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Our History

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From 1879 to 1883 many counties in north-central Wisconsin were carved out of larger counties of Marathon, Lincoln, and Oconto.

One of those new counties was actually named New County (created in 1879). It was later renamed Langlade County in honor of Charles de Langlade, an important figure in the history of the Great Lakes region long before the country of the United States existed.

Charles de Langlade may have never actually set foot in the county that bears his name. The closest that we know of, for certain, was that he lived in Green Bay in his later years. But he nonetheless deserves to be recognized for his importance in the early history of this area. His name would suggest that he was French but, although part French, he was actually what would later be known as Metis – the son of a French man and Native American women (Odawa nation). His father was a prominent fur trader. Charles also married an Odawa woman. So, his family and social connections were more Native American than French.

The region where Lakes Superior, Michigan, and Huron come together was a major crossroads at a time when long distant travel took place by waterways. Canoe routes went eastward towards the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic and westward towards the Mississippi and Gulf of Mexico. Many Native American villages, French settlements, missionary settlements, military forts, and trading posts dotted the landscape. A major fort was at Michilimacinac - on the mainland of the Michigan Upper Peninsula opposite Mackinaw Island.

In the 1850s and 1860s Langlade was based mostly around Michilimacinac but his trading and military excursions took him as far as New York State and Quebec City. In his military career he always sided with those who were fairest to his Native American kin. He was instrumental in negotiating many alliances among the various Indian nations and between the Native

Americans and French who had vast business interests in the fur trade.

Langlade is probably best known in history for his role in a battle called “Braddock’s Defeat”. French and British were vying for dominance in the Great Lakes region. They were at war in Europe in the “Seven Years War”, which carried over into North America in the “French-Indian War”. In part due to Langlade’s negotiations, Anishinaabe Nations (including Ojibwe, Odawa, Potawatomi, and Huron) were allied with the French. The French-Indian War began in 1755 when a force of Anishinaabe defeated a force of over 3,000 British soldiers under the direction of Major General Edward Braddock at Fort Duquesne (now Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania). (One of the British soldiers was a 21-year-old officer – George Washington.)

While Langlade may not have played the major role depicted in a painting made about 150 years after the fact, there is no doubt that he rallied the Anishinaabe to fight on the side of the French in that battle. He later took part in other battles and in 1757 he led a large contingent of Native Americans at Fort William Henry in New York’s Adirondacks, made famous in James Fenimore Cooper’s novel *Last of the Mohicans*. It was a decisive French victory. About 1,800 Native Americans took part in what was perhaps the largest alliance ever assembled. However, that celebrated French victory was short lived. Two years later, in Quebec City, at the Battle of The Plains of Abraham, Langlade was once again leading a group of Anishinaabe allied with the French when they were defeated by the British. It is rumored that he was one of the sharpshooters that brought down the leader of the British troops, General Wolfe. That battle signaled the beginning of the end of French control of a region encompassing what is now eastern Canada and the northern U.S. from the Atlantic to the Mississippi.

Langlade returned to his home base at Michilimacinac which was still under French control. He continued trading and forging alliances among the various Indian nations and the French. But the French sold out the Native

See History Next Page



In a 1903 painting by Edwin Willard Deming, Langlade is shown, in European style clothing, at the far left directing the Anishinaabe in their attack on Braddock’s forces at Fort Duquesne (near what is now Pittsburgh). The original painting is in the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison.

Use March 14 as an excuse for some math fun

(StatePoint) Pi Day, is not only an annual opportunity to celebrate math, it's also a day to honor the renowned scientist and mathematician, Albert Einstein, born on March 14.

Here are some great ways your family can make math fun this Pi Day:

- Visit a math museum: Take the kids to a hands-on math museum featuring fun interactive exhibits,

events, puzzles, games and more that bring math to life.

- Bake a 'pi': Bake a pi-themed pi. Whether you love cherry, chocolate or lemon meringue, you can honor the day by baking a pie and carving the symbol for pi into your creation. This is also a great opportunity to calculate fractions, angles, percentages and areas!

- Learn the meaning of pi: A very

special number, pi is the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter, making its value essential for those studying geometry. It's also an "irrational number," meaning its exact value can't be expressed as a fraction. While scientists have calculated trillions of digits of pi, you are likely familiar with the first few -- 3.14.

- Learn more about Einstein:

There are many terrific biographies for all reading levels available, as well as documentaries and biopics that can help your family learn more about the life and work of the legendary Albert Einstein.

Math has reputation for being a tougher school subject, but it can also be a lot of fun. Let this Pi Day be an opportunity to show your kids that math is something to celebrate.

Continued

History

Americans in the peace treaty they signed with the British, giving the British control of the region. Langlade moved to Green Bay and set up his fur trade empire in the region between the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. Once the British took over at Michilimacinae he became a major force in negotiating deals between the British and French remaining in the region.

When 13 British colonies declared independence from England in 1776 the British tried, unsuccessfully, to forge alliances with the Iroquois against the Americans. But they were more successful with Langlade's Anishinaabe. They fought on the side of British General Burgoyne in New York State. But Native Americans soon divided their loyalties, some supporting the Americans and some the British. Langlade and his nephew Charles Gautier tried to rally the Ojibwe and Odawa to continue supporting the British while other Indian nations like the Sauk supported the rebels. Even the Menominee and Winnebago originally allied with Langlade were divided. Langlade and his followers went

back to Green Bay to regroup. British losses in southern Michigan convinced the Indians that continued support of the British was futile and against their own interests. When the French began assisting to the Americans the Native Americans became more encouraged to help the Americans. The British met with Langlade hoping to convince him to stay on their side. They were convinced that if Langlade and the Odawa and Ojibwe remained with them so would the Winnebago, Menominee, and Potawatomi. But while Native American of the Great Lakes had some concerns about the British, neither were their supporters of the Americans who were showing signs of encroaching into their lands. Langlade's son, Charles de Langlade Jr. and a contingent of Odawa fought with the British against the Americans. The Anishinaabe of northern Michigan were stunned when the British, after their defeat at Yorktown, sued for peace and, in the Treaty of Paris in 1783, ceded their lands and all territory east of the Mississippi to the Americans. This violated an earlier promise they had made to the Anishinaabe.

Back in 1759 Charles de Langlade had participated, on the side of the French, in the decisive

battle that gave the British control of the Great Lakes region. He returned to his home in Michilimacinae and then to Green Bay and continued being an influential fur trader and negotiator, resigned to British rule. About 20 years later he formed coalitions among the Indian nations to help the British against the Americans. While he, his nephew, and son were loyal to the British there were divided loyalties and lack of support from other tribes. With the end of the Revolutionary War Langlade now became an American, living in Green Bay. Even after American independence the British continued fur trading

and working with Langlade's Odawa kin. He died in Green Bay in 1800.

Charles de Langlade, his father before him, his son, nephew, and later, his grandson were important figures in the history of northern Michigan and Wisconsin. Four generations of the Langlade family established business contacts and political alliance among the Native Americans and between the Native Americans and the different colonists of the region: the French, the British, and the Americans. Those who chose to rename "New County" Langlade County honored an important historical figure.

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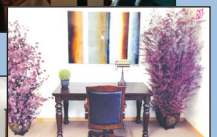
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