



Winter STORIES

“The stories were entertaining and helped pass the time, but they also taught valuable lessons in life.”
CAROL ANNETTE KRAMER,
White Earth Ojibwe member and elder from the village of Pine Point

The **Tribune**

Detroit Lakes ▶▶

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VOLUME 112, NO. 100 • SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2019 • DETROIT LAKES, MN NEWSSTAND \$1.50 • 2 SECTIONS

Ojibwe tales that can be told only when there's snow on the ground

By Marie T. Johnson
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Why The Loon's Eyes Are Red" might not be the classic holiday story found in every bookstore come December, and "How the Raccoon Got His Mask" has never been turned into a

Christmas TV special, but for Ojibwe families around Detroit Lakes, these tales are as beloved a winter tradition as lefse and lutefisk are to local Scandinavians.
In the Ojibwe culture, storytelling is an ancient and important art. It's how tales and teachings about the

world are passed from generation to generation, from elder storytellers to eager children.
Tales are told all year long, but winter, especially, is a season of storytelling.
"There are traditional stories that can only be told while there is snow on the ground," said Emily Buernann, who was born and raised on the White Earth Indian Reservation. "We have to wait all year for these sorts of stories."
The tradition stems back many

generations to when, "With each new season, the Ojibwe moved to different locations to harvest the resources from the land," and in winter, they would move into large birch bark wigwams and live on the food they had collected and preserved during the spring, summer and fall, according to Carol Annette Kramer, an enrolled member of the White Earth Ojibwe and elder from the village of Pine Point.

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County to take West Lake Drive property through eminent domain

By Nathan Bowe
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Hoping to meet next summer's construction schedule, Becker County has decided to move ahead with eminent domain proceedings to obtain a 66-foot right of way for the West Lake Drive project between Legion Road and County Road 6.
"It's just a method of doing it recommended by our attorney (Minnneapolis real estate attorney Jay Squires) to keep it timely," said Becker County Highway Engineer Jim Olson.
Eminent domain allows the government to take private property for public use, compensating the

“It's just a method of doing it recommended by our attorney to keep it timely.”
JIM OLSON, Becker County Highway Engineer

GROWING TAX BASE HELPS KEEP DETROIT LAKES LEVY DOWN - PAGE A8

unwilling seller.
The county had considered first going to court to establish that it has a 66-foot right of way on that stretch of roadway, but that could delay the project by a year or more, Olson said, and the county might still end up having to use its power of eminent domain.
By using condemna-

tion, or eminent domain, Olson said, "at least we get title and possession of the property within 120 days after filing the petition. That will still allow us to start next year."
Depending, of course, on the findings of an archaeological survey that the Minnesota Department of Transportation is requiring before the project can move forward, Olson hopes the survey can be done early in the spring, and says the county will likely hire a MnDOT-approved consultant to do the work. The county



Nathan Bowe / Tribune
City officials say the trees along Little Detroit Lake will largely be spared, because the West Lake Drive project's footprint will mostly shift toward the residential side.

will have to pay half the bill, but that's the fastest route forward, he said.
With luck, the county can still bid the project in May or June, Olson said. That's late in the year to bid a job, but "if the bids come in too high, we could reject them and do it the next year or the following year," he said.
The new owners of WE Fest have announced the country music festival is taking a break next year. It usually is held in early August, making it an ideal opportunity for a late-summer road project

on West Lake Drive — which otherwise would see heavy traffic during WE Fest, Olson said.
Even without WE Fest, "it will still be a challenge with that road," he added, but the idea has always been to start the project after the Northwest Water

Carnival (set for July 10-19 next year) and finish by the end of the construction season in 2020. "Without WE Fest this year, that might help us construct it in the later half of the summer," Olson said.
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Urban chickens now allowed in DL after city council approval

