.

The “Big” Game

At the time, the 2019 game was one of the biggest that the Myaamia community had ever played. There were almost sixty players on the field, and their ages ranged from seventy-six to five. There were over eighty community members in the crowd watching that day. Before the game, each player selected a wooden pakitahaakani ‘lacrosse stick’ from a supply of sticks made by Doug Peconge from wood that came from our homelands in what is today northern Indiana and southern Michigan. The gathered players were divided into two teams, and each team was given a colored ribbon to tie to the hoop of their stick: one team had black ribbons and the other yellow. Black is connected metaphorically with both elders in our community and those who have passed on. Yellow is connected with the youth of our nation and thoughts of our future.

Once the teams were ready, Akima Lankford gathered everyone together and explained the purpose of that day’s game. He reminded everyone of all the work that it had taken us to get to that day, and he recognized key individuals who helped us along the way. He also asked all those playing to keep those who had recently passed away and our living elders in our hearts and minds as we played. He also reminded us to think of our youth and to protect our elders and the little ones when the game got rough (which it always does). Players then gathered at the center of the field and sang our community song, before the first toss-up got the game started.

I have very strong memories of this game, but for the life of me, I can’t remember whether the yellow team or the black team won. What I remember is how much fun we had, all the bumping and pushing, the shouting of Myaamiaataweenki up and down the field, and the beautiful sound of all those wooden sticks clacking off each other as the two sides fought for the ball. This big community game is always the highlight of every summer for me. At the conclusion of every summer’s game, I always hear our people saying that they can’t wait until next year’s game, and I couldn’t agree more!

It has been an honor for me to play whatever role I could in the



Akima Lankford addresses the community to set intentions for the game before beginning. Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Myaamia community members play peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ using only wooden Myaamia lacrosse sticks. Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

reclamation and revitalization of peekitahaminki ‘lacrosse’ for Myaamia people. Many of us had a vision of what we were hoping for when we began to research Myaamia games in the 1990s. Yet, I think it’s fair to say that even on our most hopeful day, we couldn’t envision the growth of peekitahaminki in our community and the strength that the game brings to us today.
ayaakwaamisiko eeweemilakakoki, aahpitesitaawi pakitahantaawi!

Stewart Culin, Games of the North American Indians (New York: Dover Publications Inc, 1975), 569. For more on the style of stick used by Myaamia ancestors, see Thomas Vennum, American Indian Lacrosse: Little Brother of War (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994),79-80. Vennum calls this style of lacrosse stick: “Great Lakes sticks.”

Listen to George discuss the revitalization of Myaamia lacrosse on the Neepwaantiinki Podcast



Neepwaantiinki: Stories from Myaamia Revitalization Podcast

Scan with your phone camera to learn more.





Operation Feather Give

Nate Poyfair

ARPA Project Manager, Cultural Resources Office

Aya ceeki. In May 2025, members of the Miami Tribe leadership and the Cultural Resources Office received an invitation from the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma to visit their Grey Snow Eagle House and to participate in their new program, Operation Feather Give.

Operation Feather Give, a program developed by the Iowa Tribe through their rescue facility, the Grey Snow Eagle House, was designed to help facilitate the establishment of new relationships with tribes in Oklahoma and eventually, outside of the state. Operation Feather Give is designed to gift 25 brown and white Bald Eagle feathers to cultural and political leaders of tribes to help facilitate the availability and use of such items. As eagle feathers are used in various forms of regalia, religious uses, funerary purposes, and other aspects of native cultures, the Iowa Tribe created this program of gifting feathers to develop positive relationships and assist other nations in obtaining feathers for such uses.

On May 28th, 2025, Business Committee members Doug Lankford, Donya Williams, and Tera Hatley, as well as Cultural Resources Office employees Julie Olds and Nate Poyfair, were invited to visit the Grey Snow Eagle House in Perkins, Oklahoma. Here, we received an excellent tour of the rescue facility by Aviary Assistant Director Ashley Lone Tree, which got us very close to Bald and Golden Eagle rescues. Here, we learned how the Grey Eagle Snow House rescues, rehabilitates, and, if possible, prepares for release large birds of prey that have been brought to their care.

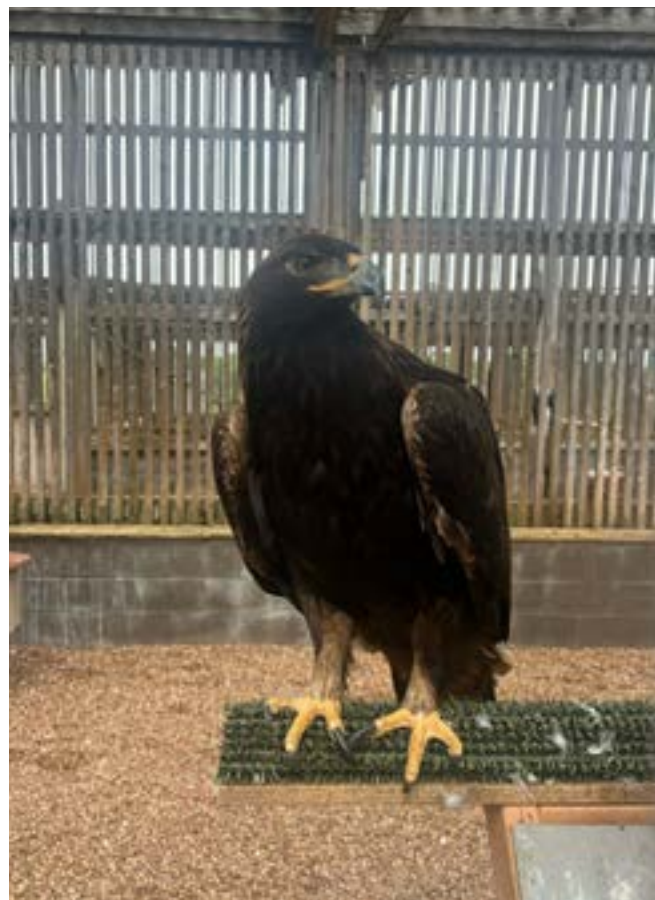
Following our tour, we met in the Conference Room with Ayla Medrano (organizer of our visit), Abraham Lincoln (Iowa Tribal Leader), Megan Judkins (Aviary Director), and Ashley Lonetree, where we then engaged in the feather give. Graciously, Mr. Lincoln offered kind words and for us to receive the gifted feathers, where tribal leadership returned this generosity with a Special Edition Myaamia-themed 8th Generation Blanket. Although brief, this exchange of gifts, especially the overwhelming way that the tribe was received at Grey Eagle Snow House, was a wonderful experience for all involved.

Tribal leadership and cultural leaders hope that this interaction and reaching out with generous hearts will develop into a growing relationship and friendship with the Iowa people in the near future. A special neewe ‘thanks’ should be given to Ayla Medrano for working so hard with us on scheduling and arranging this meeting. Abraham Lincoln, Megan Judkins, and Ashley Lone Tree were excellent hosts as well, and we will never forget their graciousness and inviting nature at their facility.



Bald Eagle at the Grey Snow Eagle House.

Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Golden Eagle at the Grey Snow Eagle House.

Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Akima ‘chief’ Lankford with Iowa Tribal leader, Abraham Lincoln. Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



LtoR: Julie Olds, Akima ‘chief’ Lankford, Donya Williams, and Abraham Lincoln. Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Iowa Tribal leader, Abraham Lincoln. Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Myaamia Artists and Cultural Staff Invited to Ganondagan

Nate Poyfair

ARPA Project Manager, Cultural Resources Office

July 2025: Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Artists and Cultural leaders participated in a cultural exchange at the Indigenous Music and Arts Festival at Ganondagan State Historic Site.

What is Ganondagan?

Ganondagan State Historic Site, located in Victor, New York, is the site of a historic Seneca Town, also known as “White Town,” which also means the “Town of Peace.” This place is the site of a large 17th-century Seneca town containing an estimated 150 longhouses and buildings and upwards of 4,500 people. Miami people, with both peaceful and warlike intentions, have visited this place for hundreds of years.

What is the Indigenous Music and Arts Festival?

A celebration of Indigenous American culture and heritage. Haudenosunee and other native people share their culture, languages, songs, and dances, and interact with guests from all over the nation and the world. In this instance, Myaamiaki ‘Miami people’ had a tent where we shared various forms of artwork and

craftmaking, as well as discussed our language, history, and culture with visitors. During this festival, there is also music and presentations by visiting nations. This two-day event on July 26th and 27th featured exhibits within the museum, presentations, music, art and food vendors, and various activities for guests to learn about and interact with native people.

Who went to this event?

A contingent of Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. Myaamiaki attended this event to strengthen our friendships with Seneca people, as well as engage with and educate the public about our identity. George Ironstrack, Kara Strass, and Megan Sekulich from the Myaamia Center, Nate Poyfair, Doug Peconge, Logan York, Jared Nally, and Clau-



Miami people led on a nature walk by Tonia Galban. Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

dia Hedeem of the CRO, and Tribal Citizen and artist Scott Shoemaker, along with families and friends, attended this event as artisan demonstrators and teachers of Myaamia art, history, and culture.

Continued on page 7B >>



<< Continued from page 6B

What did we do while we were there?

Beginning Friday, Myaamia guests were invited to and participated in an Edge of the Woods ceremony at the edge of the Ganondagan State Historic Site. This ceremony is a traditional welcoming ceremony for Native people who have travelled to visit the Seneca people. Traditionally, guests are welcomed using a specific protocol to assure and give hospitality and safe passage. This ceremony holds deep cultural significance, and for the Myaamiaki and Seneca people, it holds historical significance as well. During the ceremony, Seneca orators invite their guests into the village by offering them water, messages of peace, and welcome, as well as exchanging gifts. This time, George Ironstrack returned messages of thanks and friendship in Myaamiaataweenki, the Miami language. We gifted our hosts a large wooden bowl with a ladle, as well as a bag of tobacco. In return, the Seneca gifted a beautiful amehkwa, a beaver-shaped bowl. This welcoming ceremony was emotionally and symbolically significant for all in attendance, and for some, the most important and valuable aspect of our visit. It symbolizes hundreds, if not thousands, of years of interactions with the Seneca people, and continues our good relations with them.

Following the Edge of the Woods ceremony on Friday, Ganondagan tour guides showed Myaamiaki their historical and art exhibit, and provided lunch. They gave us a guided walking tour of their property by Tonia Galban. During our tours, we learned more about the Seneca and Haudenosaunee peoples. We also shared stories, knowledge, and language about the plants and natural world during our nature walk. In all, Friday was a day of friendship, laughter, and learning for all in attendance.

On Saturday and Sunday, Myaamiaki gathered in a large tent with tables and displays intended for teaching and knowledge exchange. Each artist displayed various forms of artwork: Scott Shoemaker and Kara Strass displayed and worked on Myaamia ribbonwork, Megan Sekulich displayed prints and art, George Ironstrack worked on shaker cans for stomp dance, Logan York displayed and worked on hide painting and cone earrings, Jared Nally worked on fingerweaving and various forms of textile arts, and Doug Pecgone displayed and demonstrated the making of his lacrosse sticks. Nate Poyfair and Claudia Hedeen served as cultural and historical educators and assistants to the rest of the group. During allotted time slots, Myaamiaki also took part in educational presentations and stomp dance demonstrations. During these two days, Myaamiaki in attendance shared our language and culture with thousands of guests and our hosts. Both evenings, we were welcomed to the site of the Ganondagan White Corn Project for wonderful dinners where we interacted with The Friends of Ganondagan



Ganondagan staff, Seneca leaders, Myaamia Center historian George Ironstrack, and Second Council-person, Nate Poyfair following the Edge of the Woods Ceremony. Photo courtesy of Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

volunteers and employees of the Art and Culture Center.

The large festival, which hosted dozens of food and art vendors, as well as musicians and cultural leaders from multiple indigenous nations, made for a wonderful weekend of sharing and learning. During this event, Myaamiaki were invited and treated as well as we could have ever wished.

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How to learn more

To learn more about Ganondagan State Historic Site and the Seneca Art and Culture Center, visit www.ganondagan.org. There, you can learn more about what the Center does and future events. There is also more information about the Friends of Ganondagan and the White Corn Project. For more information regarding this visit, see the Ganondagan State Historic Site Facebook page for recordings of the Original Peoples Podcast and the Myaamiaki and Seneca interviews during this event.



Young tribal citizen participating in lacrosse demonstration. Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Neewe to All Involved

As there are too many people to list and thank individually, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma Cultural Resources Office and Business Committee would like to say neewe ‘thank you’ to the Ganondagan State Historic Site and the Friends of Ganondagan for their wonderful welcoming, hospitality, and the time they took to make all Myaamiaki in attendance feel so cared for. During the Edge of the Woods Ceremony, we extend our gratitude to leaders of the Seneca Nation, Jamie Jacobs, Peter Jemison, and Michael Galban, as well as all of the Haudenosaunee in attendance, for their warm welcome, their time, and hospitality.



Jared Nally providing instruction on fingerweaving. Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Ganondagan Staff provide tour and information regarding exhibits. Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Doug Pecgone brought lacrosse sticks for learning and demonstrations. Photo by Nate Poyfair, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Myaamionki Kiihkayonki Peehkahkionki – Land of the Myaamiaki – the Beautiful Place - Fort Wayne, Indiana

Robin Lash

General Council

In August 2021, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma purchased 45-acres on Fritz Road in Fort Wayne as the site of a Cultural Resources Extension Office (CREO) serving the Tribe’s 1,200 enrolled members living in and around Kiihkayonki – Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Fritz Road property provides a working location for the Tribe’s cultural resource staff in furtherance of its Food Security and Myaamia Learning Recovery Projects. The Tribe’s name for the property is Peehkahkionki, meaning “the Beautiful Place,” because of its lovely, wooded areas, large fishing pond and rolling grass expanses.

The dedication of Peehkahkionki for CREO activities represents a historical step in the return of the Tribe to its homelands that began in 2014 when the Tribe acquired property on Trentman Road in Fort Wayne and established a governmental presence through its CREO. The governmental and cultural presence at that location were incredibly successful, serving an enrolled membership hungry for close connection to their Tribe. The overwhelming response meant that the CREO quickly outgrew the Trentman Road location which resulted in the sale of that property and the purchase of the Fritz Road land.

In 2024, Peehkahkionki was transferred to be held by the United States in trust for the benefit of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. The Tribe’s application to transfer the property to the U.S. made clear that the Tribe intended only to use the property precisely as it is being used – as a cultural resources, education, and gathering place for members. The Tribe’s application to transfer the land, and the United States acceptance, both make clear that Peehkahkionki was not acquired for and will not be used for casino gaming activities.

On this land, the Tribe recently completed the construction of the Myaamia (Miami) Community Center, an 8,000-square-foot building providing significant space for Food Security and Myaamia Learning Recovery activities. The Center houses a commercial kitchen to educate the Myaamia community about traditional approaches to food harvesting and preparation from on-property gardens and wild edible plants. A portion of the fa-

cility is developed as a quiet space allowing tribal members to observe the four seasons through windows facing the forest. The Center also provides space for tribal citizens to gather for community meals, tell winter stories, and conduct cultural workshops such as basket making and sewing ribbonwork.

