

Ashi-niswi giizisoog (Thirteen Moons)

Miini Giizis

Miini Giizis is the blueberry moon and begins its cycle as a new moon on July 1. Other names used for this moon include Aabita niibino giizis (mid-summer moon) and Miskomini giizis (raspberry moon) and Baashkaw'e giizis (flying moon).

Learning Ojibwemowin: Don't miss out!

By Dave Wilsey,
University of Minnesota Extension

I hear one message over and over in program development: It is critical that members of the Fond du Lac community are exposed to their language. For this reason, one of the goals of Thirteen Moons is to help connect community members to culture and language. In the three years that I have worked with Fond du Lac, I have seen a blossoming of language-focused events in the community. Thirteen Moons cannot take credit for these events as most were developed by dedicated FDL community members. I am proud to say, however, that Thirteen Moons partially supports these events financially and in other ways. Because this is such an important topic, I want to highlight two large Ojibwe language efforts underway this season.

June 13 kicked off the third year of the Wiigwaasi Jiimaan Immersion Camp. This workshop is held on the FDL Cultural Museum grounds and runs daily through early July. Participants are immersed in the process and language of birch bark canoe building. Fluent speakers are on staff.

June 24 - 26 marks the third year of Ambe, Ojibwemodaa (Come on, let's speak Ojibwe) Language Immersion Camp. This event is held at the Kiwenz campground (formerly Molstad's). Campers are exposed to language and traditional, natural resource-based arts through various activities and events. Fluent speakers are on staff and make sure that Ojibwe is spoken, and spoken well. I'm sure there is more out there but these two events are not to be missed.



Vern Zacher practices daashkibijigewin

Remembering Awsawdum through Gitigaan

By Jason Holliday,
FDL Planning Director

The Fond du Lac Reservation gardening project started in 1995 in cooperation with the University of Minnesota Extension Service. Jim Sutherland coordinated activities under the Pathways to Educational Partnership (PEP) program. At that time the Gitigaan Program, as it is known now, was called "Project Grow". PEP and Project Grow were a part of a larger statewide project that included all Minnesota Ojibwe tribes. Each tribe had what was called a "Planning Circle" comprised of staff, community members and other volunteers that worked on three main focus areas: youth education, health/nutrition, and horticulture. Other aspects were also incorporated such as wellness, traditional

foods, and native plants. Through the use of gardening, the planning circles addressed the areas of youth education, health/nutrition, and horticulture. A series of ten weekly classes was the tool to address these ideas. Classes were originally held at the University of Minnesota Forestry Center and had between 8-10 attendees each night. At the end of each year, there would be an annual meeting of all the Planning Circles to discuss each program and how to improve it for the following year. The PEP Program concluded in 2001 when grant funding ended. Tribes at this time were left on their own to continue programs.

Awsawdum (Leland Debe) was always active in this program since its beginnings in 1995. He promoted the program whenever and wherever he could. He served on local and national boards based on his desire

and knowledge on gardening, community and traditions. He was very proud of his time on the NRCS National Committee. On Fond du Lac, Leland became a central figure and spokesperson of the Gitigaan Program. This was important after the PEP Program concluded, as he stepped forward to keep it moving. Unfortunately for other Tribes, their programs ceased to function or were drastically reduced without the financial or administrative support of PEP. The Fond du Lac program continued and has increased in size over the years, with class sizes up to 50 people. This is quite a change from the eight the first year. Awsadum was instrumental to the Gitigaan Program: I thank him for his time, effort and patience.

Straw Bale Gardening...

By Shannon Judd,
*Environmental Outreach Coordinator,
FDL Resource Management Division.*

If you missed last month's issue, straw bale gardening involves growing your plants right out of a straw bale. The straw bale acts as the container and seedling can be placed directly in the straw. Or, seeds can be started by just placing them in an inch or two of soil on top of the bale. Almost everything I planted is doing well, but I do need to replant some: I assume that having old seeds is the reason.

I was concerned about the mushroom forest popping up in almost every bale. Mushroom growth IS a good sign that the composting process is happening, but there were tons of them. I pulled many out to clear space for planting and they really have not seemed to be a big deal. They are mostly Inky Caps, which are known for decomposing straw bales and dropping black blobs that look like ink. One observation I did make is that you do not want your plant leaves right near the mushroom heads because when they drop their ink, it sticks to the leaf. One question I have heard from a few people is if I have had a problem with snakes around the bales. I have not seen any yet but I will keep you posted.



Shannon's straw bale squash row in mid June