Anishinaabe News

c/o Center for Native American Studies
Northern Michigan University
1401 Presque Isle Avenue
Marquette, Michigan 49855

Happy New Year!

On behalf of everyone at the NMU Center for Native American Studies, niwen/migwech/thank you for a wonderful year in 2008.

We’ve accomplished a lot with a little. We’ve met a lot of wonderful people from Rev. Kevin Annett to D.J. Vanas from Tillie Black Bear to the aboriginal delegation from Australia (and so many more).

There are many exciting possibilities on the horizon for the Center in 2009. We hope you will be there.

There will be new people to meet, new challenges to face, new problems to solve, new questions to answer.

Embrace your new year with gusto.
I shall try as well!

Sincerely,
April E. Lindala, Director

Inside this Issue
Native American Heritage Month events
• Student programs from NAS 204
• Photos from Fall 2008 and more.

Grammy-award winner Joanne Shenandoah visits NMU.

By Grace Chaillier - Award winning singer, songwriter, and educator Joanne Shenandoah performed at Kaufman Auditorium on a blustery Saturday, November 8 evening as part of the NMU International Performing Arts Series. Shenandoah, who won a Grammy in 2006 for her Songs of the Spirit album, is an eleven-time Native American Music Award winning artist and a Haudenosaunee woman of wolf Clan descent. Dressed in a black velvet top and floor-length black velvet skirt, Shenandoah played guitar, beginning the performance with a song from her Once in a Red Moon album. She said the piece was “recorded long ago about our mother, a living and breathing spirit who keeps giving to us.” The artist that the Associated Press called “the most critically acclaimed Native American singer of her time” crooned:

Hear my beating heart.
Don’t steal my thunder.
Don’t break my heart.
I’m your mother,
Hear my beating heart.

See “Shenandoah” continued on pg 2

Award winning musician Wade Fernandez performs at NMU

by Sam Hill - The atmosphere at Wade’s concert on November 13 was very relaxing. Once seated, you could see flutes, a guitar, and some pedals, a very simple set up on stage. I felt like he was performing for us in someone’s living room, it felt so comfortable and intimate. There was a medium sized crowd seated, ready to hear Wade Fernandez (Menominee). Craig Meshigaud, member of the Native American Students Association, introduced him, and Wade performed a lovely flute song. The way he played the wooden flute was very soothing to listen to. After awhile he added some guitar rhythms, which made his music sound almost whimsical. I was amazed at his ability to play the flute and his guitar at the same time.

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Photo by Sam Hill

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Photo by Sam Hill
Shenandoah informed the audience that “speaking of our mother”, a movie she’d starred in as a Native nurse and cook was now available in video stores. The film has a global warming message and is titled The Last Winter.

“In the Iroquois way, we ask, does anyone have any trouble?” she said. After the laughter subsided she continued, “Take that trouble and roll it up to the front of the room. It will be here for you when we finish this evening.” More laughter. This putting cares temporarily aside is a part of the Iroquois Theory of the Good Mind.

Shenandoah informed listeners that her Haudenosaunee name means “she sings.” She told of having worked in corporate America before coming to the decision in 1990 that she needed to sing. She contacted her sister Diane, who sat near her on the Kaufman stage, and asked her to perform also. Throughout the concert, Shenandoah turned to catch Diane’s eye and smile.

Having come from a matriarchal culture, Shenandoah performed a series of songs to honor the women.” Several were recorded on the Matriarch album and one was written in honor of the release of the Sacajawea coin and performed in Washington, DC, at the request of then first lady Hillary Clinton. With regard to misbehaving men, Shenandoah stated that in the Iroquois way, women who want to rid themselves of their damaging husbands take the men’s belongings and place them either outside the home or on his mother’s doorstep. Again, laughter.

Shenandoah explained that she had recorded many different songs that remind her of specific women. She sang her sister Diane’s song. She discussed her feelings on the power of song by stating, “Healers say if you sing along with songs, you will be healed.”