Peehkahkionki includes open spaces to play lacrosse, plant big gardens to grow many varieties of traditional Myaamia foods, and has walking trails and dense woods with a wide variety of trees native to the area. The Tribe’s vision is to preserve, protect, and enhance Peehkahkionki as a diverse natural setting for the CREO and tribal members.

comply with all state and local codes and regulations and worked closely with Fort Wayne City Officials to connect the Miami infrastructure to city services. “We have a great relationship with our city and county governmental counterparts in Miami, Oklahoma,” said Chief Douglas Lankford, “and we plan to be a great community partner here as well.”

The Miami Tribe celebrated the restoration of Tribal land and jurisdiction by holding a Welcome Event in June 2024 inviting State, City and County officials, local businesses and neighbors. The Tribe shared its rich history and ties to the land, along with the planned use of the property for its cultural programs.

“A piece of our homelands is fully restored to the Tribe 178 years after the forced removal of my people,” said Chief Lankford. “Peehkahkionki is a place for our tribal citizens to reconnect with one another and to participate in the traditional cultural activities of our ancestors,” he said.

Fort Wayne sits within the heartland region of the Myaamionki, the land of the Myaamia people. Following decades of warfare and treaty negotiations, in 1846 the Miami Tribe was forcefully removed from its great lakes homelands, to lands west of the Mississippi in present-day Kansas and was again forcibly removed just 20 years later from Kansas to the Indian Territory, now the State of Oklahoma - ultimately occupying a Reservation and seat of its sovereign tribal government in Ottawa County, Oklahoma.

But the Tribe maintained its connection to its homelands, which continued to hold great significance to Myaamia people. The acquisition of Peehkahkionki, the development of the Myaamia Community Center, and the reestablishment of intergovernmental relationships with the city, county and state are the next steps in the Tribe’s return home, and a testament to its resilience as a people through two centuries of difficult times. Peehkahkionki will serve the Myaamia community for generations to come. It will remain a uniquely Myaamia place – a place of cultural sharing, learning, and being a people. “oowaaha niiloona Myaamiaki,” said Chief Lankford, “we are Myaamia People.”



A lacrosse game held on trust land at the Cultural Resources Extension Office (CREO). Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Myaamia citizens participating in a stomp dance at the Cultural Resources Extension Office (CREO). Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Because Peehkahkionki is held in trust for the Miami Tribe by the United States, the Tribe has exclusive authority to regulate the use of the property and will be doing so under Article II of its Constitution and its land use regulations. Nevertheless, the Tribe designed and built the Myaamia Community Center to

wiintanto wiintaakani ‘You read a book!’

New Book Release: Our People Believe in Education Now Available for Pre-Order — Includes Discount Code!

Official Announcement Myaamia Center

Our People Believe in Education: The Unlikely Alliance of the Miami Tribe and Miami University is now available for pre-order, and you can get it at a discount!

This powerful new book explores how two very different communities, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, came together to support the revitalization of the Tribe’s language and culture. What began as a chance meeting in the 1970s grew into a lasting, meaningful collaboration rooted in respect, education, and shared history.

The book provides a reflective examination of why this relationship developed and how it has evolved since the 1970s, when Chief Forest Old’s first visited with President Phillip Shriver at Miami University.

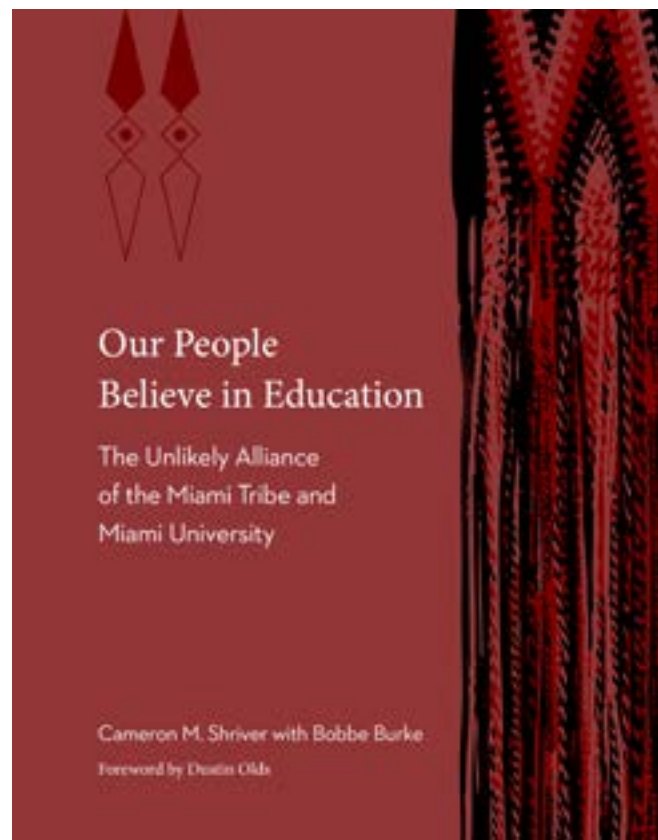
Author Dr. Cameron Shriver, a historian at the Myaamia Center and grandson of former Miami University President, tells this remarkable story with the help of Bobbe Burke, Miami Tribe Relations Coordinator Emerita and an honorary citizen of the Tribe. Together, they bring decades of experience, research, and personal insight to this moving and important narrative.

This book isn’t just about history; it’s about relationships, resilience, and the power of education.

Our People Believe in Education is a must-read for anyone interested in the university-tribal partnership.

The book is available for pre-order now, and the Miami Tribe is invited to use the exclusive author’s discount code: 6D40 for 40% off at checkout!

www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/nebraska/9781496237798/our-people-believe-in-education/





mihkaweelimaataawi ‘let’s honor them’

Peter Murphy recognized as an Honorary Citizen of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

At a recent tribal event held at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, the Business Committee recognized former Miami Nation Enterprises Chief Executive Officer Peter Murphy as an Honorary Member of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma presenting him with a Pendleton blanket.

Murphy, a successful business leader with a proven record producing sustainable revenue and EBITDA growth in major public and private corporations, joined Miami Nation Enterprises, the Tribe’s economic division, in early 2017 as its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Murphy, a former Navy Commanding Officer and Designated Navy Aviator, brought to MNE extensive skills in high level corporate operations including commercial growth, operational improvements/restructuring and integrating acquisitions, sales and marketing, strategic planning, finance and product development. Murphy immediately went to work improving MNE’s internal operations, implemented new policies and procedures, identified future growth opportunities, and charted MNE’s path for new successful growth and development.

Murphy, who served on more than a dozen Board of Directors in his career, provided guidance and direction working closely with the Miami Nation Enterprises Board of Directors. Although Murphy’s successful business strategies and strong leadership contributed greatly to MNE’s growth and success, it was his compassion and love for the Tribe that truly set him apart. Understanding early on that the Tribe could not match CEO compensation packages at the level of former companies for whom Murphy worked, he selflessly offered his services to the Tribe for eight years at a rate the Tribe could afford. He did this because he felt it was the right thing to do.

Knowing retirement was approaching, Murphy groomed Miami Nation Enterprises Board of Directors member and Miami Tribe citizen, Lance Theobald, to fill his position to take MNE to the next level. On February 1, 2025, Peter Murphy retired as CEO of MNE and Lance Theobald accepted the Business Committee appointment. Still committed to the Tribe, Peter Murphy accepted a Business Committee appointment to the Miami Nation Board of Directors, serving now as Chairman of the Board.

Murphy attends quarterly MNE Board of Directors meetings and continues to support MNE initiatives. Along with his wife, Joanne, he attends tribal events and activities. For Peter Murphy’s loyalty and years of selfless dedication to the Tribe and Miami Nation Enterprises, Peter Murphy is recognized as an Honorary Member of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Meghan Dorey Honored as an Honorary Citizen by Miami Nation General Council

On June 28th, 2025, the Myaamia General Council Meeting was held in the Nation’s Council House in Miami, OK. The meeting was attended by over 400 people, with approximately 225 voting-age citizens participating. Held annually on the last Saturday in June, the meeting is the highlight of the Tribe’s National Gathering Week events.



Meghan Dorey receiving Honorary Citizenship from Akima ‘Chief’ Doug Lankford and Secretary Treasurer Donya Williams. Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

The agenda of each meeting includes an open forum for discussion, and from time to time, presentations of a special recognition are included. In 1962, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma established a special honorary title to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the Tribe through their work or community service.

The first person to receive the recognition of Honorary Tribal Member was Edwin Rothchild, the attorney for the Nation during the Indian Claims Commission. The list now includes the names of 20 individuals who have been so honored by the community.

During the General Council meeting this year, Cultural Resources Officer Julie Olds nominated Meghan Dorey, Manager of the Myaamia Heritage Museum & Archive and wife of Tribal Citizen Matthew Dorey, to be honored by the community as an Honorary Member. Dorey is well-known within the community, having worked for the Tribe for 18 years. Along with being the manager of the Tribe’s museum, she also assists citizens with genealogy research and serves on the Tribe’s Enrollment Committee. She is noted for her work to establish the museum, curating significant exhibitions for the community, and the creation of the bi-annual Eugene V. Brown Memorial Art Show which showcases artwork by Myaamia citizens and their family members.

During the open-forum session of the meeting, Olds read aloud the nomination, saying, “I want to take a moment to tell you about a particular Myaamia spouse and employee. In 2007, the Miami Tribe posted a job for an archivist. We received a handful of applications from qualified candidates, but one stood out. The young woman selected, Meghan Jensen, with her master’s degree freshly bestowed from the University of Milwaukee, and her heavy Minnesota accent, came to work for the Miami Tribe. Little did we know then the immeasurable impact her move to the Miami-Peoria Reservation would make. I call Meghan aanchtaakia - a change maker. Her commitment to the work of building our museum and archive cannot be fully appreciated in our short time today, nor could I speak such deserving accolades without succumbing to tears. Meghan is an irreplaceable part of the framework of our cultural revitalization effort, a Myaamia spouse and mother, historian, and genealogist. She dedicates hours of her weekends and after-hours time to bringing us amazing exhibits, such as those currently on display in our museum. It is my great honor to nominate her today to be added to the unique list of Honorary Members of the Miami Tribe.”

Following the unanimous vote of the General Council and the standing ovation of the crowd in attendance, the elected leaders of the Miami Nation called Meghan up to the stage to present her with a Pendleton blanket, a gift of respect and gratitude. With the honor, Meghan became the 19th person added to the list of Honorary Tribal Members.



Peter Murphy receiving honorary citizenship from members of the Business Committee. LtoR: Second Council-Person Nate Poyfair, Secretary Treasurer Donya Williams, Peter Murphy, First Council-Person Tera Hatley, Akima ‘Chief’ Doug Lankford. Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

SIGN UP TO LEARN THROUGH THE MYAAMIA EDUPORTAL
AT ŠAAPOHKAAYONI at mc.miamioh.edu/eduportal



toopeeliyani ‘You accomplished it!’

15 year old lenipinšia-Darrien is USA All-Star volleyball player

Community Member Submission

Lenipinšia-Darrien Alexander (Leni) is the son of tribal member Brandi Hatley and grandson of Tera Hatley. A 15-year-old at Jenks High School in Oklahoma, he plays on his school’s volleyball team and is also part of a club team that travels to compete in tournaments.

Last school year, Leni received the All-District Player Award. Impressively, at just 15, he tried out for and earned a place on the 17-year-old USA All-Star team, which traveled to Madison, Wisconsin, for a four-day tournament in the summer.

His family is very proud of his efforts and achievements. We wish him the best as he continues in his academic and athletic career!



lenipinšia-Darrien posing for USA All-Star photo on the volleyball court. Photo courtesy of Tera Hatley.

Miami Artists featured in new “City on The River” Exhibit at Indiana University

Staff Article

Indiana University (IU) recently opened the fully-renovated Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology (IUMAA) on their campus in Bloomington. The museum held its first public openings last fall, but this summer unveiled an exhibit that centers the story of Angel Mounds and the indigenous people who lived and visited there. The exhibit was a collaboration between IU staff and several tribal nations, including the Miami, that began several years ago.

Angel Mounds is an established archaeological site on the southern border of Indiana, along the Ohio River. Though the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites manages the mound site in Evansville, IN, many archaeological materials traveled across the state to Indiana University, where they are now exhibited in the context of contemporary art from descendant nations connected to the site. The site was an important hub of life, trade, relationships, and ceremonies for those who lived and traveled there. The city was inhabited from approximately 1100 AD to 1450 AD, and is noted as a significant traditional site by many descendant nations today, including the Miami, Shawnee, Quapaw, Osage, Potawatomi, and Delaware. The exhibition tells the story of the People who lived there through material culture from the site, an immersive virtual reality experience, connections to the stories of contemporary culture-bearers, and art from Indigenous descendant communities. Myaamia visitors who visit the virtual reality theater may recognize the voice of the narrator, former Miami Tribe Historic Preservation Officer Diane Hunter.

Included in the art commissioned or purchased for the exhibit are works from Myaamia artists Josiah Dorey, Jared Nally, Doug Peconge, and Katrina Mitten. Josiah, Jared, and Katrina were able to attend the opening of the exhibit and provided short talks about their art and experience to the many visitors. Josiah’s triptych, myaamionki neehi siippiwa, was entered into the 2021 Eugene Brown Memorial Art Show at the Myaamia Heritage Museum and Archive and purchased by IUMAA staff while visiting. The set of three can-



Jared Nally with his exhibited items. Photo by Meghan Dorey, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Josiah Dorey at the exhibit. Photo by Meghan Dorey, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

vases depicts the homeland states of Indiana, Kansas, and Oklahoma, all connected by a blue line symbolizing the way water connects all Miami lands. Also included in the exhibit is a twined bag created by Jared Nally. The museum specifically commissioned this piece to represent the practice of weaving that would have been occurring at Angel Mounds during the period of habitation. Doug Peconge gifted a lacrosse stick to the exhibit to illustrate one way in which games continue to bring tribal communities together. Lastly, a beaded medallion with the IU logo from Katrina Mitten reminds visitors that IU is situated inextricably within an indigenous landscape.

City on The River is a permanent offering within IUMAA, so stop by for a visit if you are ever in the area! More details about the exhibit and planning a visit can be found at <https://iumaa.iu.edu/>.



Katrina Mitten at the exhibit. Photo by Meghan Dorey, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Hudson Ball Becoming A “Wrecking Ball” On Tulsa Golden Hurricane Defense

Staff Article

Myaamia citizen Hudson Ball is a true freshman this fall at Tulsa University and looks to get significant playing time this season for the Golden Hurricane. He was a standout defensive end at Jenks High School his sophomore and junior years, where he caught the eye of TU coaches. Hudson played both ways for the Trojans, playing running back on offense and carrying the ball very effectively. In 2023 as a junior at Jenks, he recorded 89 tackles and 14 quarterback sacks on a Trojan team that played for the 6AI state championship against Bixby.



Hudson Ball at TU. Photo courtesy of Ball Family.

A family move back to Arkansas found him back at Shiloh Christian in Springdale, the school he attended as a freshman. Playing both offense and defense at Shiloh, Hudson continued to grow and improve. Despite a coaching staff change at TU, the opportunity to pursue an education and play football there remained on the table for Hudson. By graduating early from Shiloh, Hudson was on the TU roster this spring and had an impressive spring practice with the Golden Hurricane.

First-year head coach Tre Lamb is excited about what Hudson can accomplish, even as a true freshman this fall. In fact, Lamb told reporters Ball is the true freshman most likely to contribute significantly this season as the Golden Hurricane look to improve on last year’s disappointing 3-9 season and be a contender in the AAC.

