Constance Lake declares state of emergency over blastomycosis outbreak

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Constance Lake has 18 confirmed blastomycosis cases and three probable cases as of Dec. 9 after Chief Ramona Sutherland declared a state of emergency on Nov. 22 due to three suspected deaths from the the fungal lung infection.

'We have 18 confirmed blastomycosis cases and three probable cases, and we have 120 people still under investigation," says Roger Wesley, crisis coordinator at Constance Lake.

'The biggest thing we're dealing with right now is the multiple losses – we're leading the mental health supports and trying to reach these families and offer our services such as debriefing or grieving circles or just talking circles to kind of get them the help to address and grieve their losses.'

Sutherland says the community requires additional services to assist their people during this time of hardship in a Nov. 25 press release.

"It is of the upmost importance that we find the origin of these recent cases of blastomycosis so that we can prevent the loss of additional lives of our community citizens and treat the affected

areas," Sutherland says. "We require services such as emergency housing inspections, additional site assessments, grief/mental health counselling, support for family members of sick individuals and resources to help elevate fears of our people, to name a few. Due to our low standard of living, we need these resources immediately. We need to work closely and hold federal and provincial governments accountable during this time of crisis and we ask our neighbouring communities and partners to help support us in our time of need."

Grand Chief Derek Fox says in a Nov. 23 press release that Nishnawbe Aski Nation is "very concerned" with the situation in Constance Lake and have assured Sutherland and the Constance Lake Council that they are prepared to assist in any way possible.

"We look to our federal and provincial treaty partners to support Constance Lake with the resources they require to address this crisis including access to health care, testing and mental health supports," Fox says. "This is an extremely serious situation, and we appreciate the support and cooperation the community has received so far. We are hopeful that environmen-



Wawatay News archive photo

Constance Lake Chief Ramona Sutherland declared a state of emergency due to three suspected deaths due to blastomycosis.

tal testing will help the community understand and contain the problem as quickly as possible. We continue to pray for citizens of Constance Lake and ask that people keep them in their thoughts and prayers.'

Wesley says they have conducted sampling of areas around the community where people may have been exposed to the fungus, which the federal government's website states grows in moist soil, leaves and rotting wood.

"The greatest challenge is we have no idea what this is or where it comes from or how we're supposed to deal with it but we're learning fast," Wesley says. "With the snow cover, it's kind of blanketing any possibilities of these (fungal) spores getting into the envi-

Wesley says the Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital in Hearst now has extra physicians and stocks of anti-fungal medicine on hand to deal with the blastomycosis cases.

"Indigenous Services Canada stepped up as well as the province to provide that extra support," Wesley says. "I believe they brought in additional doctors and nurses (and) converted the emergency to fast track all our Constance Lake folks that were coming in with blastomycosis symptoms. So they are doing everything they possibly can to expedite the services they are providing.'

The federal government's website states that the fungus is common in soil near the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence Seaway and lakes in the Canadian Shield, including in northern New York State, Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

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A group of Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School students, Thunder Bay leaders, staff and police, Fort William Chief Peter Collins and former NHL player Jason Simon pose for a photo before playing a floor hockey

A Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School student tracks down the ball during a floor hockey game between DFC students, Thunder Bay leaders, staff and police, Fort William Chief Peter Collins and former NHL



DFC hosts floor hockey game with former NHL player

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School students hosted a floor hockey game with former NHL player Jason Simon, Fort William Chief Peter Collins, Thunder Bay Mayor Bill Mauro and city councillors, staff and police officers. Mauro convened the floor hockey game as a "great way" to welcome students to Thunder Bay.

"What a great day to be able to get out with the (students) and especially with the mayor and police officers," says Simon, a motivational speaker and Aamjiwnaang citizen from southern Ontario. "It was a great day, lots of fun."

Simon, who played on the DFC students' team, showed off his slap shot a few times during

'I still play quite a bit on the ice," Simon says. "I find that's where I'm most happiest is out on the ice or in the gym getting those endorphins, exercising."

Simon had earlier delivered three motivational sessions for the DFC students to inspire

them to exercise and burn their calories off.

"I promote health and wellness and staying away from drugs and alcohol," Simon says. "We talked about drugs and alcohol, seven grandfather teachings, caring for one another, being healthy and respect yourselves."

Mauro says Simon had a "heck of a shot" during the floor hockey game.

"I couldn't find any volunteers to go shadow the guy," Mauro says. "He's big, strong and a lot younger than most of us, so I just talked to him a little bit and hopefully if we play again and he is here he'll take it easier on us than he did today."

Mauro says the floor hockey players had a "great time," noting that he saw plenty of smiles throughout the game.

"I'm just seeing a lot of smiles out here and that's all it's about," Mauro says. "I think the (students) enjoyed themselves and the staff from the city as well as the councillors — it was lots of fun, lots of smiles, just a good time."

Mauro's team included Col-

lins and a group of Thunder Bay councillors, administrators and police officers. Simon and Thunder Bay Police community inclusion team officer Bob Simon, an Elsipogtog citizen from New Brunswick, played for the DFC students' team.

"I came out to have fun with the students at DFC and hopefully challenge them to a good hockey game," Collins says. "It's important to continue building that relationship and supporting the (students) who come from the north to get their education here in Thunder Bay and Fort William territory."

Bob says he surprised the other players by switching teams during the game and scoring the first goal of the game against Mauro's team.

"I planned it out with one of the organizers here at DFC to put on their jersey underneath my police shirt," Bob says, noting he started the game on defence with Mauro's team. "First shift out I scored a goal on (Mauro's) side and then I took my Thunder Bay Police shirt off and underneath was the DFC jersey."



Thunder Bay Police officer Bob Simon scores the first goal of the game on Thunder Bay Mayor Bill Mauro's

team during a floor hockey game.

Bob says it is important for the Thunder Bay staff and police to build relationships with the DFC students and staff.

"It's always been a great experience just hanging out with the (students) here making them feel welcome," Bob says. "It's their home away from home, and we try to make that as safe and comfortable as it

DFC principal Sharon Angeconeb says the floor hockey game was "a lot of fun" and a good time overall.

"It's good to have fun again, it's good to laugh together, it's good to enjoy being back together again," Angeconeb says. "I was very glad to see the mayor and the chief here, and the chief of police as well. That's leadership, spending time with young people, laughing with young people and just being part of our community."

Norma Kejick, executive

director at Northern Nishnawbe Education Council, also emphasized the importance of the floor hockey game with city representatives.

"DFCHS is very excited to bring in prominent members and leaders from our community to interact with our youth," Kejick says. "Hockey is a lifestyle in the north, and we look forward to creating lasting memories between our students and the community."

Thank You, Airlines!

Your fast, courteous delivery of Wawatay News to our northern communities is appreciated.













Sports



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School student aims to set up a scoring play.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay New

Former NHL player Jason Simon and a group of Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School students, Thunder Bay leaders, staff and police and Fort William Chief Peter Collins give elbow taps after playing a floor hockey game at DFC.