She called Dan Truckey, Beaumont Heritage Center Curator and director of the Performing Arts Series up on stage to play guitar, and she moved to the grand piano. She then addressed Enisha Hill, a young Mohawk woman and part of a Hannahville Indian Community student group, asking her to join the growing assemblage onstage. She sang a friendship song with Enisha and urged everyone to sing.

More of the Hannahville students were encouraged onstage, as were other audience members. The first half of the concert ended with audience members round dancing in the aisles.

Back from intermission, Shenandoah sang another song from the Matriarch album and then a tribute song to Lori Piestewa, the young Navajo mother who was the first Native American woman killed in combat while serving in America’s armed forces. She recommended that everyone access a tribute she performed to Piestewa, who gave her life in Iraq, on YouTube.

When the missionaries came to Africa they had the Bible and we had the land. They said, ‘Let us pray.’ We closed our eyes. When we opened them we had the Bible and they had the land.”

“Every country has its own songs of struggle, its own songs of hope. I have learned that our songs are our personal stories of struggle and hope. Through the story of song by stating, “Healers say if you sing along with songs, you will be healed.”

“Every country has its own songs of struggle, its own songs of hope. I have learned that our songs are our personal stories of struggle and hope. Through the story of song, we can celebrate our root, our connection, our history.”

A special thank you to Kenn Pittawanawkat for delaying his journey home to Canada in order to be with us. Chi miigwetch, Kenn.

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Shenandoah said she has released fourteen albums and she must sing one song from each album so the audience won’t know which one to buy. This, she said, “is an old Indian trick.”

She endorsed nurturing one’s gifts saying, “Our gift is a responsibility. Though I’ve won many awards, what counts is the message behind the music.”

She explained how talented her sister Diane is, a degree art major, and a critically acclaimed sculptor and jeweler maker, some of whose work was available for purchase in the lobby.

Diane has been playing a large, red-painted hand drum with a bird in flight painted on it throughout the performance.

She explained that she has learned that her generation is the seventh generation since her ancestor, Chief Shenandoah, lived among her people. She thinks of that as she sings “When the Eagle Calls.”

When the Eagle calls,
When the Eagle cries,
Don’t run away,
Don’t turn and hide,
Join hands as one,
Hold your head up high,
When the Eagle calls.

Shenandoah moved into the lobby after the concert. Fans pressed close in the Kaufman reception area as she signed autographs and posed for photos with admirers.

When the missionaries came to Africa they had the Bible and we had the land. They said, ‘Let us pray.’ We closed our eyes. When we opened them we had the Bible and they had the land.”

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1. Wade Fernandez poses with NMU student Maryanne Brown, NAS Faculty Grace Chaillier. NASA Chair Sam Hill, and NAS Faculty Leann Miller.
2. Joanne Shenandoah takes a break from her workshop to take a photo with Beaumier Heritage Center Director, Dan Truckey and Center for Native American Studies Director, April Lindala.
3. Joanne and her sister Diane play and sing for their Hannahville audience.
4. Hannahville students round dance during Joanne Shenandoah’s workshop performance.
6. NASA member, Jalessa Schuyler, is ready to start cooking for the First Nations Food Taster.
8. Dr. Adriana Greci Green helps her NAS 204 students during a beading workshop.
9. NAS 204 student, Andrew Post, works on his Peyote stitch keychain.
10. April Lindala guides a student through her first Peyote stitches.
11. Audience members speak with Michael Robinson following his presentation.
12. Dr. Martin Heinhardt tells a story for the Oral Traditions course.

Shenandoah Holds Workshop
By BJ Bosco
The morning of Saturday, November 8, I had the privilege of attending a workshop by Joanne Shenandoah and her sister, Diane. The sisters’ visit to NMU was thanks to the International Performing Arts Series, overseen by Dan Truckey, Director of the Beaumier Heritage Center at NMU. Held in the Whitman Hall commons, the first workshop was held for a group of visiting Hannahville students. The visiting group of students also took a campus tour and planned to see Shenandoah’s concert later that evening at the Kaufman Auditorium in Marquette.