Hudson wears number 32 for the Golden Hurricane. He is the son of Annie Ball and Jack Ball, the grandson of Diana (Strack) Griscom, the great-nephew of Mark Strack and Ben Strack, the great-great-nephew of Priscilla VanAllen, and the great-grandson of Robert E. Strack.

We will be keeping an eye on the Golden Hurricane this season, and if you get an opportunity to watch him play, Skelly Stadium is a great smaller venue for college football.



Hudson Ball with family. Photo courtesy of Ball family.



Hudson Ball. Photo courtesy of Ball family.



weekintiiciki
‘They are married’

McGuire-Wray

Tribal member Molly McGuire married Christopher Wray on May 25, 2024, at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. The couple specifically chose Minnetrista for their nuptials because of the direct ties to the native history of the area. Minnetrista which was once the Native American settlement of the Lenape tribe, who called it Wah-Pe-Kah-Me-Kunk, Tetepachsit’s Town, and later, Munsee Town. In 1818, the Delaware chiefs of the area signed the Treaty of St. Mary’s, which gave ownership of the Munsee Town land to Rebecca Hackley, the granddaughter of the Miami chief Little Turtle.

The name “Minnetrista” comes from the Sioux Native American language (no relation to Indiana or the Lenape) with the words “minne,” meaning water, and “trista,” mean-



ing crooked or twisted. This acknowledges the village because it is said to have been located on the north bend of the White River, where Minnetrista is located currently. The land that Minnetrista sits on was also once owned by the Ball family, founders of the Ball Brothers Glass Manufacturing Company, which has further ties to Muncie history. The Ball family chose the name “Minnetrista” for their land as it can also mean “a gathering place by the water.” Today, Minnetrista and its grounds are open to the public as a cultural learning center.

peenaalinta *‘One who is born’*

Queenie Marie Brandt
June 3, 2025

Queenie Marie Brandt (Queenie B.) was born June 3rd, 2025, in Broken Arrow, OK at 7 lb 19 and 3/4 inches long. Her mother is Jessie Brandt and she has two big brothers, Logan and Brody Brandt.



Abraham Peter Dorey
Aug 26, 2025

Abraham Peter arrived early the morning of August 26th, weighing 5 lbs 13 oz, and at . His father is Matthew Dorey, Mother Meghan Dorey and two older brothers Jensen and Josiah that are excited to have another little brother.



waanantakhšinka
‘Lying quietly’

Brian Andrew Markel
Aug. 19, 1981 – Jun. 26, 2025

Brian Andrew Markel, 43, loving husband of Rosa Barocio Markel, passed away on, Thursday, June 26, 2025, at his residence.



Born on August 19, 1981, in Peru, Indiana, Brian was the son of Gregory Andrew Markel and Tamela Sue Peconge Lally. Brian honorably served as a Veteran of the United States Army for 12 years, with deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. He also took part in the humanitarian response to Hurricane Katrina. Brian was a Staff Sergeant in the 10th Mountain Division, the same as his grandfather. Following his militan service, he worked as a forklift operator at Fox Farm.

Brian was a proud citizen of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma. He had a passion for heavy metal music, especially Pantera, playing the guitar, and skateboarding, but most of all his greatest joy in life was spending time with his son. Brian also had a special place in his heart for his cats, Luna and Lyla, and dog, Courage who he enjoyed taking on walks every day.

Brian is survived by his beloved wife, Rosa Barocio Markel; parents, Gregory Andrew Markel and Tamela Sue Peconge Lally (Richard); son, Halen Andrew Markel; sisters, Sarah Markel (Joe), Laura Burtis (Matt); grandparents, Beverly Markel (the late Gerald); and many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

A Graveside Service was held at 11:00 am, Thursday, July 3, 2025, at Long Creek Memorial Gardens.

The family is at their respective homes. In lieu of flowers, memorials in Brian’s memory may be made to the Tunnels to Towers Foundation, 2361 Hylan Blvd, Staten Island, NY 10306 or to the Prisma Health Cancer Center, 65 International Drive, Greenville, SC 29615.

Condolences may be expressed online by visiting www.sandiferfuneralhome.com.

Karen Kay Peconge
July 4, 1942 – Aug. 21, 2025

Karen Kay Peconge, age 83, of Harlan, Indiana passed away on Thursday, August 21, 2025. She was born July 4, 1942, in Fort Wayne to the late Harold W. and Alouse (Wilson) Ayres. Karen attended Elmhurst High School and married the late Harold D. Peconge on August 19, 1972, in Fort Wayne. She dedicated 21 years to Fort Wayne Community Schools, and 28 years to the Fort Wayne Country Club prior to her retirement in 2007.



Karen had a love for animals and nature, whether gardening, feeding the birds, caring for her beloved cats, adding figurines to her elephant and angel collection, and trips to the winery. When indoors, she could often be found crocheting or in the kitchen - she was an amazing cook, particularly her fried chicken, and enjoyed canning produce from her garden. Karen deeply loved her family, always giving, always providing, and cherished time spent with them, especially the grandkids, and lived life to the fullest.

Karen was a member of St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church, Fraternal Order of Eagles Lodge 3512, American Legion Post 82, and Army/Navy Garrison 57.

Karen is survived by her daughters, Tammy (Richard) Lally of Mountain Rest, S.C. and Misty Peconge of Hicksville, Ohio; sons, Tim Peconge of Miami, Oklahoma; Thomas Peconge of Fort Wayne and Doug Peconge of Harlan; eight grandchildren; ten great-grandchildren; and sister, Dawn Campbell. She was preceded in death by her brothers, Donald Ayres and Richard Ayres; grandson, Brian Markel; and great-grandchild, Jemma Eicher.

Funeral Service is 10:30 am, Wednesday, *Continued on page 4C >>*

MIAMI NATION NEWS

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

SEND US YOUR NEWS



Something new to show or tell?
Share it with us!

The Newspaper relies on submissions from community members and MTO staff. Without your contribution this project would not be possible!

mihši neewe 'big thanks' for your continued submissions and support!

Submissions accepted anytime!

Share with the us by sending to
MTOnewspaper@miamination.com



stomp ribbon skirt guide

Learn to sew your very own ribbon skirt with the step-by-step guide on Šaapohkayoni, the Myaamia education portal.

Visit myaamiaportal.com to create an account and access the course.







By Adeline Fox

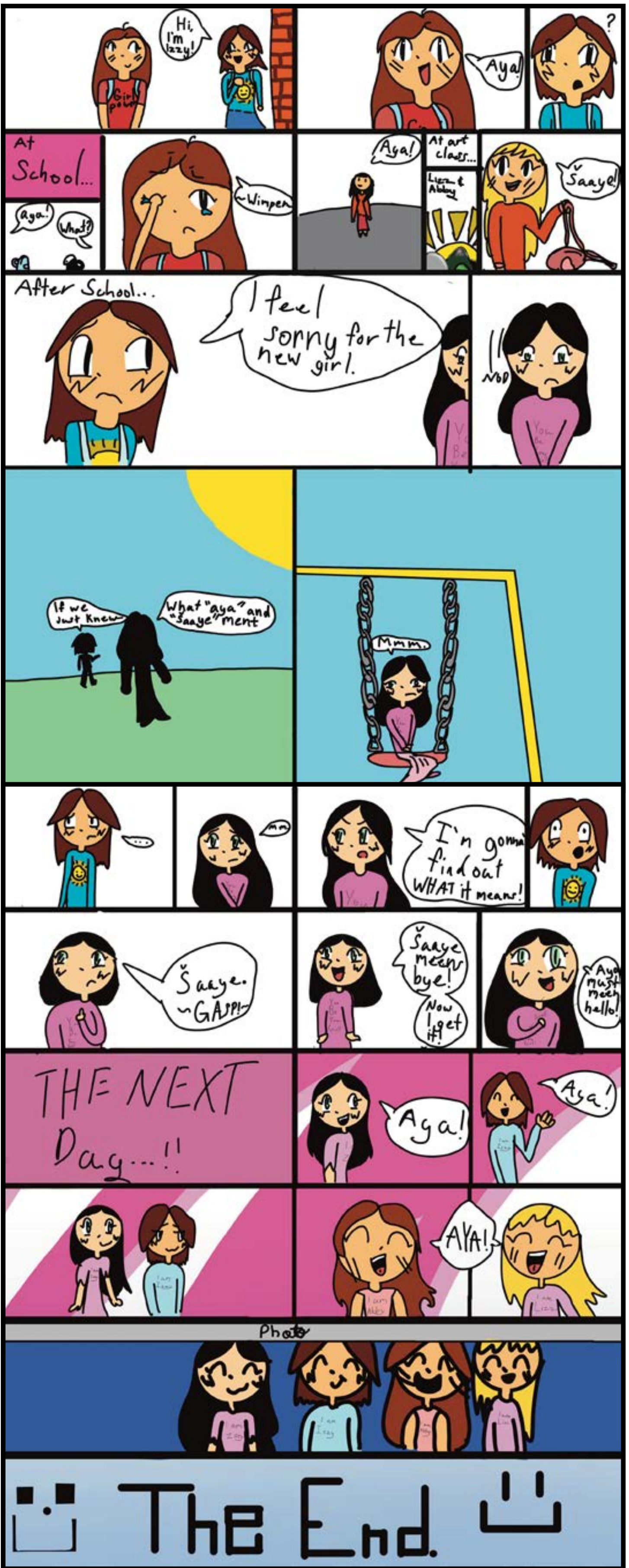
Memorial Contributions may be directed to Myaamia Heritage Foundation.

Programs for Tribal Members within the ICW Prevention Program

- For the car seat program, the child must be 8 years of age or younger.
- For the diaper program, the child must be 3 years of age or younger.

Applications can be found on the Miami Nation website (Services, Indian Child Welfare, Applications). Completed applications with required supportive documentation can be submitted via email to cevans@miamination.com or tgrayson@miamination.com.

For more information about any of our programs please visit the ICW page on our website or call our office at 918-541-1381.



Prairie Sky Processing Set To Supply USDA-Inspected Beef

Dustin Olds
Natural Resources Officer, NRO

As of September 1, 2025, Prairie Sky Processing is a USDA-Inspected meat plant. This is the culmination of several years’ work to make our homegrown beef available to all our families. While the original mission of the plant was to provide a local solution to the shortage of processing facilities relative to the demand for local processing brought about by the 2020 pandemic, we have been able to upgrade the facility, train staff, and make preparations to process and package our beef under federal inspection and remove all restrictions as to where we can ship or sell it. When a plant is inspected by the USDA, the meat it processes can be sold at retail anywhere in the country. In addition, it provides the highest level of food safety. If you own livestock and are a custom butchering customer, we are still providing custom processing as well.

With the establishment of the meat plant and Prairie Sky Market, we can now make the highest quality beef accessible to our families. The building on Route 66 that became the Market was purchased primarily to store and sell meat to tribal households, either by pickup at the market or through shipping to those households beyond driving distance of Miami. Through time,

the market concept grew into a place capable of providing other dietary staples, enjoyable foods and treats, high quality products otherwise unavailable in our community, and a place for our people to socialize, eat, and enjoy.

Much work has gone into making our beef accessible to our families. A great deal of work remains, but the overall goal will always include these elements: Production of the highest quality and best tasting meat animals through genetics, diet, and grazing practices that improve our lands; providing the best meat possible to our families at a price equal to or less than supermarket price for inferior meats; and sustainability to ensure perpetual and consistent supply.

By the first of October, our beef will be available at Prairie Sky Market On The Mother Road in North Miami. Tribal families will receive the best price possible. We hope all of our families within driving distance will purchase their beef here and pick up other foods while here. Those who live beyond driving distance can purchase and have it shipped. Even with the additional cost of shipping, we hope all our distant families can find better value in our beef than what they may be purchasing from supermarket chains. All cuts will be available in vacuum-sealed packages. Ground Beef will be available in one- and two-pound packages, while steaks and roasts will be

available single or double packaged.


The beef we produce is primarily grain finished, but all calves being fed always have access to unlimited forage. At times, fully grassfed animals may be processed when they have adequate fatness. These will primarily be barren heifers or young cows that did not breed back and have grown fat on pasture. If enough demand exists, we can create a steady supply of grassfed beef. We look forward to requests and guidance as to what our families are looking for and how we can best fulfill their dietary needs with healthy meats. We hope all our families take advantage of this opportunity. It has been a quarter century in the making, and we are excited to bring this to our families.



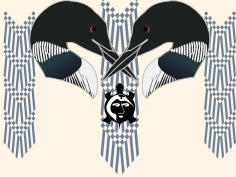
Photo of processing in progress. Photo courtesy of Dustin Olds, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Two new coffee blends that are a perfect way to start your morning and share with family and friends. Both blends were roasted and packaged for us by O-Gah-Pah Coffee from the Quapaw Nation so we offer them *mihši neewe* 'big thanks' for their help and support. Kocihsaapowi is available for purchase at the Miami Nation Gift Shop in downtown Miami, OK and at the new Prairie Sky Market, opening soon in North Miami, OK.

waapanekaataawi
Dance All Night!



aweentioni
Friendship Blend




Waapanekaataawi is a dark roast blend that honors song and dance traditions. This *kocihsaapowi* 'coffee' is meant to give singers, shell shakers, and dancers enough energy to enjoy our cultural gatherings all night. *Waapanekaataawi*, which is dark like *peehekanteeki* 'night' has dark chocolate flavors with various spices to produce a heavy-bodied and bold *kiitahsaminki* 'roast.'

As a dark roast, we wanted the name to be something that we associated with or evoked feelings of dark or nighttime. We opted for *waapanekaataawi* 'let's dance all night!' as a reference to dancing and stomp dance and also as an invitation to join us in dancing and celebrating all night. On the label, there is also a subtle reference to a story we tell: *peehekanteece*, *peehekanteece*, *peehekanteece* meaning 'it is night, it is night, it is night'.

Aweentioni is a blend of coffee designed to be enjoyed with friends and family. This medium *kiitahsaminki* 'roast' has notes of chocolate, caramel, and stone fruit flavor to create a soothing taste. Whether you are sitting around the fire telling *aalhssoohkaana* 'winter stories' or making your *sayiipaawe kocihsaapowi* 'morning coffee', this is a smooth and well-rounded blend that can serve any purpose.

Naming this blend was an easier task, as we always wanted the name to represent friendship, family, and community. We use *aweentioni* meaning 'peace, family, friendship' to honor our friends and family that may live far apart, but are still near in our hearts. With the *maankwaki* 'loons' facing each other and our familiar community symbol in the center, we hope you feel connected when you drink this blend.



**SUBMIT
OBITUARIES,
BIRTHS,
MARRIAGES,
GRADUATIONS,
ANNOUNCEMENTS
& OTHER HONORS**

SUBMIT

Photo resolution: 300 dpi
Minimum size: 3” x 3”
Formats: tif,jpg, pdf, psd

Tribal members and their family members are encouraged to submit detailed text and a color or B&W photo to newspaper staff at:
mtnewspaper@miamination.com

Miami Tribe contributes to this year’s TCAP experience

Staff Article

The Tar Creek Apprenticeship Program engages with tribal and community youth to develop a cohort of environmentally aware and capable apprentices, equipped to pursue further education or maintain a healthy balance of cultural and environmental perspectives when interacting with nature in the future.