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Commentary Christmas

Past



Ihristmas was always a season of chaos and con- ■ fusion for me as a child. It was a strange mix of excitement and joy mixed also with feelings of anxiety and worry.

On one hand, our parents did everything they could to follow the strange modern commercial Christmas that we saw happening everywhere else in the country and on TV.

On the other hand we had to take part in the religious history of the birth of a saviour named Jesus and the ceremonies of ancient Middle Eastern, European traditions.

My mom Susan was born and raised in the northern remote wilderness and my dad Marius had lived his whole life in our home community of Attawapiskat. Both of them had been raised in a tradi-tional life of hunting, trapping, fishing and living off the land like our ancestors had for thousands of years. Their lives revolved around the land and the movements of the animals throughout the year.

The ideas of Christmas must have been very foreign to them but they followed in its tradition because it was part of the Christian faith. In more modern times, it was very confusing for all of us to un-derstand the commercial images of Santa Claus, snowmen, elves, Christmas trees, bright colourful deco-rations and lights even where. We all just fell in line with the rest of the country and we were mesmerized by the chaotic excitement of the year without really understanding what it was all about.

I never really understood it all but the best part of the celebrations for me was mom's Christ-mas feast. It was a mix of modern foods with turkey, ham, salads and sugary desserts combined with tra-ditional foods like roasted wild goose, and stews of moose meat or caribou mixed with dumplings. As children we watched mom making magic in the kitchen with excitement and later as teenagers, we joined in the work to help her in preparing food.

One of mom's specialties was Christmas fruit cake. In Cree this cake is called Kas-kah-pahchee-kan. She made hers in a large round donut pan that provided enough cake for all of us.

When we were all much younger, mom only ever made one cake at time during Christmas. It wasn't until we grew older and could help in the kitchen that she started mass producing six, seven or eight cakes a year to share with family and friends in town. As a child, I was never fond of of these cakes because I preferred the store bought chocolates and candies. It wasn't until later in the life that I grew to appreciate this sea-sonal cake and now I enjoy it because it reminds me of those special times with my family and my mom Susan.

The most memorable moments from my family's Christmas get togethers were those times when there was no alcohol or drugs in the com-

These were special times when we as children could feel safe, secure and happy. When adults in town were partying all that changed.

Of course we all realize now that the prevalent use of alcohol and drugs had to do with a history of colonization, residential schools and oppression.

Many of us drank or used drugs to forget and to numb the pain.

No matter what the root cause the fact is that when we as adults turn to using alcohol or drugs and in particular at times of the year that are supposed to be happy, our young ones are terrorized.

Most adults don't realize the terror and trauma they cause to younger people when the holiday drinking takes over everything.

The culture and traditions of our ancestors long ago did not include these substances and of course life then was very different as people were connected in a very direct way to Mother Earth. Our healing journey from the effects of colonization is a long one.

It is my hope that you will give yourself, your family and your friends the gift of sobriety this Christmas and start the new year with a life of healing and recovery.

Don't forget your children are watching your every move and they learn from you. If they accept that alcohol or drugs should be part of their lives then you are responsible for letting that happen.

If you are having problems with addictions, pick up the phone and reach out for help. Many of us have ghosts of Christmas past in memories that have to do with drinking or drugs and tragic cir-cum-

stances. If we make positive changes for ourselves and those we love in Christmas present, then we can look forward to better times in Christmases yet to come.

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Indigenous Knowledge improves the NWMO's geoscience work



At a recent conference, the NWMO's Jessica Perritt and Sarah Hirschorn spoke about how applying Indigenous Knowledge to a traditionally western science focused industry has improved the quality of our technical work and our ability to engage with communities. Their lecture focused on applying the seven sacred grandfather teachings of love, trust, honesty, humility, respect, bravery, and wisdom to the NWMO's work on the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel.

A Hesitant Beginning of Winter: Now It Is Here



Tam not certain that everyone agrees but I am certain November is a winter month in Northern Ontario.

Yes, it conflicts with the calendar of 12 months and 4 seasons with 3 months each. November technically is the final month of the Fall season but also features winter conditions. Record low temperatures of -30° C and lower are in the record books in late November and onwards. Another given in November is snow! Well, not necessarily, but more about snow follows below.

November was considerably different than October, which had been much above average in temperature across the entire North region. November was more complicated with temperatures much above normal in the far North (next to Hudson and James Bays), warmer than normal in the Northwest and near normal in most of the Northeast, A few locations from Sudbury to the Quebec border were slightly cooler than normal. in November.

A pronounced warm period extended across the North

from November 4 to 11. Temperatures were 8 to 12° C above average. These unseasonal conditions resulted in near record and a few new records.

Precipitation

November typically features a transition from rain to snow as the month progresses. To state the obvious, major snowfalls can occur anytime in November. In the Northwest a winter storm tracked through November 10 to 12. Snow amounts in Kenora, Sioux Lookout and other area locations were 15 to nearly 25 cm. The same low-pressure system resulted in record rain amounts of 55 to 72 mm in the Thunder area. The Northeast was relatively dry in November. Moosonee received about 33% and Sudbury about 50% of long-term averages.

Most of the North had snow on the ground (SOG) by early December. The snow belt from Wawa to Sault Ste. Marie featured (Dec. 9) 30 to 76 cm. The snow belt east of Lake Nipigon had 30 cm SOG.

Thunder Bay and area had only a trace of SOG by Dec. 5. At my weather station southwest of Thunder Bay there was 45 cm of SOG by the next

Lake Superior

Surface water temperatures of Superior continue to be warmer than average. Open water and slightly warmer conditions almost certainly mean that lake-effect snow will continue to result in closure of the Trans-Canada Highway to the east of Lake Superior from time to time in the coming weeks. A similar effect because of Lake Huron will likely enhance snowfalls in the Northeast to the north and east of this Great Lake.

Conference of the Parties (COP) 26

I have written about this recent world climate meeting in Wawatay for a couple of months now. Delays in climate change policy and postponing actions, in spite of chatter about a "Climate Emergency", is dangerous behavior. Fire, strong winds and flood are the most pronounced dangers in this region. The extreme weather in recent seasons should have reinforced for policy makers that such trends require action and adaptation.

A column in the Financial Post a few days ago caught my attention. A "Half a century of climate panic hasn't worked. Let's get smarter". I had writte in Wawatay that five decades of promises and slogans have not changed climate change policy. I mentioned Stockholm, Sweden in 1972 where environment and economic issues related to the changing climate were discussed. Inaction in spite of decades of evidence – not smart!

It seemed unlikely I would agree with a stated opinion in the Financial Post but author Bjorn Lomborg started with Stockholm. He goes on with locations and complaints. One complaint is that the "rich countries still get 78 per cent of their energy from fossil fuels" but make "their grandiose statements about saving the world". Fair enough.