Shenandoah started the morning by conversing with the students, asking them about their likes, their hopes, their goals, and telling them a little about her own. She told stories of when she first began to sing, and how she deals with sore throats, keeping herself in top singing shape. She and Diane then played and sang for them, accompanied by Truckey on guitar. She encouraged everyone to sing along with her.

During a short break Diane showed examples of her artwork, photos of sculptures, as well as actual pieces of jewelry she had handcrafted.

One student, Einisha Hill, recorded an interview with Joanne for the student-run program “Rezz Radio” produced by students at the Hannahville Indian School. Shenandoah was all smiles throughout the morning, giving students tips on writing and singing. She ended the workshop by inviting the students onstage at her concert that evening, and they practiced a song, dancing around the perimeter of the Commons. After the workshop she and Diane joined the group of students for lunch at the Wildcat Den.

*There was to be a second workshop scheduled for NMU students and the general public, but was canceled due to lack of attendance.

Dr. Adriana Greci Green (CNAS) is pleased to announce the award of a MetLife Foundation grant ($100,000) to the Detroit Institute of Arts in support of an Anishinaabe arts exhibition project. This grant will be dedicated to creating a traveling exhibition designed for community-based Native American cultural centers, bringing the museum to underserved audiences throughout the Great Lakes Region in the United States and Canada. Partnering institutions are the Saginaw Chippewa Ziibiwing Museum in Mt. Pleasant and the Ojibwa Cultural Foundation on Manitoulin Island. Dr. Greci Green is part of the steering and advisory committee for this project.

Rosette beading class held

The first beading class of the semester was taught by April Lindala on Wednesday, October 29. Ten students attended and were taught how to make rosette beaded earrings. It was a fun and relaxing night getting to know each other over our beadwork. We listened to Joanne Shenandoah and Wade Fernandez (both of whom visited NMU’s campus this semester). Several of us finished at least one earring before the end of the night. This beading class was part of the Native American Student Empowerment Initiative. Watch for more events like this during the Winter 2009 semester.
Anishinaabe Language impacts other areas of education

By James Van Eck II—As a student of the Anishinaabe, both verbally and culturally, I am blessed with the understanding of an entire people’s culture and history other than my own. For the last three semesters I have been taking at least one Anishinaabe class, while at the same time laughing, learning, and understanding life a little bit more than I did before. The past two semesters I have taken, specifically, NAS 101 and 102, the Anishinaabe Language, Culture, and Community classes. I have learned so much from these classes, yet I realize that I know so little at the same time. It wasn’t until December 1, 2008 that I realized how much knowledge I have truly attained.

I sat with my fellow students in a large Sociology class lecture room. We watched the documentary “Manoomin: Ojibwe Spirit Food” produced and directed by NMU’s own sociology professor, Michael Loukinen. We were learning about this food and its role in Anishinaabe Madzowin (life). As I watched this film there was a scene showing the late spiritual elder Archie McGeshick Sr. giving a prayer in Anishinaabe for a good harvest and a blessing over their crop. I sat and watched, amazed that I was capable of understanding his prayer.

Unfortunately I wasn’t able to comprehend every word, but his point was very clear to me. I chuckled, knowing I was probably the only one out of the entire class (close to 100 people) that could translate his words. It truly opened my eyes as to how much I have acquired of something that only a handful of people have— an ability, an understanding, and the knowledge to link myself with a people that do not have their own country, that do not have a massive population, and do not have that many fluent speakers.

Manoomin: Ojibwe Spirit Food can be found in the CNAS Resource Room and is available for viewing at the CNAS.

Student Project for NAS 204

Michael Tracy chose to build a Native American style hand drum for his NAS 204 - Native American Experience class project. Coming from an Irish-American background, Michael chose this style of drum due to its similarity to the Irish bodhrán. The construction of the drum has been documented in a power point presentation and is available in the CNAS Resource room for anyone interested in viewing Michael’s techniques.