Following the pilot year, the program continued with great success under the leadership of the program and through tribal collaboration. One student from the Miami Tribe enrolled this year, and the Miami Tribe also had the honor of participating once again through investments made by their Environmental and Cultural departments.

Throughout the program’s six weeks, the Miami Tribe facilitated several educational experiences for the student apprentices.

It began with the three participating youth visiting and being introduced to the tribe’s environmental and cultural departments. Their team members lead the students on a tour of the tribal headquarters, which included a history lesson with Joshua Sutterfield, playing traditional games with CRO staff, and a visit to the Myaamia Heritage Museum with Megan Dorey.

Later during the program, all students visited the Four Mile Creek Restoration Site and Miami Chat Base Site with volunteers from Blue Thumb, the Miami Nation Environmental Department, and Philip Cernera (Program Facilitator).

Traditional resources are also a substantial focus of the program. The students enjoyed a day of learning about traditional Myaamia ecological knowledge with Joshua Sutterfield and making Pinch Pots with members of the Cultural Resources Office, led by Julie Olds and assisted by Madalyn Richardson.

The students spent a day learning about the impact and importance of food sovereignty while visiting the Prairie Sky Meat Processing Plant with Dustin Olds, Second Chief and Natural Resources Officer of the Miami Tribe.

Finally, students participated in a lacrosse game facilitated by Doug Peconge of the Miami Tribe, following teaching on the idea of utilizing and understanding wildlife resources.

The tribe enjoyed participating and sharing knowledge and resources with students in the Tar Creek Apprenticeship Program this year and hopes to continue in the future.



TCAP opening day, 2025. Photo courtesy of Tayler Fraizer, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Doug Peconge presenting on utilizing wildlife resources in lacrosse. Photo courtesy of Tayler Fraizer, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



TCAP participants visiting Four Mile Creek on property owned by the Miami Tribe. Photo courtesy of Tyler Fraizer, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Navigating & Advocating: A Survival Story

Community Submission
Molly McGuire

According to the American Heart Association, the maternal mortality rate in the United States is also unacceptably high, especially among Black, Brown, and Native American women. Leading the way? Cardiovascular disease (CVD). It is even more alarming that 80% of these deaths are preventable. Simply put, CVD is the No. 1 killer of new moms.

Tribal member Molly McGuire is honored to be chosen as a representative for the American Heart Association's (AHA) 2025 Go Red for Women Class of Survivors! She is 1 of 12 women selected by the AHA as a spokeswoman to represent the AHA on a national level to educate the public on maternal health and pregnancy complications related to high blood pressure disorders, something she experienced during her pregnancy with her son, Michael. Molly learned about the callout for survivor stories while working to meet her fundraising goal for the AHA's Run with Heart 2024 Chicago Marathon Team.



Molly McGuire displaying her medal after completing a half-marathon. Photo courtesy of Molly McGuire.

Molly selected the AHA as her charity because her father died when she was a senior in high school from sleep apnea with associated heart disease, and her mother has also had a heart valve replacement. She didn't realize until she saw a post on the AHA Facebook page that she was also a survivor. In addition to the Chicago Marathon, she participated in the 2024 New York City Marathon, representing the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma in New York City as a delegate in the Parade of Nations Opening Ceremony. For her AHA photo shoot, she chose to wear a red ribbon skirt she borrowed from another tribal member because she strongly believes that "representation matters." Molly feels extremely blessed with all the opportunities presented to her since she began her running quest to complete a half marathon in all 50 states. Not only is she feeling the healthiest she's ever felt, but she has completed a race in 35 states

and is on track to complete all 50 by the end of 2026. You can follow and track her progress on Instagram @RunningRogueMama.

Molly says, "My travel and running events are for me; however, the information I provide to those I meet along my journey is for them and those they love. I hope that others remember my medical care ordeal with preeclampsia and HELLP. When you get as sick as I did, you no longer can make good decisions for yourself, and if your medical provider is dismissive like mine, then you must have friends and family who are aware and willing to step up and advocate for you when you can no longer do it for yourself." Early diagnosis is critical because serious illness and even death can occur in about 25% of cases. As a result, patient awareness of HELLP (Hemolysis, Elevated Liver Enzymes and Low Platelets) syndrome and how it relates to preeclampsia is necessary to ensure the best medical care for both mother and baby. Molly also wants to bring more awareness to the mental and emotional impact of a medical crisis. She thinks it's important to make sure both parents and the baby are all supported and have access to the resources they need. For her efforts, Molly was recognized in September 2024 as a Hoosier Health and Well-Being Champion by the Wellness Council of Indiana – Indiana Chamber of Commerce "for her unwavering advocacy and commitment to community health." She continues to set an example for her community.

Resources

HELLP Syndrome
Link: <https://www.preeclampsia.org/hellp-syndrome>

Note: Molly was diagnosed with severe post-partum depression, anxiety, and PTSD after her near-death experience and the death of her baby from severe preeclampsia, HELLP Syndrome, and untreated gestational diabetes.

You can read the details of Molly's survivor story online at Class of Survivors | Go Red for Women, <https://www.goredforwomen.org/en/about-heart-disease-in-women/class-of-survivors>.

Learn more at: Hoosier Health and Well-Being Champions Named by Wellness Council of Indiana - Indiana Chamber of Commerce, <https://www.indianachamber.com/hoosier-health-and-well-being-champions-named-by-wellness-council-of-indiana/>.



Molly McGuire and 11 others, pictured here at the American Heart Association (AHA) 2025 Go Red For Women Class of Survivors. Photo courtesy of Molly McGuire.



A group photo including Molly McGuire at a community event. Photo courtesy of Molly McGuire.



Molly McGuire poses with the Miami Nation Flag. Photo courtesy of Molly McGuire.



Molly McGuire advocating with the AHA. Photo courtesy of Molly McGuire.



ICW Department Events of 2025

Corinna Evans
MSW, Indian Child Welfare Coordinator



April 4th, 2025- The Brain Talk: Neurobiology for Everyone

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma’s Indian Child Welfare (MTOK ICW) cohosted a mental health event with MTOK CCDF centered around understanding neurobiology and how human behavior is linked to brain development by exploring what factors shape the brain. The presentation was given by Autumn Cooper and Julie Williamson from the Oklahoma State Department of Health. Invitees included area ICW and CCDF staff, OKDHS workers, area agency and tribal workers, and individuals who work in the capacity of children or families.

In addition to the presentation, MTOK ICW and CCDF were able to provide several self-care goodies to attendees. In total there were about 46 attendees from approximately 20 different departments/organizations. The feedback from this event was overwhelmingly positive and many daycare staff expressed a desire to bring the presenters back for future provider events.

May 31st, 2025- Completing the Circle

MTOK ICW, along with the other local area tribal ICW departments, cohosted our child welfare region’s (region V) foster parent appreciation event. This event is an annual event geared towards providing foster parents with tools, information, resources, and community while also providing a friendly environment for children. This is the second year in a row our area child protection team (Northeastern Tribal Child Protection Team) has hosted this event for our region.

This event had several vendors from numerous community providers. Powwow dancers were present to provide entertainment for the attendees while they were able to enjoy a traditional meal. Throughout the event, raffle drawings were conducted. The prizes centered around family activities to be enjoyed by the foster families. These prizes were provided by the various tribal ICW departments and other partnering agencies. In total, there were 29 registered foster families who attended the event. These are foster families that are either tribal foster homes or homes that are caring for tribal children.

August 12th, 2025- ICW & LLC Prevention Safety Event

In collaboration with CCDF, MTOK ICW hosted a safety prevention event with the children at Leonard Learning Center. The event itself was divided into two sections. The first section involved a safety presentation to the children ages 3+. These kiddos were given a presentation by MTOK tribal police officer, Mike Mullins. He gave a presentation to the children on safety, recognizing emergency situations, information they need to know to give emergency personnel, and how to identify safe adults. After the presentation, the children were provided lunch and snow cones.

The second half of the event involved distributing safety and prevention items to parents at pickup. Prior to the event, applications were sent home to parents for car seats, diapers, and identification bracelets. Those items were ordered individually for each family after receipt of a completed application. In total: 13 boxes of diapers, 23 car seats/ booster seats, and 35 identification bracelets were distributed. In addition, regardless of completed applications, every family at LLC received: a car truck organizer and window breaker (provided by CCDF) and medication lockboxes, child safety locks, outlet covers, and an emergency contact magnet (provided by ICW).

CONTACT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Health Mission:
Through excellence in public health nursing practice, we will empower communities to support a healthier, safer, and higher quality of life for members and their families.

Rachel Ramsey, RN
Email: rramsey@miamination.com
Phone: (918) 541-2175

The mission of the **Community Health Representative (CHR)** is to provide quality outreach health care services and health promotion/disease prevention services to American Indians and Alaska Natives within their communities.

Kaitlyn Luttrell
Email: kluttrell@miamination.com
Phone: (918) 541-1300

THE MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

Learn more online at www.miamination.com/chr-program/

Indian Child Welfare Program

Make A Difference Today!

In Oklahoma, over half of the native children in foster care are in non-ICWA-compliant homes.

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

Miami Tribe ICW is looking for compassionate, understanding, and committed individuals to play a key role in a child’s life. Every child deserves a loving home. By becoming an ICWA-compliant tribal resource home, you can help provide that safe and loving environment for a child while also helping to preserve their culture and heritage!

If you are a Miami Tribal member and are interested in becoming a foster resource parent or have questions, please call Corinna Campbell-Green at 918-325-9078, or Trina Grayson at 918-961-1395



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

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

Back-to-School Funds

Spring and Fall Semester Back-to-School applications will be mailed to all enrolled Miami Tribe of Oklahoma children from Pre-School through High School (ages 4-19 years). Spring applications will be mailed out in September of each year and Fall applications will be mailed in June of each year.

Eligible tribal members may apply for the following funds:

- ◇ **Pre-School** (min. age of 4 years): **\$50.00**
- ◇ **Kindergarten through 6th grade**: **\$75.00**
- ◇ **7th & 8th grade**: **\$100.00**
- ◇ **9th through 12th grade** (max. age 19): **\$150.00**

Fall Semester Applications must be **received** by

JUL 1 or postmarked by **JUN 17**.

Spring Semester Applications must be **received** by **NOV 15**, or postmarked by **NOV 5**.

We will not process late applications.

Applications must be filled out completely. Read instructions on the application carefully and make sure it is signed at the bottom before returning to the Myaamia Education office by the application deadline. If you do not receive an application, it can be downloaded from the **miamination.com** under Services, Myaamia Education Office, Back-to-School Funds or call for a new application to be mailed. Please ensure your address is up-to-date with the Member Services Department. If you have questions, contact the Education Office at **918-541-2176**.

To receive Back-to-School Funds an application must be completed for each semester. Checks will be mailed within 3 weeks after the Fall semester application deadline, and after Christmas for the Spring semester.

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

Scholarships

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma is committed to supporting the education of Myaamia people of all ages through the funding of scholarships and continuing education programs. The Myaamia Scholarship Selection Committee is made up of 3 tribal members appointed by the Business Committee and given the responsibility of awarding scholarships through a blind application process on behalf of the General Council. **All scholarship applications must be fully completed upon submission or the application will not be considered.** *Note: All scholarships offered by The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma are for enrolled members/citizens of the tribe only. Scholarships are available only for Spring and Fall semesters.*

Scholarship Applications

If you have any questions please contact the Myaamia Education Office. Donya Williams: **dwilliams@miamination.com**, **918-541-2176**.
**All awards are subject to change per the Business Committee.*

Fall Scholarship Application DEADLINE OCTOBER 1ST.
Spring Scholarship Application DEADLINE APRIL 1ST.

SCHOLARSHIP ON THE SPRING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION:
***CASINO/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AWARD**
DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility:

- ◇ Full-time undergraduate status (enrolled in 12 credit hours).
- ◇ Must have 2.5 cumulative GPA.

Award:

- ◇ **\$2,000 per academic year.**
 - ◇ Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester, or should be split between Fall and Spring.
- ◇ Pays up to eight consecutive Fall/Spring semesters (4 years).
- ◇ Renewable annually with Spring Scholarship Application.

Renewal Requirements:

- ◇ Maintain full-time status (minimum 12 credit hours each semester).
- ◇ Maintain 2.5 cumulative GPA.

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

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

Application Eligibility:

- ◇ Full-time graduate or undergraduate status.
- ◇ Must have 2.5 cumulative GPA.

Award:

- ◇ **\$500 per academic year.**
- ◇ Renewable annually with Spring Scholarship Application.

Renewal Requirements:

- ◇ Maintain full-time status (minimum 12 credit hours/undergraduate; 6 credit hours/graduate, each semester).
- ◇ Maintain 2.5 cumulative GPA.

TAX COMMISSION CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP
DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility:

- ◇ Full-time undergraduate status.
- ◇ Must have 2.5 cumulative GPA.

Award:

- ◇ **Award amount changes; awarded each academic year.**
 - ◇ Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester or should be split between Fall and Spring.
- ◇ Renewable annually with Spring Scholarship Application.

Renewal Requirements:

- ◇ Maintain full-time status (minimum 12 credit hours) or part-time status (minimum 6 credit hours).
- ◇ Maintain 2.5 cumulative GPA.
- ◇

If selected to receive a scholarship, only one scholarship will be awarded. When applying, check any of the boxes for which the student qualifies. If changing colleges after award checks are mailed, it is the responsibility of the awardee to recover the scholarship amount and have it sent back to the Myaamia Education Office to be redistributed. It is also the awardee's responsibility to notify that the school selection has changed and send the new information to the Myaamia Education Office.

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

CRANE AWARD

DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility:

- ◇ **Graduate or post-graduate student.**

Award:

- ◇ **\$2,000 per academic year.**
 - ◇ Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester or should be split between Fall and Spring.
- ◇ Renewable annually with Spring Scholarship Application.

NON-TRADITIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility:

- ◇ Full-time undergraduate status (minimum 12 credit hours).
- ◇ Must have 2.5 cumulative GPA (high school or college, whichever is most recent).
- ◇ Must be 5 years since completion of last semester in high school or college.

Award:

- ◇ **\$2,000 per academic year.**
 - ◇ Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester or should be split between Fall and Spring.
- ◇ Non-renewable.

FRESH START SCHOLARSHIP

DUE APRIL 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility:

- ◇ Freshman (apply senior year of high school).
- ◇ Must have 2.0-2.4 cumulative GPA.
 - ◇ This scholarship is for a student who does not carry a 2.5 GPA, which is a requirement for all other Miami Tribe of Oklahoma scholarships on the Spring application.

Award:

- ◇ **\$400 one-time award for Fall Semester.**
 - ◇ Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester or should be split between Fall and Spring.
- ◇ Non-renewable.

SCHOLARSHIP ON THE FALL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION:
VOCATIONAL OR TRADE SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP
DUE OCTOBER 1 EACH YEAR.

Application Eligibility:

- ◇ Must be enrolled full-time in a state-accredited vocational or trade school.
- ◇ Full-time undergraduate status (minimum 12 credit hours).
- ◇ Must have 2.0 cumulative GPA.

Award:

- ◇ **\$2,000 per academic year.**
 - ◇ Student must advise school if full amount should be applied to Fall semester or should be split between Fall and Spring.
- ◇ Renewable annually with Fall Scholarship Application.

Renewal Requirements:

- ◇ Maintain full-time status (minimum 12 credit hours each semester).
- ◇ Maintain 2.0 cumulative GPA.