By Nathan Bowe
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Detroit Lakes residents will now be able to enjoy fresh eggs from their own backyard chicken coops.
The city council on Tuesday, Dec. 10, approved an amended ordinance that allows homeowners with a city permit to keep up to four hens. But don't worry about waking up to that cock-a-doodle-doo crowing at the break of dawn: Roosters and other farm animals are still off limits.
Worried about rogue gangs of chickens menacing the good people of Detroit Lakes? Fear not: The chickens have to be kept in a coop or chicken run at all times. The permit can be revoked if chickens are found to be at large — meaning unconfined, out of the control of their owner, or just plain breaking curfew — more than once.
Only family residen-



Rick Abbott / Forum News Service
While Fargo and several cities in Minnesota allow chickens to be kept in city limits, Detroit Lakes has not been one of them, until now. A new city ordinance was approved Tuesday.

tial homes on a large lot (7,500 square feet or bigger) qualify for the chicken permit. The birds cannot be kept inside any residential structure, including basements, porches, garages, sheds or similar storage structures, and they cannot be kept on a vacant lot.
Nina Kleinschmidt, a Minnesota Avenue resident, was at the city council meeting with her three young kids. Before the vote, she said "we're cautiously optimistic," that the council would pass the ordinance. But the kids were ready for battle. "They call it (the

city council meeting) the 'chicken-fight meeting,'" she said with a laugh. She said the family will get a \$60 chicken permit and keep backyard chickens. "They (the kids) say they'll help with the chickens, but we'll see," she said with a smile.
Another woman at the meeting, Majken Hall of North Shore Drive, said her family also plans to get a permit, build a coop and follow the stipulations of the ordinance for backyard chickens.
The ordinance also loosens the leash a little on the number of pets allowed in town. Residents can now keep up to three dogs, cats, rabbits or guinea pigs as long as they have all been spayed or neutered. If not, the most pets that can be licensed under the new ordinance is still two per household, as it has been in the past.
CHICKENS: Page A10



Jenny Schlecht / Forum News Service

Anishinaabe Agriculture Institute receives \$25K grant for hemp work

By Desiree Bauer
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While hemp and marijuana leaves may look similar and both come from the cannabis species, the two are very different.
Hemp contains a compound called cannabidiol (CBD) and has less than .3% THC — the substance that makes marijuana-

na psychoactive — so it doesn't provide a "high."
Winona LaDuke and Nicolette Slagle with the Anishinaabe Agriculture Institute are working to highlight the differences in hemp and the many benefits it has. They received a \$25,000 grant for hemp work.
Slagle



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INSIDE The real decoys
Detroit Lakes carvers exhibit their craft at decoy show
Page A5

1,000 points
Paige Ziegler adds scoring milestone to state hurdles
Page B1

Forecast

TODAY Partly Cloudy High: 6 Low: 2	MONDAY Partly Cloudy High: 8 Low: 2	TUESDAY Partly Cloudy High: 6 Low: -1	WEDNESDAY Partly Cloudy High: 21 Low: 11	THURSDAY Partly Cloudy High: 19 Low: 14
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Every day is a news day
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HEMP

From Page A1

grant from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) to help their efforts. "Our big goal is promoting hemp," Slagle said, adding that they hope to bring more awareness to growing it, its uses and the profitability. "To try and use hemp as a tool for community and economic development." Slagle said that two big ways hemp can be used for the lakes community

HEMP CONFERENCE

The third annual hemp conference, mainly geared toward tribes and tribal members, is March 4, 2020, at Maplelag Resort in Callaway. For information, call 218-375-2600 or go to www.wetrip.org.

is to "diversify farmer's incomes" and as a textile. Hemp can benefit soils and the environment, she added.

"In the realm of textiles, it's been shown that hemp uses less water and potential chemicals versus cotton," she said. "It's shown to be a much more sturdy fabric."

With the \$25,000 Sustainable Agriculture

Demonstration Grant from The Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation MDA organization, Slagle and LaDuke have more opportunities to promote hemp.

As the Anishinaabe Agriculture Institute is a nonprofit, the grant provides them with money to pay for interns, for some of the work on their cur-

riculum about growing hemp for different travel organizations, and for part of their hemp conference in March, Slagle said.