Seats are still open for a few of the classes offered by the Center for Native American Studies (CNAS).

“Anishinaabe Language, Culture and Community II” with Kenn Pitawanakwat still has seats available.

The Center is working to build a large base of students so that future classes such as NAS 102 and even NAS 201/202 will be offered and available. (see story regarding Furthering Anishinaabe Language on next page).

Grace Chaillier is once again teaching “History of Indian Boarding School Education.” This class will begin the week of January 12 and will be Tuesdays/Thursdays at 4-5:40 p.m. It is scheduled a bit late in the day to encourage community members to sign up.

Anishinaabe News

Annette’s documentary made me cry and brought me back to that day on the French-German border. A day I will never forget. More people need to never forget.

I am so proud of Kevin Annett for having the courage to take a stand and defend what is right. Not many would have stood firm in all that he faced. Hearing his story gives me courage. I will not just live in this world and let someone else take care of it. Now, when my own courage falters, I will think of Kevin Annett and I will continue on the right path.

For more information on Kevin Annett and Canada’s Genocide, visit www.hiddenfromhistory.org

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NAS 204 students learn to Peyote stitch

Dr. Adriana Gregi Green’s NAS 204 class, The Native American Experience, had a Peyote stitch workshop on Monday, November 24, 2008, led by guest presenter April Lindala. Students made key chains with an option of three colored beads, white, black, and red.

The purpose of the workshop was to “give students experiential appreciation for Native Art,” says Dr. Gregi Green. The students were interested and engaged in the activity, and said they hope it will be repeated for NAS 204 classes to come.

April’s Tiny Tidbit

Great gift idea for any time of the year!

A smart alternative to plastic shopping bags.

On sale now at the CNAS—$112 Whitman Hall for $12.

Tidbit

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By Kristy Walker-Treacy - My husband and I sat down to watch this documentary after Kevin Annett visited our Northern Michigan University classes in September. We both have been involved in several social, environmental and human rights movements. We consider ourselves activists. I really enjoyed meeting Kevin and am glad he inspired me to watch his documentary. I have known about indigenous genocide in the North America for more than a decade now and I wish that I could say that I was surprised by the extent of genocide that happened in Canada, but unfortunately I was not. I want to ask, how could this happen? I want to know why this was not stopped. I want to know how a grown man or woman could violate and harm a child and blatantly get away with it. I want to demand justic for the victims of such brutal and heinous crimes. But what justice can you offer for the murder of a people, not just bodily but culturally and spiritually? I wish that I could understand how one group could decimate another and then turn its back on the survivors, denying them their right to mourn. I feel this is one of the most important aspects of the white man’s denial of this atrocity. The Native peoples need and should have, the right to bury and grieve for their loved ones who have passed, their living that continue to suffer, and their culture. Denying the existence of this holocaust is denying the victims the ability to move beyond it. The governments of North America need to admit to their crimes against humanity and then they need to pay their restitution. I am not in any way suggesting that apology, recognition, and restitution are enough, but it is what they have to give and they need to give it. Now. The people have been waiting long enough. In 1995, I worked in Germany and had an opportunity to visit a Nazi death camp on the French-German border. Reading books, watching films, and seeing photographs of such things is not enough. There is no way to understand what truly happened until you see it and feel it in person. It was the single most painful thing I have ever experienced. But I am glad that I did. I read many books on the Nazi holocaust and saw many movies. I even took a college course on it. I felt that I was informed. I understood the terrible things that happened, or so I thought. I stepped off the bus on that chilly morning and I will never forget what I felt. It may sound strange to some, but I felt death, I smelled death, I heard and tasted it. In one moment everything I read and thought I knew about concentration camps was amplified tenfold. I could not stop the tears from streaming down my face. The suffering of so many is very hard to take in. When Kevin Annett speaks of the need for remembrance, a holocaust museum, I could not agree with him more. People must know what happened. People, Native and white, need to grieve for so much loss. Kevin

By Kenn Pitawanakwat - This winter semester, the Center for Native American Studies is offering its first Anishinaabe Language course focused on winter specific exercises in the Anishinaabe language. Excitement is mounting. NAS 298 is a 4-credit course and is a directed study in Native American Studies. This specific directed study will consist of outdoor and cultural vocabulary specific to winter study. At the end of the course the student will achieve a level of competency specific to the exercise and winter elements. Prerequisite is NAS Anishinaabe Language, Culture and Community 101 or by approval of the instructor. For more information or to fill out a directed study form, contact the Center for Native American Studies at 906-227-1397 or visit us on-line.