Myaamia students reflect on internship experience that included sharing their culture at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival

Margo Rutledge Kissell
Miami News, July 27, 2025, miamioh.edu/news/2025/07/myaamia-students-reflect-on-internship-experience-that-included-sharing-their-culture-at-the-smithsonian-folklife-festival.html

For Mia Hankenson, participating in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in the nation’s capital was an unforgettable experience that exceeded her expectations.

“The energy, the people, and the cultural richness created an atmosphere unlike anything I’ve ever been a part of,” said Hankenson, who graduated from Miami University in May and is focused on applying to accelerated nursing programs.



Miami University student Pimyotamah Hartleroad, a Myaamia citizen, teaches young people how to play peekitahaminki ‘myaamia lacrosse’ on the National Mall during the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Hankenson is one of seven Miami students or recent graduates — all Myaamia citizens — who participated in the Folklife Festival in early July along with leaders from the Myaamia Center and Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

The Myaamia Center, the Miami Tribe’s research and educational development arm based on Miami’s Oxford campus, was invited to take part in this year’s festival, which honors contemporary living cultural traditions and celebrates those who practice and sustain them. Only four tribal nations were invited to participate.

The students shared their knowledge in four cultural areas: lacrosse, the myaamia language, ribbonwork, and gardening.

Hankenson, who majored in Kinesiology, loved connecting with other participating Native groups, including representatives from the Hawaiian, Alutiiq Alaskan, and Mohawk communities.

“Getting to know them on a personal level was incredible in itself, but what made it truly special was hearing their stories about cultural and language reclamation,” she said. “It was powerful to learn about the different paths we’ve all taken to reconnect with our traditions and also to recognize the similarities in our challenges and triumphs.”

Pimyotamah Hartleroad, who is entering their senior year as an Anthropology major with Spanish and Linguistics minors, enjoyed learning



Myaamia students stand together at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival Photo by Stella Beerman, Myaamia Center.

from so many artists and educators about their particular passions and histories.

“I thoroughly enjoyed spending time amongst the other groups in language revitalization because we share so much of the same passions,” Hartleroad said.

Hartleroad also enjoyed the unique experience of playing lacrosse on the grassy National Mall and teaching it to others.

“Showing the public how to play peekitahaminki ‘myaamia lacrosse’ showed me how unifying sports are for people. My favorite moment was when all of the language revitalization groups came together to play one big game on the field,” Hartleroad said.

Learning about Myaamia leadership

Participation in the festival was part of an eight-week internship experience for the seven students.

“As myaamiaki ‘Miami people,’ we are family and we look out for each other. We look to each other for guidance,” Hartleroad said. “I have made many new friends during this internship that I hope to stay in contact with and look forward to seeing again.”

Hankenson said she also appreciated the opportunity to strengthen relationships.

“Sharing this experience brought us closer, not just as friends, but as fellow Myaamia people,” she said. “We supported each other through challenges, celebrated successes together, and had meaningful conversations that strengthened our bond and sense of shared identity.”

It also gave Hankenson a much richer understanding of her own Myaamia identity.

“The experiences, conversations, and new perspectives I encountered throughout the summer pushed me to reflect on who I am and how I fit into our larger story,” she said. “I’m incredibly grateful for this opportunity. It was transformative in ways that I’m still processing, and it’s something I’ll carry with me for a long time.”

Hankenson said she also gained a deeper understanding of what leadership looks like within the Myaamia community.

“Throughout the summer, especially during our time at the Folklife Festival, we were given the opportunity to step into leadership roles. What stood out to me was how leadership in our community differs from more mainstream or Western definitions,” she said.

“Myaamia leadership tends to be more community-centered, humble, and relationship-driven, something I’ve seen over the years but hand’t fully understood until we explored it more intentionally during this experience.”

Learning about this leadership dynamic “really connected the dots for me and helped me reframe how I think about influence and responsibility within my community,” she added.

Hartleroad is looking forward to this academic year, with many courses centered around language and culture.

“I hope to take this time to work with people at the Myaamia Center to further understand what it means to be a language teacher and help in the efforts of language revitalization.”

Mia Hankenson ’25: ‘The energy, the people, and the cultural richness created an atmosphere unlike anything I’ve ever been a part of’



Mia Hankenson stands in front of the Smithsonian Institution Building in Washington, D.C. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Pimyotamah Hartleroad holds a handcrafted lacrosse stick. The Myaamia students made their own lacrosse sticks this summer under the guidance of Doug Peconge. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Pimyotamah Hartleroad holds a handcrafted lacrosse stick. The Myaamia students made their own lacrosse sticks this summer under the guidance of Doug Peconge. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Letter from the Director of the Myaamia Center - Fall 2025

Daryl Baldwin

Director, Myaamia Center

Tipeewe neeyolakakoki aapweeyiikwi ‘Its good to see you all back.’

This summer was quite a whirlwind with the Miami Tribe’s Eemamwiciki Summer Programs and a trip to the Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C. I enjoyed watching staff and Myaamia Heritage students engage in new opportunities by learning and sharing with the general public and other tribal nations. Since January, the Myaamia Center has added 3 new positions in education and technology. This year marks a developmental milestone as we begin the first stages of developing our first-ever technology team that will lead our work with the Miami Tribe community and National Breath of Life. This will increase our ability to grow our technologies as we prepare for how AI may support our work.

Just before the semester began, we welcomed the Miami Nation Enterprise’s board members to campus for their quarterly meeting. It was the first time they had met on campus, and it provided a great opportunity for us to share how our work has grown and what we see coming down the pipeline in the next few years. Over the last couple of days, I have had a chance to visit with our incoming first-year class of Myaamia Heritage students who will graduate in 2029. Some of them I have known since they were quite young, while others are new to our revitalization work. They are a great cohort of eager learners, and I look forward to observing their transformation over the next four years.

As we begin this next academic year, I find myself thinking about the strategic growth we will experience in this next year. Our first-ever full-time digital archivists will be joining us in early October to help us strengthen our ability to not only organize internally but also set the stage for greater ability to share content with our tribal community. Our annual Heritage Student numbers remain between 45-50 consistently, and requests for more learning opportunities from the community keep coming in. As the Myaamia Center and Miami Tribe’s Cultural Resources Office continue to work together in response, we are constantly looking long-term to ensure sustainable growth. Staff training, strategic planning, and ongoing fundraising are critical to sustaining the growth we are experiencing.

The partnership between the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and Miami University continues to be the foundation that makes the work of the Myaamia Center possible. The University’s long-term commitment to this relationship provides the infrastructure and academic environment that allows our research, educational programming, and community engagement to thrive.

Echoing what I have heard tribal leaders say many times - “it’s a good time to be Myaamia” - I feel fortunate to be embedded in our revitalization efforts. I am also further empowered by a younger generation that is feeding into this growth. The energy needed to support revitalization work has to come from a younger generation, and that is happening before our very eyes.

As we set our sights on the spring Myaamiaki Conference and celebrate 25 years of the Myaamia Center in 2026, we look forward to engaging with our stakeholders and lifting our hearts with pride for the work we have all accomplished together. As always, I am honored to serve my community.

Kikwehsitoole ‘respectfully’,

Daryl



Sign up to stay updated on the Myaamia Center and Myaamia Heritage Program at Miami University.

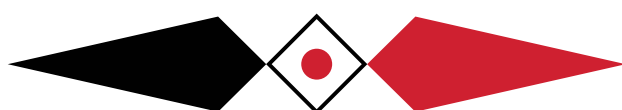


Scan this QR code with a smartphone camera or visit: bit.ly/3AY01w9 to sign up.



MYAAMIA CENTER

Questions? Contact Stella Beerman at beermaj@miamioh.edu



Why should I join the *Myaamia Heritage Program* at Miami University?

They offer full tuition waiver for Myaamia students to attend Miami University.

Would I get to take a series of courses to learn more Myaamia history, language and culture?

Yes! Are you interested?

For more info, visit

www.miamioh.edu/miami-tribe-relations



You can also contact Kara Strass at strasskl@miamioh.edu



This semester’s Myaamia Heritage Students welcomed to Miami University. Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Myaamia Heritage Program at Miami University: Fall 2025

Stella Beerman

Communications Specialist, Myaamia Center

This fall, the Myaamia Center is excited to welcome 48 Myaamia students to the Myaamia Heritage Program at Miami University, including 13 new incoming students. Myaamia Center staff are looking forward to engaging with these students in a variety of ways throughout the academic year, including the weekly Myaamia Heritage Course.

The topic of this year’s Myaamia Heritage Course is *Myaamiaataweenki: Myaamia Language and Culture*. Throughout the year, Myaamia students will learn to speak about themselves, their families, and their daily lives at Miami University in Myaamiaataweenki ‘the Miami language.’ They will also engage in thoughtful discussions about the importance of maintaining language and culture. During the first class of the semester, students will learn to introduce themselves and typical greetings in Myaamiaataweenki.

Myaamia Arts & Culture Education Partnership: Indigenizing Classroom Creativity May 16, 2025

Co-authored by Kristina Fox, Luke Meeken, and Stephanie Danker

In March, I (Kristina Fox) had the opportunity to attend the National Art Education Association’s National Convention in Louisville, KY. Bright and early on the second day of the convention, I joined Drs. Stephanie Danker and Luke Meeken in presenting about the Myaamia Arts and Culture Education Partnership (MACEP).

What is the Myaamia Arts and Culture Education Partnership?

In a nutshell, the MACEP prepares preservice art educators attending Miami University to learn and teach about cultures that are not their own. To accomplish this, the preservice educators work with Myaamia Center staff to develop lessons about the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, Myaamia culture, and an art activity inspired by Myaamia art.

Values

The Myaamia Arts and Culture Education Partnership centers a number of core values:

Community – Preservice art educators understand their work as teaching with Myaamia teachers/scholars, rather than teaching about or speaking for them. This is a collaborative effort.

Reciprocity – The Myaamia Arts and Culture Education Partnership aims to provide a valuable experience to the preservice educators in working with Myaamia Center staff, but also to do the work of sharing this knowledge with local elementary students. We aim for both the Tribe and the preservice educators to benefit from this work.

Cultural Appreciation – Preservice art educators learn to distinguish between cultural appropriation (claiming another people’s cultural practices as your own) and cultural appreciation (valuing and learning about another people’s cultural practices), and how their lesson design can foster the latter over the former.

Partnership Growth

In 2017, Stephanie’s junior-level Art Across the Curriculum course taught all of the fourth graders at one Oxford, OH, elementary school. The following year, they taught fourth graders in all three Oxford elementary schools. In fall 2021, Stephanie’s students stretched themselves to teach students in Oxford and at one elementary school in Cincinnati, OH. We have written more in-depth about these partnerships previously.

When Luke joined Miami University’s Art Department in 2023, the partnership expanded to include his sophomore-level Elementary Art Methods course. Now, Luke’s students teach the fourth graders in Oxford while Stephanie’s students teach fourth, fifth, and sixth graders in Cincinnati. These preservice art educators are also now spending two semesters working with Myaamia Center staff and teaching about the Miami Tribe



2025 NAEA conference with students that have participated in the collaboration and attended our presentation. Photo courtesy of Stephanie Danker, Miami University.

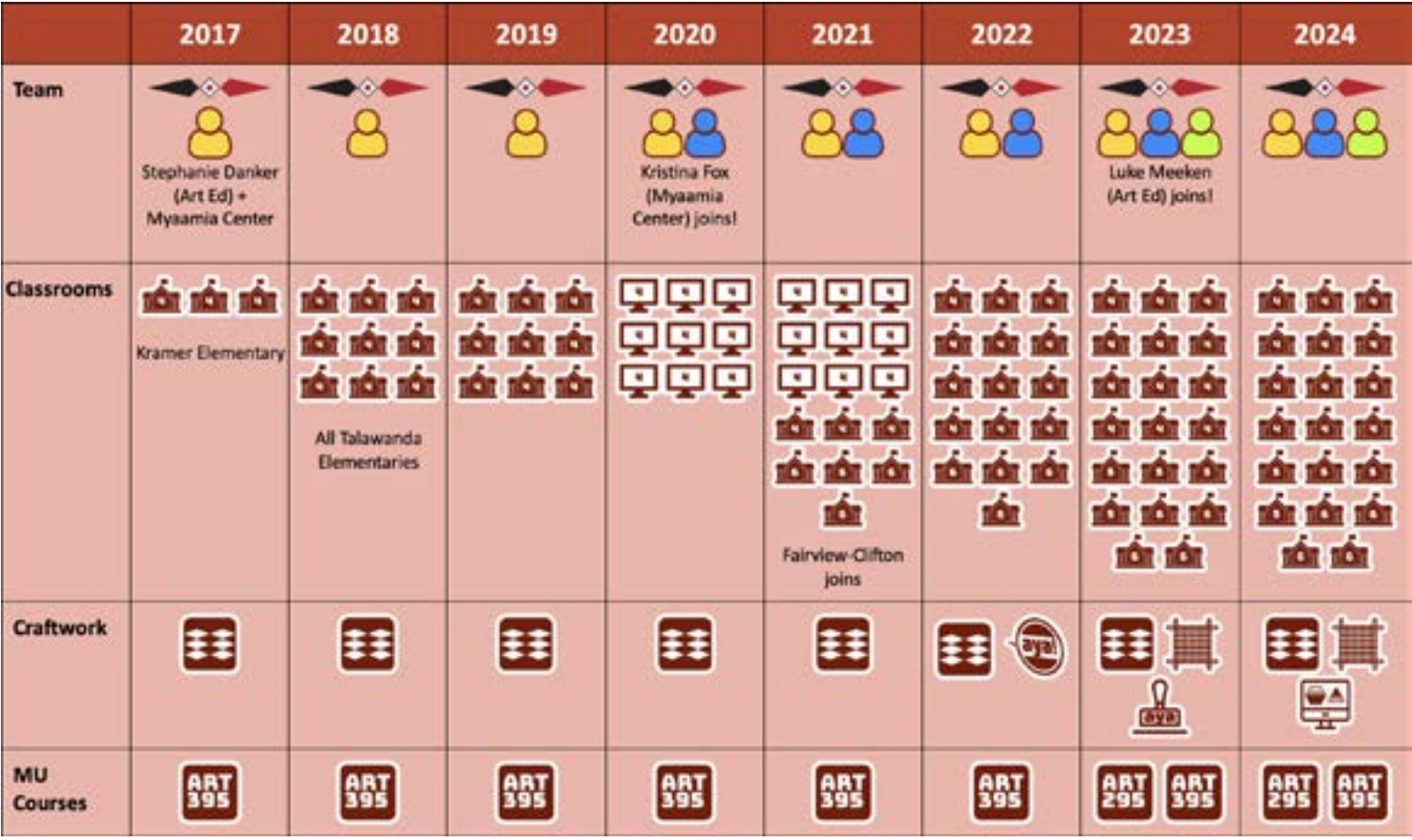
of Oklahoma.

In the fall of 2024, the fourth graders learned about Myaamia history and contemporary cultural revitalization, and made a craft inspired by Myaamia ribbonwork. Fifth graders learned about Myaamia ecological knowledge and made a craft inspired by Myaamia weaving (particularly the weaving and research of Jared Nally). Sixth graders learned about Myaamia contemporary art and Myaamia color understandings, and created digital artworks inspired in part by Megan Sekulich.

