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Ahnee (Hello)!

Winter is finally here in Northern Michigan! I hope everyone is enjoying all the snow we received and please use caution when driving. This past week was busy with travel to Washington, D.C. From both meetings, exciting opportunities and outcomes came of it. I hope you enjoy reading, and please check out the informative links provided.



12.08.09 At an invite by Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, Indian Health Services (IHS) Director, I attended the first meeting of the IHS Tribal Consultation Process Committee in Washington, DC. Dr. Roubideaux stated in her letter, “My top priority as Director is to renew and strengthen our partnership with Tribes. I understand the important role of Tribal consultation and believe that in order to improve the health of American Indian and Alaskan Native communities, we must work in partnership.” This statement is profound and definitely evident in Dr. Roubideaux’s leadership style and commitment to Indian Country.

In the first picture above, Dr, Roubideaux is shown in the middle moderating the day’s consultation meeting with Tribal Leaders. The second picture captures the two representatives from each region that participated. I was attending as a representative from the Bemidji Region.



12.08.09 Also attending the IHS Tribal Consultation was Geoffrey Roth, Executive Director of the National Council of Urban Indian Health. I have enjoyed getting to know Mr. Roth and appreciate the energy and focus he has for advocating and meeting the health needs of our American Indian/Alaskan Native urban populations. To learn more about the National Council of Urban Indian Health, please click here: www.ncuih.org.



12.09.09 On Wednesday, I provided both oral and written testimony to the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (www.indian.senate.gov/public/). This was an oversight hearing: Where's the Trustee? Department of Interior Backlogs Prevent Tribes from Using their Lands. The hearing took place in Room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C.

In the above pictures I am providing testimony and responding to questions from Senators. Also contributing on the Panel was Carl Artman, who was the Interior Department's tenth Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. Artman is an enrolled member of the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin whose nomination was confirmed by the United States Senate on March 5, 2007. Mr. Larry Echo Hawk is the current Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, as nominated by President Obama.

In both pictures, in the background, is John Petoskey. Mr. Petoskey is the Grand Traverse Band's General Counsel. I want to personally thank Mr. Petoskey, Mr. Bill Ratstetter, and Mr. Riyaz Kanji for their individual and collective efforts to prepare me for the testimony I provided, and being able to respond effectively from Senate Committee questions.

Please visit the Grand Traverse Band's website to view both the video of my testimony and the submitted written testimony to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs: <http://www.gtbindians.org/gtbnews.html> (please note the times indicated below the link that pertains to GTB's testimony).

From the past efforts of GTB Tribal Leaders and staff commitments, yesterday (Thursday), I was able to proudly send out this global email to GTB government and gaming staff:



**FROM THE DESK OF
DEREK J. BAILEY, TRIBAL CHAIRMAN**

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Global Email

Today we received exciting news that Parcel 45 in Milton Township, in Antrim County, will be taken into trust for the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians by the Secretary of the Interior! Parcel 45, which is 78 acres, will allow 22 additional housing sites for tribal members for housing development. The trust status of this parcel has been pending since 2001. On December 9, 2009, I was invited to testify in front of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs on the backlog at the Department of the Interior for fee-to-trust applications. The Senate Select Committee has held two previous hearings on the lack of action by the Department of the Interior in accepting fee property into trust on behalf of Indian tribes.

As a direct result of previous Tribal Leaders' efforts and my testimony yesterday, the Department of Interior has accepted this parcel into trust. We anticipate that continued pressure on the Department will move along other existing fee-to-trust applications that Grand Traverse Band has pending. Trust status for tribal property ensures the continual existence of GTB by the expansion of the Grand Traverse Band reservation, which secures the common future for all tribal members. I want to thank all of the dedicated staff and tribal leadership who have worked on this effort – MEGWETCH!



12.11.09 Through an invite by Dr. Jason Jeffrey, Principal/Director of the TBAISD Career-Tech Center (CTC), I was able to learn more about what is offered at the CTC. Honestly, I had no idea the numerous educational opportunities that exist, and also what a great learning environment the CTC is!

Also joining today's tour was Michael Casuscelli, Publisher of the Traverse City Record Eagle (www.record-eagle.com). In the first above picture (L-R): Michael Casuscelli and Jason Jeffrey. The 2nd picture shows a student in the culinary program that worked in the World Café, and part of the CTC programming. Our breakfast was delicious, and thank you to the students, staff and Chefs! The 3rd picture shows the CTC's greenhouse – a great place to relax!

If you have not visited the CTC, I encourage you to do so and to also visit the World Café (open Wednesday thru Friday from 11 – 1 PM). To learn more, please click here: www.tbactc.org.

Have a great weekend and week!

Chairman Bailey

www.gtbindians.org

“A Nation grows stronger when built upon shared visions.”