He quotes a study that notes "young people worldwide found that most suffer from 'eco-anxiety'. Two-thirds are scared and sad, while almost half say their worries impact their daily lives." This very well could be the case and I am still in agreement.

Then Lomborg states, "It is irresponsible to scare youths". He goes on to blame the media, politicians and science studies and reports. He claims this induced "climate panic" is costing \$trillions. It is not "panic" and climate concerns that cost \$trillions. The damage from severe weather is now into the \$trillions world-wide.

It is an inappropriate time in history to advocate for increased use of fossil fuels and deny the cost and cause of climate disasters.

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Phone:(705) 360-4556 Toll Free: 1-877-929-2829 Fax:(705)360-1601

CEO/PUBLISHER John Gagnon johng@wawatay.on.ca

MANAGING EDITOR Chris Kornacki chrisk@wawatay.on.ca

> NORTHERN LIGHTS BANNER Dan Russell http://NorthernLightsNow.com

SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Tom Scura Phone: 807 622-6000 Fax: 807 622-6010 toms@wawatay.on.ca CIRCULATION/PRINTING Safeguard Business Systems Thunder Bay, ON

TRANSLATION Vicky Angees

vickya@wawatay.on.ca

DESIGN AND LAYOUT Through the Sky Studio

CONTRIBUTORS Lindsay Cote Rick Garrick Xavier Kataquapit Graham Saunders Ranger MCpl Chris Vernon Guest editorials, columnists and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of Wawatay News

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Commentary

Back To The Land And Around The Fire



ere we are all getting ready for Christmas and a new year. Most of us would have thought that we might be through with this Covid19 pandemic but that is sadly not the case. We are seeing a rise in numbers

all across the country and although the vaccines have protected us to a great degree new variants are making things difficult.

Combine that with the fact our vaccines are waning in strength after many months and a lot of double vaccinated people are getting sick.

The important thing to remember is that most of those who are vaccinated are not getting very sick, not ending up in hospitals, intensive care units or dying. That is a very big deal.

Still we have to deal with this pandemic and according to most experts vaccines will not be solv-ing it anytime soon on a global basis.

Yet, as more people get vaccinated we will be able to manage things so that we can move back to a new normal that will allow us dine in restaurants, go to the movies, visit family and friends and even travel domestically and perhaps internationally.

The biggest strategy we will always rely on is to wear masks, keep two meters from others, stay home if we have flu or cold symp-toms and wash hands

My partner has a lung disease and is very vulnerable to getting pneumonia so he can't get Covid19 or even any flus or colds. By following the rules for the pandemic he has not had any flus or colds with resulting pneumonia for three years. Neither one of us has been sick so obviously we know that following the rules and protocols to stay safe from Covid19 has in fact helped us stay healthy.

So far Covid19 in Canada has killed almost 30,000 people and in Ontario alone that number is almost 10,000. Even the flu is reported to kill abut 3,500 people in Canada every year. This is why I encourage people to get a flu shot every year.

Indigenous people are very vulnerable to getting sick from Covid19, flus, colds and all kinds of infections because of the cramped living conditions, poor housing quality, negative health diets, limited

access to medical services in semi and remote First Nations and far spread mental health conditions as well as addictions. Many people living on First Nations are also impoverished.

The realities of these facts are somewhat depressing however some good things have come out of this challenging Covid 19 pandemic.

For example we all now have a great respect for the power of the vi-rus, the danger of disease, flus and colds and more appreciation of what we need to do to stay safe and healthy. Everyone is also realizing that we have to follow the directions of world wide experts in epidemi-ology and virology and medicine in general to stay safe.

We have had to be creative to figure out how to see our family and friends in safe ways over the past couple of years and that has meant some sacrifice but we have all managed to a great degree.

One of my solutions to getting together safely with people has been to meet on the land around a fire. I have been doing this for some time now in the warmer and colder months and it has proven to be very successful.

This has taken us out of the house and onto the land often near lakes or rivers and with the comfort of relaxing chairs and appropriate clothing. We have enjoyed roasting marshmallows, hot dogs and bannock around a fire.

I have laughed so much at the antics of those around the fire and I have also been educated and moved by the stories I have heard from the young and Elders alike.

Under the sky at night I have picked up on my friend Don's passion for astrophotography and the wonder at being able to stare far into the universe with all its galaxies.

We are able to socialize safely, meet in our natural envi-ronment on the land and connect without the influence of television, the internet, electronic devices, social media and developing virtual realities.

We are kinder, more tolerant, benevolent with our time for others and connected to Mother Earth and each other as we sit in the soft, flickering glow of a friendly fire.

This has been one of the few bene-fits I have discovered through this Covid19 pandemic. In a way I feel that Mother Earth has beckoned us to come and join her to reconnect with what is really meaningful and valuable in our lives amidst this ter-rible pandemic. I am thankful for that.

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Year five report for First Nations Youth Inquest

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Aboriginal Legal Services' Jonathan Rudin highlighted that 95 per cent of the First Nations Youth Inquest jury's 145 recommendations are complete or in progress during his Dec. 9 Year Five Report Card presentation.

"Sixty-four per cent of the recommendations are now complete, 31 are in progress and (for) five per cent nothing has been done on them," says Rudin, program director at Aboriginal Legal Services in Toronto, during his Year Five Report Card presentation at Lakehead University's Bora Laskin Faculty of Law in Thunder Bay. "That's significant (progress) from when we started and it represents continued growth, slow but continued growth."

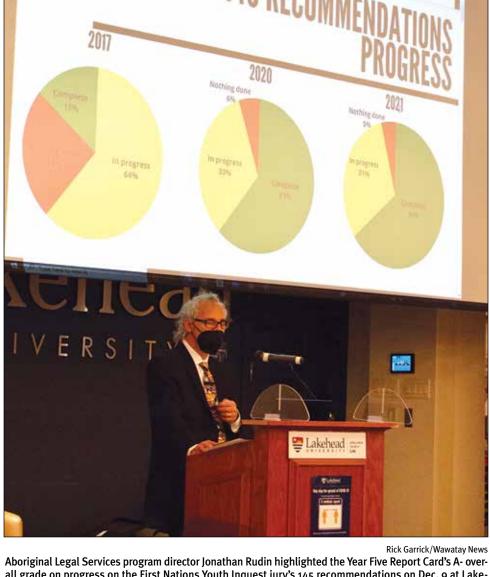
Rudin says the Year Five Report Card's overall grade for the efforts made to implement the First Nations Youth Inquest jury's 145 recommendations improved to an A-, compared to a B+ in 2020 and C+ in Year One. The grades improved from last year for Canada, from C+ to B-; the City of Thunder Bay, from B to A-; and Nishnawbe Aski Nation from B+ to A-; while the grades remained the same for Ontario at B-; Matawa Learning Centre at A+; Northern Nishnawbe Education Council and Dennis Franklin Cromarty at A+; and Keeywaytinook Okimakanak at A+. The Thunder Bay Police Service was not given a final grade, as has been the case since the Year Two Report Card.