Impact

As of fall 2024, over 2,500 youth have participated in learning experiences focused on Myaamia art and culture. These include the classroom lessons developed by over 100 preservice art educators as well as adaptations of those lessons for community organizations, such as local Girl Scout troops in collaboration with the Richard and Carole Cocks Art Museum in Oxford.

The preservice art educators represent their work with the Myaamia Center consistently on their ePortfolio teaching websites. Their ePortfolios are developed throughout all art education courses to promote their work to potential employers. An outcome from a 2024 Howe Writing Center Fellows workshop, attended by Stephanie and Luke, was a statement co-authored



Infographic depicting growth of MACEP. Image created by Luke Meeken, Miami University.

with Kristina for consistent representation of the collaborative Myaamia lessons in ePortfolios. The statement was designed to share the intention of the collaboration without outwardly sharing all cultural content of the lessons.

The impact of this work continues to resonate beyond graduation, as preservice art educators regularly reach out to share how it has shaped their teaching. At the 2025 Preservice Art Education Conference, Stephanie moderated a panel with three MACEP alumnae and one current student. The alumnae, Molly Ensor, Ally McLean, and Kalee Grayson, acted as mentors to the class following their cohort, and the current student, Hal Loomis, was in the first cohort to participate in two semesters of the program. Molly shared how her MACEP experience has informed how she engages with Indigenous art and artists in her classroom. Hal shared how engaging in this work across two years (and two consecutive trips to Winter Gathering) has allowed him to meaningfully incorporate Myaamia culture in curriculum.

I am proud of the work the preservice art educators are doing with local youth and love hearing them share their experiences. I’m grateful for Stephanie’s and Luke’s partnership in this work and enjoyed sharing it with others at the National Art Education Association’s National Convention. Most of all, I look forward to seeing how this work evolves during our next iteration of the collaboration next fall!



LtoR Kalee Grayson, Molly Ensor, Hal Loomis, Ally McLean, and Stephanie Danker at the 2025 Preservice Art Education Conference at Miami University. Photo courtesy of Stephanie Danker, Miami University.



Save the date for the 11th biennial Myaamiaki Conference on April 18, 2026!

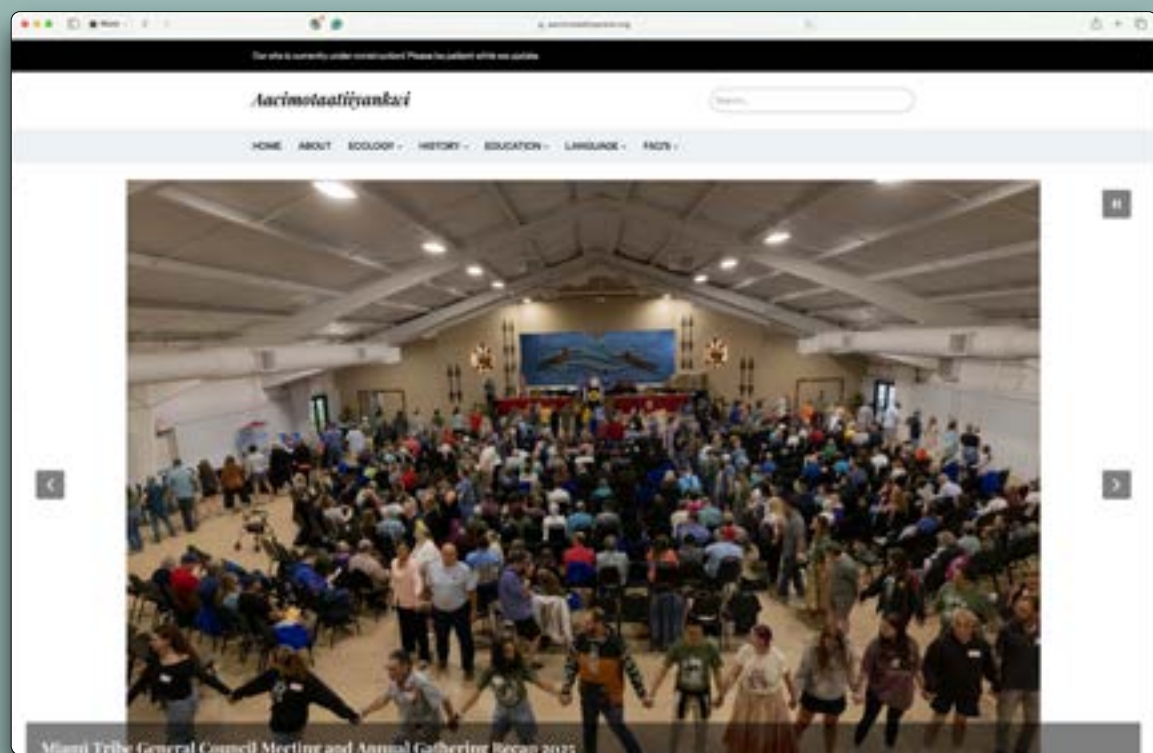
The Myaamiaki Conference is a biennial conference for Myaamia Center staff and colleagues to present ongoing activities that support the revitalization of Myaamia language and culture at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

The conference is a great way to learn about a wide range of ongoing research projects and the educational initiatives that continue to be developed. Information for topics, attendance, lodging, and more will be posted as it becomes available.

About the Myaamia Center:

The Myaamia Center is a research initiative directed and supported by the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, located at Miami University. The Center conducts in-depth research to assist tribal educational initiatives aimed at the preservation of language and culture. This research is used to create a wide range of educational models and materials for community language and cultural programs. It is also home to the Myaamia Heritage Program, a four-year undergraduate experience for Myaamia citizens attending Miami University.

Want to learn more about Myaamia History & Culture?



Explore online at
aacimotaatiiyankwi.com

College Students of Indiana

— Did You Know...

The Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission provides scholarships to Native American residents of Indiana attending an Indiana college or university?

Apply today!

For more information and application, visit:
www.in.gov/inaiac/resources/education-resources/scholarship-resources/



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Tribal members contact Tera Hatley at
thatley@miamination.com
or 918-541-1300

Dialects of Miami-Illinois: What’s the Difference Between the Myaamia and Peewaalia Languages?

David Costa
Linguist, Myaamia Center, May 6, 2025

The Miami, or Myaamia, language (also known as Myaamiaataweenki) is a member of the Algonquian language family. The languages of the Algonquian family are found over a very large area of North America, including the Great Lakes, Canada, the Great Plains, and the Eastern Seaboard. In writing about the Myaamia language, I usually use the cover term ‘Miami-Illinois’. This term was specifically coined by linguists to include several different forms of speech that are all considered to be the same language. Specifically, ‘Miami-Illinois’ is intended to include the speech of not only the Myaamiaki, but also the Peewaaliaki (Peorias), Waayaahatanooki (Weas), Peeyankihšiaki (), Kaahkaahkiaki (Kaskaskias), and any other Inohkaki (Illinois) tribes. The name ‘Miami-Illinois’ seems to have been coined in the 1970s:¹ it was created because there has never been a word in Myaamia or Peewaalia (or any other Native language) that takes in all these different groups. Using the term this way, the speech of the Myaamiaki, Peewaaliaki, Waayaahatanooki, Peeyankihšiaki, Kaahkaahkiaki, and Inohkaki are all assumed to be ‘dialects’ of a single Miami-Illinois language.

The word ‘dialect’ gets used in different ways, but here I am just using it to mean the various forms of speech of a single language, differentiated from others based on factors such as geography, ethnicity, social class, etc. For example, one can speak of different regional or ethnic dialects of American English, and in turn, ‘American English’ can be viewed as a dialect of English, and so on.

Deciding whether or not two different forms of speech are two different languages or just two dialects of a single language is often not straightforward, and linguists often struggle to decide when two dialects are different enough to be counted as two different languages. The most common basis for whether two forms of speech are two different languages or just dialects is mutual intelligibility: that is, whether speakers of one form of speech can readily understand the other. But this criterion is not foolproof either, since sometimes two forms of speech are not mutually intelligible to speakers at first, but become more so after a certain amount of exposure. For example, most speakers of American English cannot immediately or totally understand certain types of Scottish English if they have not been exposed to it before. However, these dialects quickly become understandable the more experience one has hearing them. For this reason, people might be hesitant to call American English and modern Scottish English “different languages”, since this would imply a level of difference between the two languages like that of English and, say, German, Dutch or Swedish, where massive differences of pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary are found at all levels, and where speakers of one can generally understand none of the other unless they are specifically taught it.

Viewed this way, Myaamia, Peewaalia, Waayaahatanwa, Peeyankihšia, and Kaahkaahkia are unquestionably dialects of a single language, and not different languages. This is because the differences between these dialects are quite minor, and speakers of any one of them can easily understand the others. This is explicitly stated in the historical records; for example, Charles Trowbridge, who spent the winter of 1824-1825 living in a Myaamia community in Indiana, recording the customs, language, and history of the Myaamiaki, wrote the following:

“the Miamies understand perfectly the Kaskaskias, Peorias, Weas & Piankeshaws, because those tribes have all descended from them. And the difference of dialect is scarcely more than between the present Parisian and the Canadian French.” (Trowbridge 1938: 2)

Likewise, Jacob Dunn, who did extensive fieldwork on Myaamia, Peewaalia, and Waayaahatanwa, wrote an unpublished report for the Bureau of American Ethnography in 1909 specifically comparing the differences between these three dialects. In writing this report, he compared the speech of Thomas Richardville, a Myaamia, George Finley, a Peewaalia, and Sarah Wadsworth, a Waayaahatanwa.² In this report, Dunn



Various language publications created by the Myaamia Center at Miami University. Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

made the clearest, most explicit statement comparing the Myaamia, Peewaalia, and Waayaahatanwa dialects ever written by anyone who had ever gotten to work with native speakers of them:

In most of the cases all three of these people (Richardville, Finley and Wadsworth) were familiar with the differing words of the three dialects, and confirmed each other as to them. They also confirm Godfroy’s assertion that there is a slight difference in pronunciation in the different tribes – each says the others have a ‘brogue’ – but it is too slight for an outsider to distinguish. Otherwise they have a common language, with a comparatively few differing terms, and these almost wholly referring to things introduced by the whites. (Dunn 1909: 2)

This summary is very valuable, since it is clearly taken from what Richardville, Finley and Wadsworth themselves told Dunn. Dunn is saying here that Myaamia, Waayaahatanwa and Peewaalia basically differ by slight details of pronunciation that are too subtle for nonspeakers to even detect – what Dunn calls here a ‘brogue’, an old-fashioned word from the 19th century equivalent to what would now be called an ‘accent’. Dunn also says that the vocabulary differences among the dialects are minimal, mostly for concepts not present in the language before European contact, and that there are even fewer examples of different words for ‘precontact’ concepts. Indeed, Dunn points out that the vocabulary differences among the three dialects are so few and easy to understand that speakers of each dialect were able to volunteer words found in the other dialects which are absent from their own dialects. From my time studying the Miami-Illinois language, this description matches what I have been able to find out about the dialect differences in the language. Written records of Miami-Illinois from the various speakers are so similar that if they are not identified as to which speaker they came from, it is usually impossible to tell which dialect or speaker they represent. The vast majority of Miami-Illinois words are the same for all dialects and all speakers.

At this point, I would like to summarize the handful of differences between Myaamia and Peewaalia.

Pronunciation Differences

Very few consistent differences in pronunciation can be detected among Miami-Illinois dialects. (That is, cases where a certain sound is always pronounced one way in one dialect but a different way in the other dialect.) No doubt, the great majority of phonetic differences between a Myaamia and a Peewaalia ‘accent’ were far too subtle for the English-speaking and French-speaking recorders of the language to hear and record. The most obvious pronunciation difference between Peewaalia and Myaamia is that a number of words which begin with n in Myaamia instead begin *Continued on page 6D >>*

myaamiaataweenki

101

Learn basic greetings, introductions, and parting phrases in Myaamiaataweenki ‘the Miami language’ on Šaapohkayoni, the Myaamia education portal.

Visit myaamiaportal.com to create an account and access the course.

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<< *Continued from page 5D* with l in Peewaalia. Some typical examples are given in **Table 1**.

However, not all words beginning with n in Myaamia begin with l in Peewaalia. A much larger number of words always begin with n in all dialects, which means that these words are the same in Peewaalia and Myaamia as seen in **Table 2**.

Despite the fact that not all Miami-Illinois words follow this pattern, the presence of words which begin with l in Peewaalia but with n in Myaamia is by far the most important marker distinguishing Peewaalia and Myaamia pronunciation. However, a big complication here is that at least one very important Peewaalia speaker does not pronounce the words in Table 1 with l at the beginning, but rather with n, making his pronun-

ciation of these words the same as that of Myaamia speakers. This speaker is George Finley, the Peewaalia speaker we have by far the most data from – more than all other modern (nineteenth and twentieth century) Peewaalia speakers put together. Every other modern Peewaalia speaker ever recorded shows the l pronunciations in Table 1, including Frank Beaver, John Charley, Bill Skye, Nancy Stand, and James White.³

The fact that Finley’s dialect does not match that of other Peewaalia speakers in this regard might be because even though Finley self-identified as a Peoria and was enrolled in that tribe, he was in fact of Peeyankihšia ancestry, and so it is possible that the dialect he learned while growing up was actually closer to Peeyankihšia rather than Peewaalia or Kaahkaahkia. Unfortunately, we cannot confirm this, since we have almost no language data from anyone self-identifying as Peeyankihšia.

Vocabulary Differences

As Dunn noted, the vocabulary differences between Myaamia, Peewaalia, and Waayaahatanwa are extremely minor. The great majority of words in modern Miami-Illinois are the same in all its dialects, and there are very few words for basic, pre-European contact concepts that are exclusive to one dialect or another. Most of the examples of words that are different across the dialects are names for things: Myaamia has mihsipakwa for ‘leaf’ while Waayaahatanwa and Peewaalia have kaakipakwi (or sometimes kaakipakwa). The Myaamia name for the dogwood tree is aakantemiši, but this is iihkalwi in Peewaalia. And apparently mahkiikwi meant ‘marsh’ in Myaamia and Waayaahatanwa, but ‘lake’ in modern Peewaalia. But examples like this, with totally different names for basic things not introduced by Europeans, are very rare. It is more common for words for concepts introduced after European contact to vary in the different dialects.

For example, the old Miami-Illinois word for ‘sled’, šoohkwaakani, can still mean ‘sled’ in Myaamia, but it has come to mean ‘wagon’ in Peewaalia and Waayaahatanwa.⁴ ‘Saddle’ is wiiwaši for most speakers, but Dunn claimed naahkiipioni was the name for this object with some Peewaaliaki. In turn, naahkiipioni is the normal word for ‘chair’ for all Myaamia speakers and most Peewaalia speakers, but some Peewaaliaki used apinayi to mean ‘chair’. In turn, apinayi is the normal word for ‘bed’ for Myaamia and most Peewaalia speakers, but the usual word for ‘bed’ for Waayaahatanooki and some Peewaaliaki was teehsooni, a word which means ‘scaffold’ or ‘shelf’ in Myaamia. Dunn claimed that masaanikaani specifical-

ly meant ‘tent made of mats’ in Myaamia (probably its original meaning), but was the name for any kind of tent in Peewaalia. In Myaamia and Waayaahatanwa, naloomini is ‘rice, oats’, while in Peewaalia, this noun means ‘wheat’, and maloomina means ‘rice’. And ah-sawaankatia means ‘large feather, plume’ in all dialects, but can also mean ‘pen’ in Peewaalia. But it should be emphasized that words like this, which vary from dialect to dialect, are still not very common, and represent only a small fraction of the tens of thousands of words in the Miami-Illinois language.