According to a news release from the MDA, Slagle and LaDuke's hemp project and its progress will be included in the Greenbook, an annual publication of the MDA. The project is expected to last two to three years.

Slagle's interest in hemp started from LaDuke's. She's been working with LaDuke for close to five years now, learning more about hemp and helping LaDuke get her hemp project started. She's noticed that other people's interest in hemp has "kind of been exploding in the last year or so," and hopes to continue educating with this grant.

MORE INFO

► Anishinaabe Agriculture Institute: anishinaabeagriculture.org
► Email: info@anishinaabeagriculture.org
► MDA Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant: www.mda.state.mn.us/sustagdemogrant. Applications for the second round of grants are accepted until 4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17.

STORIES

From Page A1

"The long, dark winter nights were perfect for telling stories around the fire," Kramer said. "The stories were entertaining and helped pass the time, but they also taught valuable lessons in life." "Traditionally shared orally, Ojibwe winter stories are geared to children and often involve woodland animals — such as the loon and raccoon stories already mentioned, for example, or "Why the Porcupine Has Quills." They answer the kinds of questions that kids tend to be curious about, like "Why Birch Bark Has Stripes," and also sometimes provide life lessons through characters like the Nanabozhoo (who is known by other names, too, like Wenebojoo), a spiritual teacher and trickster who shows up in many Ojibwe stories.

"There are a lot of stories that are still there," said Mike Swan, a spiritual leader for the Pine Point community and the Native American Cultural Liaison for Detroit Lakes Public Schools. "Some are very long, some are very short. A lot of them are told during the wintertime, when there's snow on the ground, but there are some stories we tell when there's no snow on the ground, so you have to be careful which stories you tell when."

Swan said the snow is significant because there are some tales "you don't want to be telling when there are animals and spirits out there to hear you ... When there's snow on the ground, you know they're hibernating. You know they're sleeping at this time of year, so they can't hear you."

Creatures such as lizards and snakes, for example, often represent "bad things" in Ojibwe stories and, out of respect and privacy, the storytellers don't want them overhearing that: "They're trying to listen to you all the time," Swan said of the spirits. "And you don't tell your stories, or your dreams, to just anybody."

Buermann, Swan and others have shared several Ojibwe winter stories with the



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Tribune. The tales will be published in the newspaper over the next few weeks, starting with "Why The Fawn Has Spots," below. Read the stories yourself or share them with friends, family and the children in your life.

Just be sure they're told only when there's snow on the ground.

'Why The Fawn Has Spots'

Editor's note: This is the first of several Ojibwe winter stories that have been shared with the Tribune and will be published over the next few weeks.

When the Creator, GichiManido, created the animals, he walked among them and felt proud of all of them. The animals of the world are beautiful and precious in their own way.

Each animal has something special and unique about it. The bear was given great strength, wolf was given sharp teeth, and coyote was given quick wit. The beaver was given a flat tail, rabbit was given speed, and birds were given the ability to fly. The Creator was proud of the work he had done and the useful gifts he had given to each.

But soon, a doe

approached him. She said, "You have given everyone survival gifts, and that is wonderful, but you have not given my fawn anything to protect her. She is small and afraid and many beings in the forest hunt her."

"You have spoken the truth, mother doe," said GichiManido. "Everyone makes mistakes, and everyone can learn from them and do better."

So GichiManido thought for awhile, and then took white clay from the earth and painted spots on the fawn.

"Now, even when your baby is alone, she will blend into her surroundings, making her hard for predators to see." Then, GichiManido breathed on the fawn, taking away her scent: "Now, even when your baby is alone, no predators will be able to smell her."

"Thank you, miigwetch," said the mother doe, for she knew her precious baby would be protected.

And ever since then, every fawn is born painted with white spots and has no scent until they grow enough to take care of themselves.

— As told by Carol Annette Kramer



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Published in the Detroit Lakes Tribune, Perham Focus, Park Rapids Enterprise and Wadena Pioneer Journal

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