

FCP Museum and Cultural Center To Expand

by Krystal Statezny



Many new area structures have been built in the past few months, including the long awaited Potawatomi Bingo/Northern Lights Casino and the recently inhabited FCP Executive Building/Headquarters for Tribal Government. In addition to these new buildings, another renovation will occur in Stone Lake - the expansion of the Potawatomi Cultural Center and Museum. Plans are underway to begin the expansion in October 2006 with a completion date of July 2007.

The additional 11,000 square foot (5,500 sq. ft. on each floor) will allow the Cultural Center and Museum to expand in all areas. The upper level will include:

- a larger gift shop
- Tribal Security offices
- inclusion of the Tribal Enrollment Department

- additional Museum Staff offices
 - a large library
- The lower level will house:
- expanded archival/artifact storage areas (Climate-Controlled)
 - a photography studio and dark room
 - language classroom and office
 - conference rooms
 - additional storage areas for arts and crafts
 - maintenance office, storage and work area

The 2,000 square foot dome-shaped library will be illuminated by natural light through the ceiling. The dome, which reflects the circle of life, is enhanced by wooden beams that extend from the roof to the ground. The library will encompass a central reading room for the public and will have interactive research terminals.

Originally, a library known as Ka ken das wen (library) was established on the reservation in the late 70's with Ellen Tuckwab as librarian. Mike Alloway, Director, wants to incorporate this back into the tribal community. "I see the library as beneficial to our community especially our youth for such things as studying, tutoring, and researching."

Alloway also envisions the museum gift shop as an outlet mirroring the services offered by Noc Bay Traders of Escanaba, Mich.

The museum extends its cultural feel to the outside where additional wigwams will be constructed. This re-created village located on the eastern doorway of the center will be accessible on the lower level with birds-eye views from a walk-out deck (with outdoor fireplace) extending from the library. Designers wanted

visitors to experience that while you're inside the museum, you're outside at the same time.

Arturo Badillo, Barrientos Design and Consulting, Inc., out of Milwaukee, Wis., is the chief architect and project manager for the museum expansion. Barrientos, a minority-owned business, recently completed a county highway facility for the Menominee Indian Tribe as well as other projects for the Ho-Chunk Nation in Baraboo and Black River Falls, Wis. Badillo said the company incorporates inspiration and aesthetics into every project based on clientele information. "It will be a defining moment in the history of the Cultural Center and Museum. The building will be one with nature."

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Where: Mole Lake Bingo Hall
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