Learning language

Sometimes, two similar but slightly different forms of a word will be used in one dialect or another, but with no difference in meaning. For example,

the Waayaahatanwa word for ‘window’ is poohkihtaakani, but Peewaalia and Myaamia both have poohkišaakani. The word for a knot of a tree, or a burl, is athekwi for at least some Myaamia speakers, but athekoni in Peewaalia and Waayaahatanwa. At an even more subtle level, the word for ‘below’ or ‘down’ is mihtahki in Myaamia and Waayaahatanwa but mahtahki in Peewaalia. And Dunn claimed that the word for ‘yes’ is iihia in Myaamia and Waayaahatanwa, but iihii in Peewaalia.

Hockett vocabulary

In getting an overall picture of how different the vocabularies of Myaamia and Peewaalia are, a useful source is the Miami-Illinois wordlists collected by Charles Hockett. Charles Hockett was a linguist who is best known for his work on the Potawatomi language, but in 1938, he made a brief side trip to Ottawa County, Oklahoma to do fieldwork on Miami-Illinois. Hockett worked with two speakers: Nancy Stand, a speaker of Peewaalia; and a female speaker of Myaamia whose name Hockett failed to record. Hockett himself admitted that this fieldwork was very

Continued on page 7D >>

Table 1		
English word	Myaamia	Peewaalia
‘it is cold weather’	neepanki	leepanki
‘he/she breathes’	neehseeci	leehseeci
‘shirt’	naapinaakani	laapinaakani
‘necklace’	naapihkaakani	laapihkaakani
‘also’	naapiši	laapiši
‘between’	nalakwe	lalakwe
‘it is dusk’	neehkanki	leehkanki
‘take care!’	nipwaahkaalo	lipwaahkaalo
‘it melts’	neenkiteeki	leenkiteeki
‘sand’	neekawi	leekawi
‘it is soft’	noohkanki	loohkanki
‘it is light in weight’	naankiciiki	laankiciiki

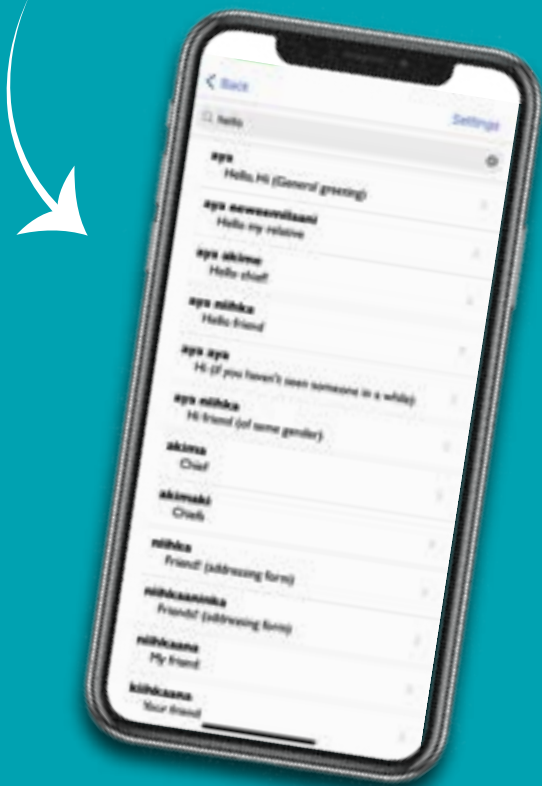
Table 2		
English word	Myaamia	Peewaalia
‘two’	niišwi	niišwi
‘three’	nihswi	nihswi
‘four’	niiwi	niiwi
‘now’	noonki	noonki
‘song’	nakamooni	nakamooni
‘horse’	neekatikaša	neekatikaša
‘he/she sleeps’	neepaaci	neepaaci
‘doctor’	neepihkia	neepihkia
‘he/she dies’	neepiki	neepiki
‘old’	nakaani	nakaani
‘blood’	niihpikanwi	niihpikanwi
‘water’	nipi	nipi
‘he/she sings’	neehineeci	neehineeci

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ILDA Dictionary



<< *Continued from page 6D*
brief, and that he spent only ‘a few hours’ with each speaker. However, Hockett’s fieldnotes are still valuable since he was the best-trained linguist who ever wrote down the language.

Hockett’s method for his Miami-Illinois fieldwork was very simple: he composed a list of 328 English keywords for basic concepts, and asked his speakers how to say those English words in Myaamia and Peewaalia. Since the two speakers Hockett worked with no longer used the language very often, there are many English words in Hockett’s vocabulary where one or the other of the two speakers could not remember a Miami-Illinois equivalent: for example, Hockett got the word eelaakwiki for ‘evening’ from the Myaamia speaker, but evidently Nancy Stand could not remember the Peewaalia word for this concept. Conversely, Hockett got a word for ‘turtle’, wiinicia, from Nancy Stand, but apparently the Myaamia speaker could not remember a Myaamia word for that concept. All in all, of the 328 English keywords in Hockett’s list, 145 are missing either a Myaamia or Peewaalia translation (44%). Subtracting these out, this leaves 183 English keywords with translations from both speakers. These 183 sets are the relevant forms here, since they form a handy point of comparison for how similar the two dialects are.

Of these 183 sets, the Myaamia and Peewaalia speaker gave basically the same word or stem 171 times. This is about 93% of the relevant forms. Of the remaining 7%, there are nine cases where the Myaamia and Peewaalia speaker gave genuinely different words, but only because they interpreted the question differently. (That is, the speakers actually gave words for different things.) An excellent example of this is the words Hockett got for the English word ‘lie’, for which the Peewaalia Nancy Stand gave the word kilaahkiihkilo, an imperative verb which literally means “tell lies!” However, the Myaamia speaker gave the word taahtakiihšinka, a verb literally meaning ‘he/she is lying down’. Or as another example, for the English keyword ‘back(bone)’, the Peewaalia speaker gave nimpahkaami, which means ‘my back’ (especially ‘my lower back’), while the Myaamia speaker gave nihpehkoošikani, which literally means ‘my spine, my backbone’. So, while in these cases both speakers gave valid Miami-Illinois words, obviously these sets tell us nothing about whether Myaamia and Peewaalia had the same word for the same concept.

In Hockett’s entire list, there are only **three** instances where the Myaamia



Considering various ways to communicate an idea in Myaamiaataweenki ‘the Miami language.’
Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.

and Peewaalia speakers appear to have given genuinely different words for the same thing. For example, for ‘turkey’, the Myaamia speaker gave nalaawahkia, while the Peewaalia speaker gave the word waapipilia. Thus, of the 183 words that Hockett asked for Myaamia and Peewaalia equivalents of, and for which he got answers from both speakers, only 1.6% represent genuinely different words for the same objects or concepts.

Conclusion

The fact that less than 2% of the words Hockett got from his Myaamia and Peewaalia speakers represents genuine differences between the two dialects very strongly supports the notion that the vocabularies of Myaamia and Peewaalia are almost the same, with very few words distinguishing them. This, along with the extremely minor number of pronunciation differences between the two dialects, and the fact that speakers of both dialects could understand the other with ease, confirms that Myaamia and Peewaalia (and Waayaahatanwa) are by no means different languages, but merely different dialects of a single language (and not even very different dialects). Importantly, this also confirms that the same materials are appropriate for the study and teaching of both Peewaalia and Myaamia: that is, that the same dictionaries, grammars, and stories are appropriate to learn both dialects.



National Breath of Life
Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages

The mission of the National Breath of Life Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages (National BoL) is to work with endangered language communities to build capacity around methods in archives-based research for community-directed revitalization efforts.

The National Breath of Life Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages (National BoL) exists as a series of training modules designed to respond to the needs of tribal communities who are engaged in archives-based language revitalization. National BoL participants, called Community Researchers (CRs), typically come from communities who have either lost their speakers or need access to language archives in order to advance their community driven efforts to recover their languages. The main purpose of National BoL is to support community interest in accessing archival materials and to develop capacity around the use of digitized copies of such materials for revitalization efforts.



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1. The first writer that I am aware of to use the term ‘Miami-Illinois’ is the Smithsonian Institution linguist Ives Goddard (for example, see 1977: 248 and 1978: 585).
2. Dunn had previously done extensive language work with the Indiana Miami Gabriel Godfroy as well.
3. Additionally, in her fieldwork with both Albert Gatschet and Jacob Dunn, the Waayaahatanwa speaker Sarah Wadsworth said that although she herself had n at the beginning of words like those in Table 1 (making her Waayaahatanwa dialect like Myaamia), she volunteered that Peewaaliaki pronounced them with l.
4. The animate form of this noun, šoohk-waakana, is now used to mean ‘car’ in Myaamia.

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MYAAMIA COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Myaamia citizens and their families have many cultural education resources available on the web. The following sites regularly post photos, videos and information from different departments and groups of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and the Myaamia Center at Miami University.



Scan this code to access digital links.

MIAMI NATION WEBSITE

www.miamination.com

MYAAMIABI

Miami Tribe of Oklahoma (closed Facebook group for Tribal citizens & their immediate family members)

AATOTANKIKI MYAAMIABI

Miami Nation News - Facebook

Miami Nation Events

Where public events are posted - Facebook

EEMAMWICKI

For our summer youth programs - Facebook

MYAAMIA CENTER

Facebook

AATOTANTAABI “Let’s Talk About It”

Myaamia community discussion group for media - Facebook

AACIMOTAATIIYANKWI

Myaamia Community Blog

<https://aacimotaatiiyankwi.org>

KAAKISITONKIA

The Myaamia Heritage Museum & Archive’s online archive

kaakisitoonkia.org

Miami Nation Gift Shop

myaamiagifts.square.site

ILDA Myaamia Online Dictionary

(Miami-Illinois Indigenous Languages Digital Archive)

mc.miamioh.edu/ilda-myaamia/dictionary

MYAAMIA CENTER

Youtube Channel

ŠAAPOHKAAYONI

A Myaamia Portal

myaamiaportal.org

Would you like to learn more about plants from a Myaamia perspective?

Explore mahkihkiwa.org today!



SummerFest was a splash!

Madalyn Richardson
Cultural & Arts Education Content Specialist, Cultural Resources Office

Tribal members of all ages enjoyed the fun and festivities at this year’s SummerFest bash! Each year, the Tribe provides a day full of fun for everyone and provides tribal youth with a backpacks full of school supplies to get them ready for the semester. This year, attendance reached record numbers, with around 150 tribal members and staff, making the impact and outreach of this special event bigger than ever.

Cultural Education Director Joshua Sutterfield organized an incredible day centered around community building and “end-of-summer” fun. Featuring several small carnival rides, a giant water slide, a rock-climbing wall, cultural games, face painting, balloon art, lacrosse-themed carnival games, tickets, and prizes, there was something to enjoy at every stop. Many attendees kept returning to booths or rides again and again throughout the day.

This year’s weather also proved to be accommodating despite the heat, allowing us to keep the event outdoors. While attendance is increasing and may eventually lead us to a new location, the Drake House remains a beloved space for hosting this event. We are grateful for the steady growth in attendance and hope it continues to be a memorable and impactful gathering for years to come.



Multiple myaamia families participated in the Bingo Game. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



The carnival games incorporating lacrosse sticks and skills were a big hit. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Kids make a splash on the water slide. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

Community Gatherings Begin at Peehkakionki with Eemamwiciki Summer Programs

Stella Beerman
Communications Specialist, Myaamia Center

After years of planning, anticipation, and dedication, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has completed construction on a new 8,000-square-foot community building at Peehkakionki, a 45-acre property just outside Fort Wayne, Indiana. The facility now serves as a hub for Myaamia community activities like educational programs, cultural gatherings, and office space for the Cultural Resource Extension Office (CREO).

After the ribbon-cutting and open house, the first official event held in this new space was the Tribe’s 2025 Eemamwiciki Summer Programs, marking a significant moment in the Tribe’s ongoing efforts to reconnect Myaamiaki ‘Myaamia people’, especially youth, with their culture and community. For the first time since the programs began in Fort Wayne in 2012, the programs were held not in a rented space, but on tribal land. With 71 participants across both youth and adult programs, and over 100 community members joining the end-of-week celebration dinner, it was clear that community members were excited and proud to spend time in this space.

Hosting the Eemamwiciki programs on sovereign land marks a major shift in what’s possible for Myaamia education and community building in Fort Wayne. Over the past decade, the Tribe has utilized borrowed spaces such as the Indiana Purdue Fort Wayne campus, the Fox Island Nature Preserve, and, most recently, Metea County Park. While those

spaces allowed the programs to grow, they also came with limitations such as restricted schedules, limited control over the environment, and a lack of cultural ownership.

“In Indiana, it was extra special to learn about Meehtohseeniwink Ašiikhkionki ‘Living on the Land’ entirely in a place governed by our nation and cared for year-round by Myaamia people,” said George Ironstrack, Eewansaapita co-director. “A huge mihši-neewe to Doug Peconge, Dani Tipmann, Claudia Hedeem, Kirk Strass, and Jared Nally for making the site such a beautiful place to share Myaamia language and culture with our youth.”

This year’s theme, Meehtohseeniwink Ašiikhkionki ‘Living on the Land,’ highlighted the importance of land stewardship and cultural knowledge tied to place. Thanks to the year-round care of CREO staff, participants were able to explore gardens filled with Myaamia plants and learn firsthand about traditional food practices. These experiences wouldn’t have been possible in previously rented locations, and they signal a future of deeper, land-based learning within the Myaamia homelands.

In addition to hikes and outdoor activities, the new building offered indoor classroom space, gathering areas, and the flexibility to design programming on the Tribe’s own terms. Importantly, the physical space helps foster a deeper sense of belonging among Myaamia youth who are growing into their cultural identities.

The week concluded with a lively community dinner, where over 100 people came together to

celebrate not only the success of the programs but also the beginning of a new chapter in the life of the Myaamia community in Indiana.

Eemamwiciki staff extend their gratitude to their CREO colleagues for their hospitality and year-round stewardship of the land. As the Tribe looks ahead, Peehkakionki will continue to be a place where education, culture, and community thrive.



Eewansaapita Participants making maple sugar at peehekakionki. Photo by Doug Peconge, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.

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

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page 8C or online at <https://mc.miamioh.edu/eduportal>

Looking Back at the Eemamwiciki 2025 Summer Programs

Stella Beerman

Communications Specialist, Myaamia Center

Throughout the months of June and July, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma staff welcomed Myaamiaki ‘Myaamia people’ to the Eemamwiciki 2025 Summer Programs to explore the theme: Meehtohseeniwinkī Ašiihkionkī ‘Living on the Land.’



Eemamwiciki 2025 Summer Programs participants and staff in Nooŝonke Siipionkī ‘Miami, Oklahoma.’ Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma.



Eemamwiciki 2025 Summer Programs participants and staff in kiihkayoonkī ‘Fort Wayne, Indiana.’ Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.

Each year, the Miami Tribe hosts Summer Programs for tribal members ages 6 and older in both Kiihkayonkī ‘Fort Wayne, Indiana’ and Nooŝonke Siipionkī ‘Miami, Oklahoma.’ The 5-day experience is designed to teach participants about Myaamia language and culture while having fun and bonding with community members.

