White Earth Welcomes New Bemidji State President

White Earth Chairwoman Erma J. Vizenor welcomed the new president of Bemidji State University (BSU) Dr. Richard Hanson, right, and the executive director of BSUs American Indian Resource Center Dr. Donald Day. They discussed the importance of American Indian education at BSU.
Obscure from Page 3

expenses. There is no actual financial information in the report about the amount of income from donations and other sources, or the specific amount of expenditures. The 25-page annual report dedicates only one page of pie charts to the revenue and expenses of the organization.

The two graphic pie charts represent in nine slices of color the percentages of apparent revenue and expenses, as the slices and percentages are not explained or commented in the report, and there are no references to actual dollars of revenue and expenses.

WELRP decided for some reason to present only obscure percentages on pie charts and to avoid the money numbers in the website reports for 2007 and 2009. The 2007 website report designates 23 percent for administration, 3 percent for fund raising, 2 percent for land, 10 percent for environment, and 16 percent for education on the first pie chart, but not the actual revenue or expenses. The second pie chart designates 2 percent for fund raising, 1 percent for administration, 36 percent for native harvest, and 4 percent for fund raising. None of these categories are discussed or explained.

The 2007 and 2009 website annual reports do not provide financial information or an explanation of the categorical percentages on the graphic pie charts. The 2007 website report is an apparent evasion of almost two million dollars in annual income, but more specific financial information was required and necessary to complete the annual Form 990 for the Internal Revenue Service.

Winona LaDuke, the Executive Director of the White Earth Land Recovery Project, comments on treaty rights, a wind turbine, a “new crop of heritage corn,” a goat project, and the destruction of her home by fire, but does not provide financial information about the annual income, salaries, and expenses of the organization in the annual website report.

“As I write, I have a home. Many of you know that this past year was extremely trying for our organization and our people. It was indeed a perfect storm. This is to say that my family’s home burned to the ground, several of my senior staff had to leave for medical reasons, and the demise of world financial markets almost cost our organization, our financial well being. As I write to you now, I can say that we have survived. We have changed, we are stronger, more lean, and soon we hope to be more virtual and versatile, as this woman and an organization which is founded in the last millennium begins to move squarely into this millennium, and the age of Facebook, Twitter, and the internet. We hope you will join us.”

WELRP presents only selective financial information about the income and expenses of the nonprofit organization. The income and expenses of the executive director and the salaries of the employees are not revealed in the two website reports. The annual reports are elusive, and the absence of critical financial information creates doubts about the management of the organization.

The White Earth Land Recovery Project should release more specific financial information and provide easy access to website financial disclosures of revenue and expenses, and the actual salaries of the executive director and other employees of the organization. The director should also provide electronic access to the most recent Form 990 reports to the Internal Revenue Service. These annual reports are public documents.

The citizens and elected government of the White Earth Reservation should demand audited annual reports and more specific information about the actual number of acres, parcels, and descriptive sections of land recovered in the name of the reservation by the White Earth Land Recovery Project.

Gerald Vizenor is a citizen of the White Earth Nation. He is a Professor of American Studies at the University of New Mexico, and a former journalist for the Minneapolis Tribune.

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Leona Trautner

Leona Trautner, age 84, of Mahnomen, died Oct. 27 at Sanford Health in Fargo.

Leona Irene was born on April 10, 1926, to Felix and Alma (Bisson) Brisbois in rural Mahnomen County. She grew up in Mahnomen and lived at the boarding house her senior year until she graduated from Mahnomen High School. Her step father, Leonard, joined the family when Leona was a just teenager and played an important part in her life.

Leona married Harvey Stuvland in 1945 and they lived in Seattle, where she worked at the Boeing plant to support the war effort. She was a “Rosie the Riveter” and because of her small size she could crawl through the fuselage to wire the planes. Leona met Ed Trautner, while working at the Red Apple Café in Mahnomen. Leona and Ed were married on Feb. 16, 1949. They were visited every year by relatives from near and far, all the way down to great-great-great nieces and nephews who would come to visit Auntie Leona, especially at the annual “Roy Lake Rendezvous” on the farm. Leona worked various other jobs in addition to her “chores” as a farmer’s wife. She worked at the Roy Lake Lodge and then for many years at the “Dime Store” in Mahnomen. Leona enjoyed baking and was known for her caramel rolls, apple strudel and wedding cakes. Over the years, she baked countless loaves of bread, cakes and cookies. Leona was also the neighborhood barber for many years. Ed passed away in 2005 and Leona continued to live on the farm until her death. She was always visiting people, having lunch at the Center, playing bingo, or going to the Casino.

Leona lived by the neighborhood kids and she especially loved her second family- the Snobl’s, they call her “Ma” and Ed was “Pa.” They were always visiting and helping in good times and bad. Steve Snobl was their guardian angel, it was his help that made it possible for them, and later, Leona, to stay on the farm. It didn’t matter what the time of night or the weather- if they needed help- he was there. Leona’s family is forever grateful to Steve.

Leona is survived by three sons: Louis (Theresa) Stuvland of Sabin, Minn., Michael (Zita) Trautner of Van Dyne, Wis., and Bill (Mary) Trautner of Moorhead; four daughters: Sharon (Gene) Jurgens of Fergus Falls, Renee (Randy) Dickhaus of Hawley, Paula (Joe) Reichel of Louisville, Colo., and Jackie (John) Agnew of Sisseton, S.D.; 19 grandchildren; and 11 great grandchildren; two brothers, Robert (Michelle) Paulitschek of Lengby, and Curtis (Rhonda) Paulitschek of McIntosh; and her sister-in-law, Felicia Darco of Fort Collins, Colo.; as well as her Snobl family.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Ed; daughter, Judy Trautner; her mother, Alma; step father, Leonard; father, Felix; five sisters: Ora, Babe, Lorraine, Alma and Fern; and two brothers, Felix Jr. and Glenn.

Mass of Christian burial was held Oct. 30 at the St. Anne’s Catholic Church in Naytahwaush. Officials were Father Dwight Hoeberechts and Father Jerry Orsino.

Interment: St. Anne’s Catholic Cemetery.

Arrangements: Anderson-Mattson Funeral Home

Online: andersonmattson.com