Further Anishinaabe Language offered in Winter ’09
Have you heard what students have said about NAS 342-Indigenous Environmental Movements?

- The instructor lives the course she teaches and conveys her convictions clearly and effectively to all students.
- My life has been enriched by what I have learned in this class.
- I feel this class opened my eyes to many issues that we are struggling with today, not only in the U.S. but globally.
- My life has been enriched by what I have learned in this class.
- The instructor lives the course she teaches and conveys her convictions clearly and effectively to all students.
- I think this course as a necessity for our survival on this earth.
- This class was the best class I have taken at NMU thus far. The texts were INCREDIBLE!
- This class opened my eyes to an entirely new type of environmentalism.
- I feel this class opened my eyes to many issues that we are struggling with today, not only in the U.S. but globally.
- This class opened my eyes to an entirely new type of environmentalism.

Seats for Winter 2009 are still open. Sign up today!
If you have any questions, contact the Center for Native American Studies at 227-1397.

Award-winning author MariJo Moore visited campus for Native American Heritage Month on Monday, November 10. Her presentation on the healing power of words was attended by both students and community members alike. The evening event which took place in the Payne/Halverson lobby, included words of wisdom from our guest as well as a sampling of her original works. Her humor is quick and put a smile on all of our faces. She slyly said, “if you have a question, put it down on a $20 bill and hand them forward.” The next morning she read original works to students in Amy Hamilton’s Oral Traditions course.

A member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma made history on Saturday, December 13 as the first American Indian to win the Heisman Trophy. Sam Bradford, 21, was named the Most Outstanding College Football Player for 2008, capping an impressive season for the 21-year-old quarterback from the University of Oklahoma. He broke state and national records with the Sooners and emerged as a role model for his tribe and Indian youth.

"I feel like that’s another blessing that God’s given me. I have a great platform, especially within the Cherokee Nation,” Bradford said in New York City, where he was announced as the 74th winner of the Heisman. "And for me to be an example for those kids, I look at it as a great opportunity for me.” Bradford, whose father is Cherokee, has previously said his tribal heritage didn’t play a major role in his upbringing. But he has embraced his newfound stardom among the second-largest tribe in the nation.

With the new title, the Cherokees can boast of two tribal members whose football prowess took them to new heights. Sonny Sixkiller, who was born in Tahlequah, is believed to be the first Indian player to start at quarterback for a Division I team – Bradford is the second. Sixkiller, who works as a sports commentator, rose to prominence the early 1970s so it’s been a long time since an Indian football player made national headlines. Few make it to the college level and none have entered the professional realm since Jim Thorpe, who was Sac and Fox from Oklahoma, and other Native athletes played in the early years of the National Football League.

Few Native athletes are represented in other professional sports though two have become baseball standouts in the past couple of years. Joba Chamberlain, a member of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, plays for the New York Yankees, and Jacoby Ellsbury, who is Navajo and is enrolled with the Colorado River Indian Tribes, plays for the Boston Red Sox.

Bradford, who is a sophomore at OU, has said he is interested in attending law school after college. There’s speculation he may want to enter the NFL draft but has not stated whether he will file the paperwork, which is due in mid-January.

Despite the attention on Bradford, he’s not the only Cherokee who plays for OU. Ben Hampton is a deep snapper for the top-ranked team. Derek Shaw, who is Ponca and Osage, is also a deep snapper for the Sooners.

Bradford was honored Monday, December 15, 2008 in New York City as the first American Indian to win the Heisman.