"It is certainly a good sign that the overall grade has improved from last year and that no party's grade dropped," Rudin says. "There is no question that everyone who was involved in the inquest understands how important this work

Rudin, who is also counsel for the families of Jethro Anderson, Reggie Bushie, Robyn Harper, Kyle Morrisseau, Paul Panacheese and Jordan Wabasse along with Caitlyn Kasper from Aboriginal Legal Services, says 17 of the First Nations Youth Inquest jury's 145 recommendations were long-term recommendations.

And they are all in progress," Rudin says. "So the good news is work has started, none of them are complete which in some ways is not surprising because they are very comprehensive. Unfortunately some like that there be clean drinking water on all reserves in northern Ontario should have been completed but are not.'

Rudin says 53 per cent of 39 medium-term recommendations were complete, work is ongoing on 44 per cent and



all grade on progress on the First Nations Youth Inquest jury's 145 recommendations on Dec. 9 at Lakehead University's Bora Laskin Faculty of Law in Thunder Bay.

nothing has been done on three per cent.

"The bulk of the recommendations were short-term recommendations, 89, and I'm pleased to say that at this point over 80 per cent of the (shortterm) recommendations have been done, 12 per cent are still in progress and and (for) seven per cent nothing has happened," Rudin says.

Rudin says the First Nations Youth Inquest jury's recommendations were directed at particular parties, but some of the parties have stated in their responses that some recommendations were wrongly directed to them.

"One example is, without giving the details, Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) had a recommendation directed to them and NAN believes that it was wrongly directed to them and they are not going to do anything because they can't," Rudin says. "It's not our job to second guess the recommendations, so if nothing is done nothing is done. We understand why NAN hasn't done that particular recommendation — we're not putting a value judgement on it but if nothing is done we're just classifying it as ... nothing's done."

NAN stated in its Year Five response that recommendation 61, Duplication of Resources and Facilities, was rejected due to flaws and remains rejected due to flaws, noting that NAN respects the autonomy of partner organizations to coordinate activities and resources for their students.

NAN also stated that recommendation 35, Method for Measuring and Establishing Equivalence in Health Outcomes and Services, remains rejected and an alternative approach will be implemented.

The Year Five responses to the First Nations Youth Inquest jury's recommendations from NAN and the other organizations and governments are posted online at: aboriginallegal.ca/resources/first-nationsyouth-inquest/year-five.

"Progress on the remaining recommendations will be hard but they are crucial to actually getting to a place where all First Nations youth in the north have a chance for a real education," Kasper says. "Families need education options that do not require their children to go to Thunder Bay for high school."

Rudin says they plan to keep doing the annual report cards because they do not know if the funding that led to improvements in grades will continue and the reality that some families will not send their children out to high school in Thunder Bay due to concerns about their safety.

"People are legitimately concerned about sending a 15, 16, 17-year-old from a remote First Nation to Thunder Bay for school," Rudin says. "The families when we were meeting with them said: 'Where are the schools that we were promised, where are the options that we were supposed to have that would allow us to give our kids an education without having to send them to Thunder Bay.' And we're not there yet."

Rudin adds that some of the other issues that have not been resolved are clean drinking water and broadband access in the all of the First Nation communities.

"How do you get a good education without broadband," Rudin says.



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Commentary

Former DGC Goyce Kakegamic passes away

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

A moment of silence was held for former deputy grand chief, educator and artist Goyce Kakegamic at Oshki-Wenjack Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Wenjack Education Institute's Annual General Meeting on

"I think each of us has a special place in our hearts for Goyce and the journey he went on for himself but in doing so he worked for his people," says Oshki-Wenjack Elder-in-residence Brenda Mason during her opening prayer. "I remember many years ago when one of the late Elders, we used to call him the Old Chief Tom Fiddler, I remember him one time talking and he (encouraged) us to see that there was a place in our lives (for education) and how education was so important for us to strive for. He said that's what's going to save you, that's what's going to carry through. I've never forgotten that and I believe Goyce carried that, what the old people used to encourage us to do, he carried that seriously and we saw that in the work he did and how he provided his inspirational stories, his guidance, his leadership and his artwork as well."

Kakegamic, 73, passed at his home on Dec. 2 after a brief illness. An accomplished artist and founder of the Triple K Collective, Kakegamic was influenced by his brother-inlaw Norval Morrisseau and Cree artist Carl Ray. He also

served as principal and education director of the Keewaywin First Nation Elementary School, was elected to four terms as deputy grand chief and played an instrumental role in bringing the Northern Ontario School of Medicine to Thunder Bay.

"On behalf of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, I send our love and prayers to Goyce's wife Lucy, his children, friends and the community of Keewaywin First Nation," says Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse. "I had the pleasure of working under Goyce for many years and was moved by his determination to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our (citizens), especially our youth. Powered by conviction and grounded by faith, Goyce was not shy about expressing his feelings and never wavered from his convictions, no matter how great the

challenge."

Narcisse adds that Kakegamic was a loving father and husband who was passionate about education and the wellbeing of youth and their families. Among his accomplishments as deputy grand chief were the launch of the Embrace Life program, the development of Oshki-WenJack and the establishment of an Aboriginal trades school at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School.

"He was determined to close the significant gap experienced by students in our communities compared with those in urban centres," Narcisse says. "He led tremendous work to ensure that our youth received quality edu-



The Thunder Bay Art Gallery featured the late Goyce Kakegamic's Nativity painting on their Facebook page after he passed on Dec. 2.

cation opportunities and took every opportunity to encourage and support them throughout their academic careers. In addition to his acclaimed artistic talent, Goyce was also a visionary who helped advance NAN's work toward education selfgovernance in the early stages of negotiations with our federal treaty partner, which set us on the path towards Education Jurisdiction."

Kakegamic also co-founded the New Hope Fellowship in Thunder Bay along with Ken Funk, retired pastor at New

Hope Fellowship.
"The Elders up north were concerned for their students coming to the city and they wanted a presence here that their students could come to connect to a church or a caring group," Funk says. "That was the initial starting of the whole thing and then it kind of morphed into a church from

Funk says there has been "a lot of grief and loss" at New Hope Fellowship since Kakegamic passed on.

"We were not acting leaders anymore but we were attenders and I would say Goyce had tremendous influence," Funk says. "It was a place where he connected with people. He would do things like during church he would take a styrofoam cup and do an art painting on it and give it to somebody after church. He met people there and he would demonstrate his compassion for people in that context."



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Former deputy grand chief Goyce Kakegamic cuts one of the ribbons during the grand opening of the Aboriginal trades school at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School in Thunder Bay in 2017.

Funk adds that one of Kakegamic's paintings is featured at the front of New Hope Fellow-

He did a painting called Metamorphosis and the theme was these caterpillars turn into butterflies," Funk says. "He wanted youth to know that they were beautiful. Art was his way of communicating that."