In June 2025, 43 participants were welcomed to the Saakaciweeta, Eewansaapita, Maayaahkweeta, and Neehsapita programs in Oklahoma. In July, 71 people participated in Saakaciweeta, Eewansaapita, and Neehsapita in Indiana.

Young adults in the Myaamia community serve as counselors for Saakaciweeta and Eewansaapita, many of whom are alumni of the youth programs or attend Miami University through the Myaamia Heritage Program. Some of these counselors live locally to Oklahoma or Indiana, while others travel from various states to participate.

Curriculum for the programs is the same in both locations, and each of the programs follow the same theme throughout the week. Saakaciweeta participants (ages 6-9) learned about the Myaamia lunar calendar and the phases of the moon, created art projects representing their outdoor environments, and played peekitahaminkī ‘lacrosse’ with Eewaansaapita. There were 31 participants in Saakaciweeta this year, 11 in Oklahoma, and 20 in Indiana.

Like Saakaciweeta, Eewansaapita participants (ages 10-16) learned about the

Myaamia lunar calendar, the phases of the moon, and how Myaamia people interact with the environment.

The week included many games of peekitahaminkī ‘lacrosse’ and mahkisina meehkintiinkī ‘moccasin game,’ time exploring connections to Myaamionkī ‘Myaamia lands,’ and lots of good eating. There were 47 participants total, 17 in Oklahoma and 30 in Indiana.

In Oklahoma, the Seneca-Cayuga Nation hosted the Miami Tribe for the annual youth lacrosse game. The two nations played on combined teams for a fun, yet challenging game. Afterward, the Seneca-Cayuga Nation invited our staff and participants to stay for lunch and stomp dancing.

There were four Maayaahkweeta participants (ages 17-18) in Oklahoma, who spent the week deepening their knowledge of Myaamia ecology while practicing Myaamiaataweenkī ‘the Miami language’ in daily immersion sessions.

These participants also take on leadership roles by sharing what they have learned throughout the week with youth participants in the Eewansaapita program.

The adult program, Neehsapita, had the largest number of participants yet, showing a growing community interest in the program. The participants were invited to sign up for workshops on specific days, adding more flexibility to the program to accommodate adult schedules.

There were 32 participants, 21 in Indiana and 11 in Oklahoma. Participants in both locations had the opportunity to woodburn and paint a cube to track the lunar phases, attend a Myaamia foods demonstration, create a ribbonwork keychain, and hike on Tribal properties throughout the week.

In each location, the Eemamwiciki Summer Programs ended with a celebration, where the Myaamia community was invited to view the youth participants’ art projects, share a meal, and play peekitahaminkī ‘lacrosse.’

While each of these programs was happening in person, an “at-your-own-pace” version was hosted on Šaapohkaayoni: A Myaamia Portal. Online participants can explore Meehtohseeniwinkī Ašiihkionkī ‘Living on the Land’ through videos, audio, and images. While participants have the option to submit their work to earn a certificate of completion, they will be able to access these materials indefinitely, so their learning doesn’t have a deadline.

In 2026, the Summer Program theme will be Eeweentiiyankwī ‘Family,’ where participants will explore what it means to be related to one another.

Applications for the programs will become available in spring 2026 on Šaapohkaayoni (myaamia portal.com) and the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma’s website (miamination.com). Questions? Contact Joshua Sutterfield, Cultural Education Director, via email: sutterfield@miamination.com or phone: (918) 541-1300.



Eemamwiciki Summer Programs participants sing the “Aya Aya” song at the end-of-the-week celebration in Nooŝonke Siipionkī ‘Miami, Oklahoma.’ Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.



Saakaciweeta participants learn about the Myaamia lunar calendar. Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.



Eewansaapita participants learn how to cook using ingredients they have learned about throughout the week. Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.



Eewansaapita participants play mahkisina meehkintiinkī ‘moccasin game’ during their free time throughout the day. Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.



Youth from the Miami Tribe and Seneca-Cayuga Nation play lacrosse together on combined teams. Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.

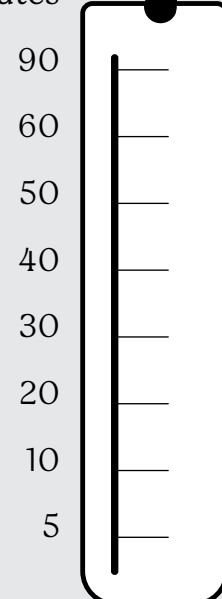


Youth celebrate their transition from Saakaciweeta, the program for ages 6-9, to Eewaansaapita, the program for ages 10-16.

Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.



Neehsapita participants work on painting a cedar cube to track the phases of the moon. Photo by Jonathan Fox, Myaamia Center.





nahineeko ‘You sing!’

You can find sing-along videos by scanning the QR code or visiting aacimotaatiiyankwi.org/education/education-resources/



Numbers Song

Sang to the tune of “This Old Man”

nkoti	one
niišwi	two
nihswi	three
niiwi	four
yaalanwi	five
kaakaathswi	six
swaahteethswi	seven
palaani	eight
nkotimeneehki	nine
mataathswi	ten

aya aya Song

Sang to the tune of “Are You Sleeping?
(Brother John)”

aya aya!
tipeewe neeyolaani
peehki-kiišihkahki
teepahki
wiicinaakiitaawi!

Hello!
It’s good to see you
It’s a good day
It is good
Let’s sing together!

natawaapantamooko ‘You Look For It!’

Match the moon phase to the picture.

saakiwa

*New moon,
first visible sliver*

napale

*First quarter,
half moon*

waawiyiisita

Full moon

napale neepiki

*Last quarter,
half dead moon*

myaalisiwa

*Waning crescent,
moon is very ill*

keešaakosita

*Waxing phases,
moon growing large*

peemineeta

*Waning phases,
moon growing smaller*





paahpiko ‘You Play!’

Mahkisina ‘Moccasin Game’

TO BEGIN

1. A game consists of two teams (north and south) of at least 4 players each. Each team includes a Team Captain and Scorekeeper.
2. To decide which team hides first, a third party hides the black bullet in one hand. North picks which hand it is hidden in first, if successful they hide first, if not, South hides first.
3. The Team Captain of the successful team selects a “hider,” and the other captain selects a “finder.”

GAME-PLAY

1. To begin game play, the finder says kyaatoolo — “you hide it!” As each game is played the hiding team can sing a song until the selection is made as distractors or annoyances for the finder.
2. Following the kyaatoolo command, the hider hides all 4 bullets beneath the moccasins in a deceptive a manner to obscure where the black bullet is hidden. When satisfied with their trickiness they say mihkanto — “you find it!” The singing continues until a selection is made.
3. Finders can touch the ground in front of the moccasins with a flipping stick and watch the facial expressions of their opponent for a clue. A selection is made when they touch and/or flip a moccasin over with a flipping stick.

Players should be careful and take their time but not to engage in stalling. The finding team may discuss their choice as a group, if they choose.



SCORING

- 1 big stick = full (1) point
- 2 smaller sticks = half (1/2) point
- 4 smaller sticks = full (1) point; trade in for 1 big stick

Once all scoring sticks are distributed, teams will take sticks from their opponent’s pile.

The finding team is successful if they find the black bullet on the second (2nd) or third (3rd) moccasin flipped.

If the finding team finds the black bullet under the second (2nd) moccasin flip they score a half (1/2) point. The finding team can score a full point by scoring two half (1/2) points in two (2) separate rounds.

If the finding team finds the black bullet under the third (3rd) moccasin flip the finding team scores a full (1) point and wins the round.

The finding team is unsuccessful if they find the black bullet under the first (1st) or fourth (4th) moccasin flipped.

The hiding team scores a half (1/2) point for each unsuccessful round of the finding team.

The round ends and the hiding team continues to hide until the finding team wins the right to hide.

THE RIGHT TO HIDE

To capture the right to hide, a team must win a full point by collecting a big stick with a ribbon or two (2) half-points in two separate rounds.

TO WIN

A team wins a round when they have scored a full (1) point. To win the game, a team must have scored all 4 big ribbon sticks (4 points).

If you don’t have a mahkisina set at home, you can still play!

What you’ll need:

- 4 hot pads
- 3 nickels, dimes, or quarters
- 1 penny
- 4 pencils (big sticks)
- 6 crayons (little sticks)

Myaamia Words:

- kyaatoolo “you hide it!”
- mihkanto “you find it!”
- nkoti “one”
- niišwi “two”
- nihswi “three”
- niiwi “four”
- eenihiwiaani “I win”
- anehiwihsiwaani “I didn’t win”
- eenihiweeyani “You win”
- eenihiweeyankwi “We win”



at the



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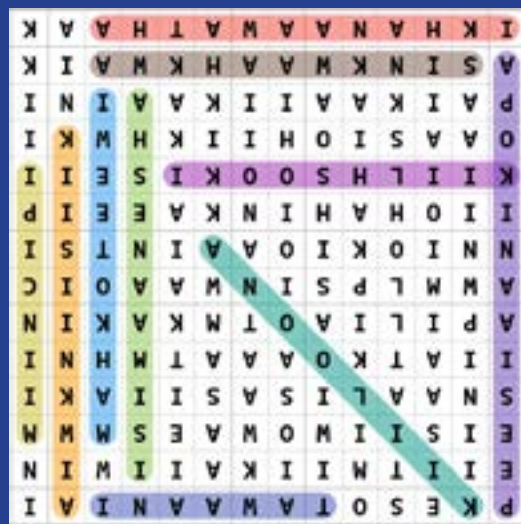
kihkeelintamani-nko ‘did you know’ this year’s theme for eemamwiciki is Living on the Land!

Have you ever used the myaamia lunar calendar? Learn more on the eduportal šaapohkayoni!



**mihkanto ‘You Find It!’***Can be forward, backward, up, down, and diagonal.*

p	k	e	s	o	t	a	w	a	a	n	i	a	i
e	i	i	t	m	i	i	k	a	i	i	w	i	n
e	l	s	i	i	w	o	w	a	e	s	m	w	m
s	n	a	a	l	i	s	a	s	i	i	a	k	i
i	i	a	t	k	o	a	a	e	t	m	h	n	i
a	p	i	l	i	a	o	t	m	k	a	k	i	n
a	w	m	l	p	s	i	n	w	a	a	o	i	c
n	n	i	o	k	i	o	a	a	o	n	t	s	i
i	i	o	h	a	h	i	n	k	a	e	e	i	p
k	i	i	l	h	s	o	o	k	i	s	e	i	i
o	a	a	s	i	o	h	i	i	k	h	w	k	i
p	a	i	k	a	a	i	i	k	a	a	i	n	i
a	s	i	n	k	w	a	a	h	k	w	a	i	k
i	k	h	a	n	a	a	w	a	t	h	a	a	k

Find the words:*ahsenaamiši**tawaani**kiilhsooki**kiiloona**ahtawaanahki**miincipi**peešiaanikopa**kiišiinkwia**mahkoteewi**šinkwaahkwa*

Use the ILDA Dictionary by scanning the QR code or visiting
mc.miamioh.edu/ilda-myaamia/dictionary

**wilaalaansamooko ‘You Color It!’**



myaamia kiilhswaakani ‘myaamia lunar calendar’



šaašaakayolia kiilhswa – August 28th - September 24th

This month is the first of the transitional period teekwaakiki ‘fall’.

It is named for the human-lit fires used for land management and maintenance.

These fires helped make healthy habitats for plants and animals by removing debris from the forest and praries.



kiiyolia kiilhswa – September 25th - October 24th

This is the second month named for the fires lit at this time.

These fires helped the larger trees in the forest.

Fires during this month burned bigger than the ones in šaašaakayolia kiilhswa as plant debris is drier.

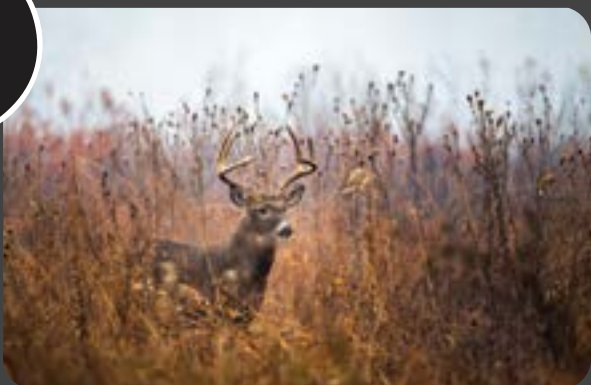


ayaapeensa kiilhswa – October 25th - November 22nd

This month is named for the moohswa 'White-Tailed Deer'.

The younger males often lose their antlers during this month.

The breeding cycle for moohswa starts at this time.



ayaapeensa kiilhswa – November 23rd - December 22nd

This month is named for the moohswa 'White-Tailed Deer'.

The younger males often lose their antlers during this month.

The breeding cycle for moohswa starts at this time.

myaamiaataweelo ‘You Speak Miami!’

Practice speaking myaamiaataweenki *the Miami language* with a friend using the skit below:

Person 1: aya, (person 1 name) weenswiaani.
“Hi, my name is ____.”

Person 2: aya (person 1 name), (person 2 name) weenswiaani.
“Hi ____, my name is ____.”

P1: tipeewe neeyolaani.
“Good to see you.”

P2: tipeewe neeyolaani. neehahki-nko kiiyawī?
“Good to see you. How are you?”

P1: iihia, neehahki niyawī. neehahki-nko kiiyawī?
“Yes, I am good. How are you?”

P2: iihia, neehahki niyawī.
“Yes, I’m good.”

P1: teepahki.
“Good.”



EEMAMWICIKI 2025 EVENTS

Jan

27-28: Oklahoma Winter Gathering

10-11: Online Winter Gathering & Storytelling

Feb

17: wiiyaakiteeheelo weehki-kihkatwe Myaamia New Year - nooŝonke siipionki

25: Myaamia New Year - kiihkayonki

Mar

9: Planting Day at Drake House - nooŝonke siipionki

Apr

20: Spring Seed Swap - kiihkayonki

20: pakitahantaawi neehi wiihsinitaawi! Let's play lacrosse and eat! - nooŝonke siipionki

May

18: keeŝtooyankwi Makerspace Day - nooŝonke siipionki

Jun

3: Spring Gathering - kiihkayonki

17-21: Eemamwiciki Summer Programs - nooŝonke siipionki

28-29: National Gathering & Annual Meeting - nooŝonke siipionki

Jul

15-19: Eemamwiciki Summer Programs - kiihkayonki

21: Summer Celebration kiihkayonki

Aug

10: SummerFest - nooŝonke siipionki

Sep

14: Fall Gathering - kiihkayonki

21: Games Day - nooŝonke siipionki

Oct

TBA: Fall Gathering - nooŝonke siipionki

19: Sasquash Seed Swap - kiihkayonki

Nov

16: Storytelling in the Home - nooŝonke siipionki

Dec

14: Myaamia Ribbonwork Workshop - nooŝonke siipionki



For nooŝonke siipionki 'Oklahoma' events, RSVP to Joshua Sutterfield at (918) 325-0107 or jsutterfield@miamination.com.
For kiihkayonki 'Indiana' events, RSVP to Claudia Hedeem at (918) 325-8810 or chedeen@miamination.com.



FOLLOW MYAAMIA COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC EVENTS ON FACEBOOK AT MYAAMIAMI or MIAMI NATION EVENTS