Thunder Bay Art Gallery director Sharon Godwin says they featured Kakegamic's Nativity painting, one of his 15 paintings and prints that are in the permanent collection, on the Thunder Bay Art Gallery Facebook page after he passed.

"It is a scene of the Nativity but in Woodland Style," Godwin says. "It's a really great painting. He had an influence on many young people, but the work with the Triple K Collective that he and his brothers founded had a real lasting impact and was a real contribu-

Kakegamic's funeral was scheduled for Dec. 14 at New Hope Fellowship with Funk officiating and burial to follow at Riverside Cemetery.



As a child back in my home community of Kasabonika, I used to cling to my kookum as she went door-to-door visiting other families to check in and say hello every Christmas season. I don't think she missed a home. We entered the homes carrying gifts, whetherit was a pound of lard or a little bag of flour, because it was a tradition to bring a giftwhen we went visiting. Often, I would leave with a gift of my

My kookum wasn't the only one who carried out this tradition in my community. I also saw our Chief doing the same, checking up on the homes. He showed love and compassion to everyone.

Today, this is the same approach we take here at Tikinagan. As we visit and work in our communities, we show our love and compassion for the children and families we work with. The holiday season is always a special time when we come celebrate our togetherness - a perfect parallel to our service model Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin, which means "everyone working together to raise our children." Being together and celebrating children at a time like this also makes me think of the Wise Men from the Gospels, who traveled to visit Jesus and his family (Matthew 2:1-11) upon his birth. They, too, also brought gifts when they visited!

This Christmas season, we celebrate how our staff have worked together to keep families and communities safe through this pandemic by following health guidelines. We also continue to work toward the reunification of families and keeping them connected to the family, culture, and community. And as we move closer to a new year, we look forward with faith, hope, gratitude, and joy. Faith that we are on the right path with our families, children and youth we work with. Hope that work that we continue to make a positive impact on someone's life. Gratitude to our Creator for our abilities to be apart of the work we do at Tikinagan. And let us be mindful of the joy that is coming and that is here.

On behalf of our Board, Elders, and Staff, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you and yours.

Thelma Morris, Executive Director



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Turtle Concepts delivers programs in Kashechewan

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Turtle Concepts recently delivered a Get Addicted to Loving, Caring and Sharing program for Grades 7-10, their parents and other citizens in Kashechewan after delivering other programs for Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek (BNA) and Lac Seul

"It was flipping the discussion on the word addiction," says Dave Jones, founder at Turtle Concepts and Garden River citizen. "We just want the young people in the school to know they still have to love the people who struggle with addictions, but we also need to learn as young people that it's OK and it's also more beneficial for your mental health and your emotional well-being to get addicted to healthy things, and don't minimize what people have to say, don't hide being healthy, don't hide being positive."

Jones says there was a "phenomenal" response from the students, parents and other citizens to the program, which was held from Nov. 28-Dec. 3 in Kashechewan on James Bay.

"They loved the idea, they weren't afraid to be excited," Jones says. "They were Kashechewan excited, which is unique to the James Bay."

Jones says they have had a relationship with Kashechewan for about 25 years.

"So when we come in there is a legacy, there's a relationship that gets reignited by the people," Jones says. "There's an expectation by Elders for us now, and on one of the days the Elders had us come out with youth and we made traditional Christmas wreaths and traditional Christmas garlands with cedar boughs, which led to storytelling which led to giggles. They just really engage into our energy, we're quite loud, we're quite noisy, we love to talk and (we're) intrigued in talking to them about the old ways and the new ways. So it was a really heartfelt uplifting project and the students want us back so we will return in January and in February under Choose Life funding through NAN (Nishnawbe Aski Nation)."

Jones says the BNA program, held from Nov. 22-25 at the Courthouse Hotel in Thunder Bay, was "really overwhelming" for the community.

"They had a full packed house, and from the council to the staff and the families that came to the parents, it was overwhelming how well they responded to it," Jones says. "We had goose calling contests, moose calling, jigging contests — I just told them these are things that our people do to make them feel good, whether it's hand drumming or whether it's jigging or whether it's jigging or whether it's doing something healthy with crafting."

Jones says the premise of that BNA program was about letting people know to be public with healthy behaviours.

"You can actually stand up for yourself and know the public support is there," Jones says. "We love it when you're addicted to being loving, we love it when you're addicted to caring, we love it when you're addicted to sharing, and maybe if we get more addicted to those positive behaviours we will prevent some negative behaviours in others."

Jones says the Lac Seul fashion show-youth conference program, held Oct. 20-25 in the community, was "really refreshing."

"They wanted us to do a youth conference on confidence, so being leaders in confidence building and energy and positivity we knew the kids needed that after the (COVID-19) pandemic," Jones says. "So going in and working with a former Turtle, who we met at Pelican Falls (First Nations) High School and now sits on the Choose Life team, her name is Rhoda Shingebis Trout and she

was instrumental in bringing us in "

Jones says Trout recalled how the Turtle Concepts team "boosted me up so much" when she met them about 20 years ago.

"She wanted these kids in Lac Seul First Nation to have that same feeling," Jones says. "So it was great to have an old Turtle connection establish new Turtle connections, and the kids were willing — they couldn't believe the numbers that came out in the evening and the Saturday. There was just a whole bunch of themes in our little celebration

at the end, and the community came out in numbers and supported us, they clapped, they laughed, and different department heads came and were just inspired by watching the children be so kind and receptive."

submitted photos
Turtle Concepts had a phenomenal response to the Get Addicted to Loving, Caring and Sharing program they delivered from Nov. 28-Dec. 3 for Grades 7-10, their parents and other citizens in Kashechewan.



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Oshki-Wenjack Education Institute holds first ever AGM



Oshki-Wenjack chair Arlene Jung speaks about Oshki-Wenjack's goal of seeking accreditation to deliver their own certificates, diplomas and degrees during their first Annual General Meeting on Dec. 10.

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Oshki-Wenjack Oshki-Pimache-O-Win The Wenjack Education Institute held its first Annual General Meeting at the Delta Hotel and Conference Centre and virtually for interested stakeholders and communities on Dec. 10.

"In the past we have always done our accountability to the chiefs directly by attending the (Nishnawbe Aski Nation) Keewaywin gatherings," says Arlene Jung, chair at Oshki-Wenjack. "That's not possible

in the face of the (COVID-19) pandemic and we wanted to make sure we gave everyone an opportunity to understand what Oshki has been doing over the past year and just have that interaction and give that ability to have some of that accountability.'

Jung says the past year has been challenging due to the COVID-19 pandemic but also a "real growth year" for Oshki-Wenjack.

"Our blended learning model helped us kind of just go right into it and hit the ground running in a way that a lot of other institutions weren't able to do," Jung says. "It's still a real challenge, we still miss that personto-person contact that we've always had in the past but I think we were far more prepared for it than a lot of other people.

Jung says they thought this was the time to grow at Oshki-Wenjack by beginning to hold Annual General Meetings.

Especially since we are seeking accreditation to be able to deliver our own certificates, diplomas and degrees, we needed to step out and provide that accountability to our NAN communities in a new way," Jung says. "Over the past few years we've been undertaking a lot of different initiatives as we prepare for this accreditation process. When our Indigenous institute has the ability and the authority to grant our own certification, because we have put in the work but do it in a way that makes sense for our people, I think we are going to see a real transformation of the entire educational system and that to me is really thrilling. We plan to add university programs for teachers, social workers and

"It's taken many years of hard work and dedication to ensure the quality programs and unique supports..."

> – Lorrie Deschamps, Oshki-Wenjack president

Lorrie Deschamps, president at Oshki-Wenjack, adds that this year is Oshki-Wenjack's 20th anniversary.

"It's taken many years of hard work and dedication to ensure the quality programs and unique supports for our institute to grow and ensure great achievements for our graduates," Deschamps says. "We're carrying on this vision of leadership who sought to have a post-secondary education and training institute for all (citizens) of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Oshki-Wenjack continues to respond to community needs and provide support for our students who are working towards a better future for themselves and their families."

Grand Chief Derek Fox says NAN appreciates the work that Oshki-Wenjack staff have done to support students and help them achieve their dreams.

"Oftentimes sitting in a university or a college does not work for them and I could relate to that," Fox says. "I struggled a lot through university and having to work in that kind of environment. If I had Oshki at the time when I was going to school I probably would have took advantage of it, to be able to sit there in a smaller classroom and sit amongst my peers."

Fox says he has a vision of NAN's leaders not only being educated but also speaking their language to each other at the chiefs assemblies and within the organizations and

"That would empower us as a nation, as a culture, as students, as organizations," Fox says. "That just all comes back to that thing we call nationhood and governance and vision for both Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Oshki."

Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse says it is important to build on the work that is happening now and empowering the vision of Oshki-Wenjack and its governing council.

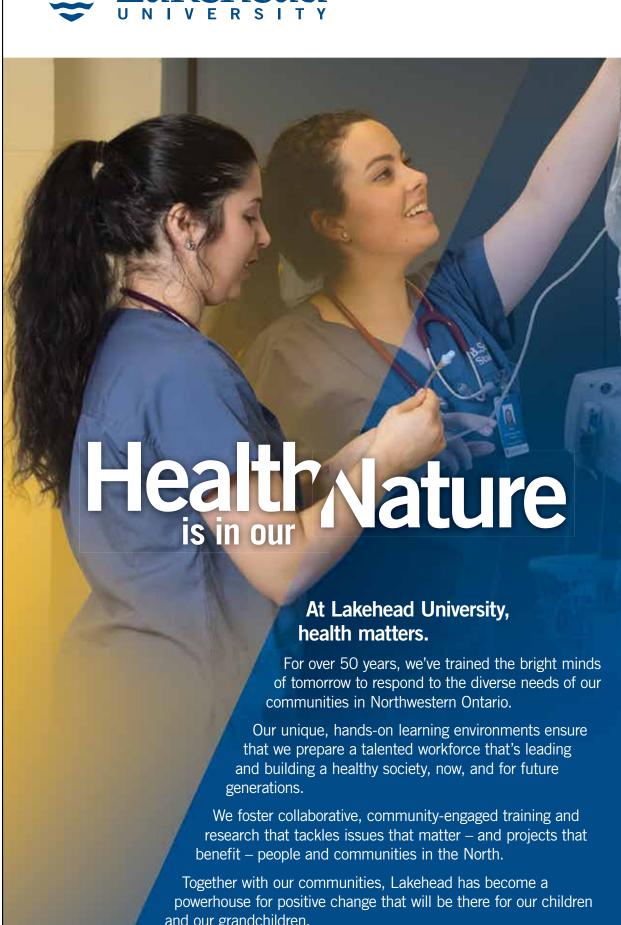
"Our citizens are life-long learners and due to the evolving economy and due to the effects of even COVID-19, a lot of things are changing," Narcisse says. "Many of our citizens will require retraining (and) looking at a curriculum also that is very reflective of the needs and the evolving environment of our communities within Treaty 9 and Treaty 5."

Indigenous Services Canada Minister Patty Hajdu says that she believes education is what unlocks better futures for every-

"We want every single person in this country to feel like and to have that fair chance of success," says Hajdu, Thunder Bay-Superior North MP. "So the work that you do is about economic reconciliation, it's about empowering Indigenous people to take their place in whatever role they want in their future and to building healthier communities. Thank you so much for everything you do and know that you have a partner in me."

The Annual General Meeting also featured discussions on the 2021 Financial Statements and current Strategic Plan and a presentation on Ensuring the Success of Our Students by Dorothy Roberts, director of student success at Oshki-Wenjack.





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Lakehead University continues its Global Speaker Series | P\CA.

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Lakehead University kicked off its 2021-22 Global Indigenous Speaker Series with a Dec. 1 presentation by Eliane Potiguara on Vulnerability of Brazil's Indigenous Peoples in the Face of the Destruction of the Amazon and of Brazil.

"We've been colonized for 520 years, there are 305 peoples and our population today is at around one million, but 600,000 live in villages," says Potiguara, a writer, poet and teacher who is from the Potiguara ethnic group in Brazil, as translated from Portuguese. "We don't yet have a specific figure for the people who live in the urban regions but we know that in Rio do Janeiro for example that over 100,000 Indigenous people are there."

Potiguara says there are 240 Indigenous languages in Brazil, but it was only a few decades ago that the Indigenous people began to fight to have their self determination in political, social and economic terms.

"We have observed that Canada, the United States and other countries across the world ... already have an economic and political identity and we Brazilians are still on crutches because in the (former) dictatorship we had governments that would not allow us to have our identity and promoted the emancipation of Indigenous peoples just so they could become integrated with the rest of the population but not as peoples with dignity, with

culture, with languages and traditions," Potiguara says. "So the government up to today attempts to integrate us to this greater society without taking into account our traditions and our Indigenous (ancestry). This is a major struggle in this country, it's very intentional with regard to our Indigenous lands and our development and the rights to the land, culture and health, education, development work and food security."

Potiguara says they did have their rights deployed in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Brazil (1988) as Indigenous peoples and guaranteed in the International Labour Organization Convention No. 169 and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

"We have these rights because of the Universal Declaration of Indigenous Rights," Potiguara says. "I took part in redrafting this in Geneva. It was a victory to have this declaration."

Potiguara says there is an issue with monoculture farming practices in Brazil, which have an impact on soil, environment, deforestation, water consumption, energy and irrigation.

"We have confronted the national congress, the lower chamber of congress and we have worked in partnership with partners that can support us and that are sensitive to our issues," Potiguara says, noting that some of the products from the monoculture practices include sugarcane, coffee, soy, eucalyptus and cattle. "We've been talking about this for



screensho

Brazilian Indigenous writer, poet and teacher Eliane Potiguara spoke about some of the issues facing Indigenous people in Brazil during her Lakehead University Global Indigenous Speakers Series presentation on Vulnerability of Brazil's Indigenous Peoples in the Face of the Destruction of the Amazon and of Brazil.

decades, we've been raising our voices, we've been shouting out for decades and the topic is the same year in, year out."

Potiguara also raised other issues such as the rape of and physical violence against Indigenous women.

"We continue to have our human rights violated," Potiguara says. "I have spoken out, I have denounced this to a number of countries."

Moira McPherson, president and vice-chancellor at Lakehead University, notes that Potiguara ia a graduate of the Federal University of Ouro Preto who has founded the first organization of Indigenous Women in Brazil in 1988, published several children's books

and writings on thoughts and poetry that are part of many national and international anthologies and received the title of Knight of the Order of Cultural Merit from the Brazilian government in 2014.

"Eliane is the ambassador for peace for the Circle of Ambassadors of France and Switzerland and was part of the working group that rewrote the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Indigenous Rights," McPherson says. "And just this past week Eliane was honoured to receive an honorary doctorate from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, one of Brazil's top universities and a partner of Lakehead University."

Confederation College hosts virtual open house

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Confederation College held a virtual open house for prospective students to look at its diverse range of programs, new opportunities and student life on campus

"Skills, trades and health programming sessions had the highest registration and attendance of all the sessions," says Kathleen Lynch, president at Confederation College. "People see opportunities in those areas and signed up."

Lynch says there were about 100 people who registered for the virtual open house, including about 63 per cent from Thunder Bay and the surrounding area.

"We had a good turnout from northwestern Ontario and we always have a high number of students who are Indigenous that attend our programming," Lynch says. "So we are happy with the turnout."

Lynch says information on Indigenous-specific programs were included during the Community Services sessions on Nov. 23 and 24. "We always get a large number of Indigenous students in those programs," Lynch says. "There are always a lot of applications for those kinds of programming, and we are hoping down the road to expand the number of Indigenous-specific programs that we offer, so we are working on that right now."

The virtual open house sessions were delivered by program coordinators and recruitment officers to give participants the freedom to ask questions and speak directly to college representatives. The sessions included an inside look at programs and the college experience as well as a showcase of available supports from applications to graduation and future career opportunities.

"We wanted prospective students to have a comfortable way to explore their future opportunities," says Don Duclos, registrar at Confederation College. "Throughout the pandemic, we've remained dedicated to our students and strived to provide opportunities to learn and succeed both on and off campus in a safe and healthy way."

Lynch says there was a good response from the virtual open house participants.

"The participants seemed to enjoy it, but overall I think people would rather come in person," Lynch says. "We used to host a lot of large open houses and students would come from right across the region, so they miss the hands-on. But I think doing it this way by specific program and program cluster, it was nice for students to meet the faculty and the coordinators and get a chance that way to get to know more about our programs."

Lynch says they are currently looking at producing some videos of different areas of the college, noting that it's a good option for people who cannot do an in-person campus visit.

"We have some videos but we want to have a lot more of all our different programs and what students can expect and what it actually looks like in our labs and classrooms," Lynch says. "In health we have wonderful simulation labs, state-of-the-art like no other in northwestern Ontario, and students wouldn't know that unless they

get to come and see our mannequins and how simulation works."

Lynch says it is "always wonderful" for students to tour the airplanes and classrooms at Confederation College's Aviation Centre of Excellence, which is located at the Thunder Bay International Airport.

"And we have our new TEC (Technology, Education and Collaboration) Hub and that has all new equipment and new facilities and new labs," Lynch says. "So we want to get all of that captured on film going forward so we can share that with prospective students who can't come for a campus visit."

Lynch says prospective students can also visit Confederation College's regional campuses for more information.

"We have a total of eight campuses, so there is a campus usually close by," Lynch says. "And we're looking forward in the future to having perhaps some campuses on some of the larger First Nations too because we know there are a lot of potential students there."

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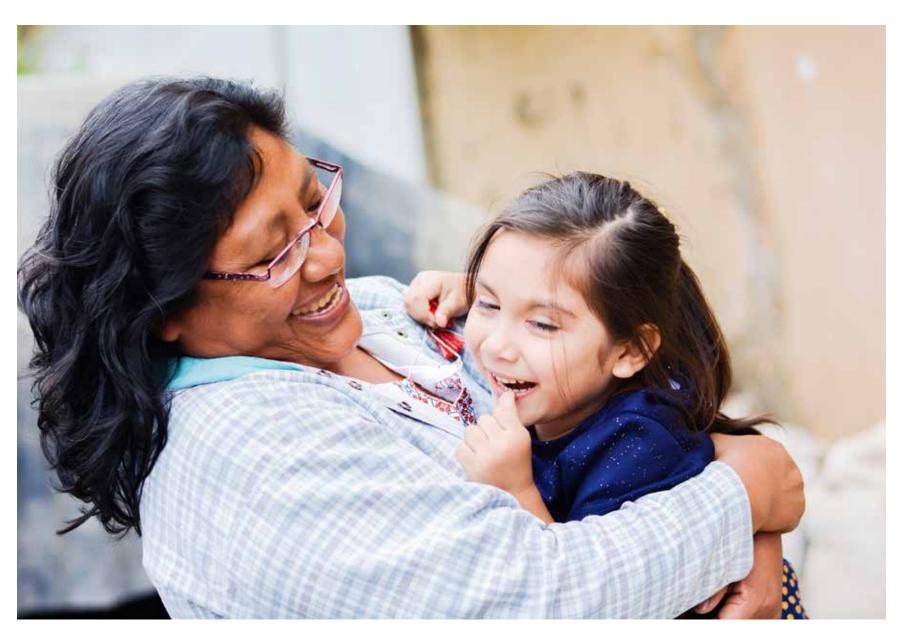
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HOW CAN AN ASSESSMENT BE HELPFUL?

Assessments can be helpful when there is an answer needed for an important question, such as:

- What mental health issue am I dealing with?
- Why is it hard to learn in school?
- Why is it hard to remember things?
- Is that fall making it harder for me to think properly?
- Is there a problem with my attention?

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For assessment services for children and adolescents, we are happy to help families access funding through Jordan's Principle.

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We feel there are many important aspects to a helpful counselling session. It is essential that our counsellors:

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- Teach skills and strategies to help cope with mental health issues
- Be a good clinical match for our clients

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- Grief and Loss
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For counselling services, we are happy to help clients access funding through Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) and Indian Residential School (IRS) programs.



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All-women line crew graduate with 25 certificates



bmitted photo

A group of All-Women Line Crew Ground Support trainees recently graduated with 25 transferrable certificates in pursuit of future apprenticeship opportunities and careers on the Wataynikaneyap Power Transmission Line.

Seasons Greetings Happy Holidays from everyone at Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre. We hope your holiday season and the new year are filled with joy, peace, and good health. SIOUX LOOKOUT Excellence
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Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Childcare was one of the keys for a group of All-Women Line Crew Ground Support trainees who recently graduated with 25 transferrable certificates in pursuit of future apprenticeship opportunities and careers on the Wataynikaneyap Power Transmission Line.

"Having childcare included with this training program has made it possible for me to pursue my career," says Jamie Keeash, a graduate from Weagamow. "Having my young son Kingston with me has kept me going."

Laura Calmwind,
Opiikapawiin Services' training program manager, says the
training program was unique
due to the 25 transferrable certificates, the All-Women Line
Crew training component and
the Indigenous knowledge
learning and land-based activities component.

"There isn't another training program like it that offers that many certificates to graduates," Calmwind says. "This was an All-Women Line Crew training — it is the only training program of its kind anywhere in Canada or the United States. We found we were trailblazing when we took on this training program to deliver to just women only. And also we built into the program Indigenous knowledge learning and landbased activities, so we had a number of Elders and other knowledge keepers come in and provide training in the areas of cultural understanding, iden-

Calmwind says the training

program also included training on healing programs and services such as child care.

"We built child care in the program that supported a mother to be able to take the training program," Calmwind says. "We wanted to make sure that this program offered an opportunity to mothers that have children."

Calmwind organized the training program after seeing the large discrepancy between men and women applicants for the co-ed Line Crew Ground Support program.

"I thought it may bring in more applicants if we offered the training for women only," Calmwind says. "It may encourage more women to think about the trades. We also looked at what barriers stopped women from applying to our training programs."

The graduates began the 14-week training program on Aug. 16 with seven weeks at the Quetico Conference Centre near Atikokan and continued with seven weeks of hands-on skills, pole climbing and equipment training at the Fort William training site.

"I want to work towards an apprenticeship and keep going with my career in the power line trades," says Shirley King, a graduate from Pikangikum. "It is encouraging to see more women being part of the construction."

Lucy Edwards, CEO at Opiikapawiin Services, says the All-Women Line Crew Ground Support training program generated "a lot of interest" from women.

"It was particularly good to see that interest from the women because delivering a program such as this opens up opportunities and leads a way for women to also receive the benefits on the project," Edwards says. "It was great to see the delivery format and also what was included in the training program — it was unique and geared towards the Indigenous perspectives of our communities."

Frank McKay, chair of the Wataynikaneyap Power GP Inc. Board, Eliezar Mckay, chair of First Nation Limited Partnership, and Scott Hawkes, president and CEO at FortisOntario Inc., congratulated the graduates on their success in the training program.

"Congratulations to the students on their hard work and perseverance," McKay says. "Training opportunities like this program build up our peoples' capacity for long term careers on the transmission system and are an important part of meaningful participation and involvement on the project – one of the Guiding Principles that our leadership provided."

Information on training opportunities for the Watayni-kaneyap Power Transmission Line is posted online at: www. wataypower.ca/project/jobtraining.

"Currently we are in the planning stages of looking at what other training opportunities we can have to increase the number of women from our communities that can have these job opportunities," Calmwind says. "So we are looking and planning in the future to advance more women training opportunities."





Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

The group of girls were the first to get their campfire going during the Algonquin Avenue Public School's A group of boys enjoy the campfire in their shelter.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Algonquin students learn life skills on the land

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

A group of Algonquin Avenue Public School Grade 8 students recently enjoyed learning about making an outdoor shelter and starting a campfire during an outing on the land south of Thunder Bay.

"It is a new experience we've never really done anything like this before but from how it's been so far it's very fun," says Jack Baxter, a Grade 8 student. "We found a dead tree and we kind of leaned all of our stuff up against it and we had a little tarp to put over it for

Grade 8 student Noah Gibbins says the outing was a good learning opportunity for those students who had not been out on the land before.

outing on the land to learn about making an outdoor shelter and starting a campfire.

"I also feel like it's a great experience to build strength as friends, so I feel it is a very good learning experience," Gibbins says. "We picked up a lot today (about starting campfires) and I hope we can use it in our future.'

Grade 8 student Connor Williamson says they put logs around their shelter to keep warmer.

"It was very fun coming out and building shelters and a fire because you get to experience new opportunities with your friends and you learn a whole bunch of new stuff," Williamson

Algonquin Avenue Public School principal Darren Lentz says the students had been reading a book in class that relates to survival and landbased learning.

"We wanted to connect that learning from inside the classroom and the reading they are doing to real life experiences on the land so they have some knowledge and experience to write about and when they are reading the book to think about what the character in the book is experiencing when he is lost out on the land," Lentz says.

Lentz says the students, who broke up into three groups to set up a shelter and get a fire going with branches and wood from the land for each of their groups, did an "amazing job."

"That's part of the other skills they are learning is those skills we want our young people to have, the problem solving skills," Lentz says. "The land teaches you all the skills you need to survive in life, and some of those skills are problem solving, teamwork, working together, figuring things out with the resources you have."

Lentz says the students enjoyed their outing on the land, noting they were "super happy" and talking with each

"You can see how they love

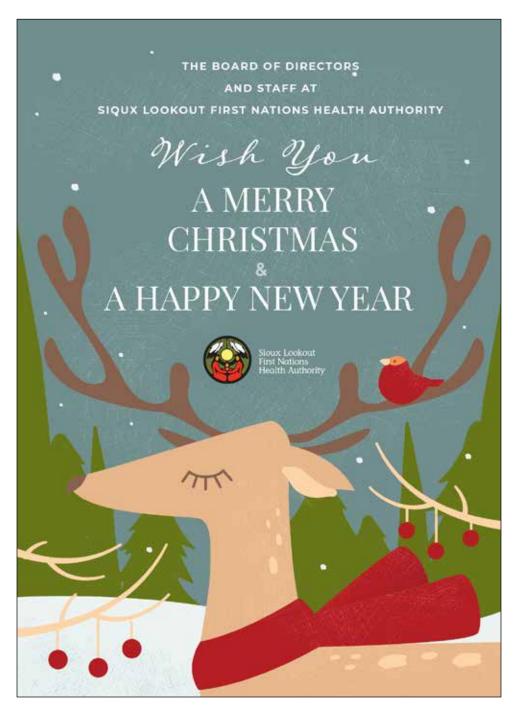
being out here," Lentz says. "They're engaged in school, they want to be here and when they go back they get that much more engaged in the writing back in the classroom. Those kind of skills and engagement and problem solving and getting into their learning is super important for future years. I think it's really important to get kids out on the land and experiencing those experiences out here because the land in a lot of situations does the teaching."

The group of girls were the first to get their fire going next to their shelter.

"The girls have quite the shelter and spot going over there," Lentz says. "They were very resourceful and they did an excellent job."

Lentz says the two groups of boys built shelters in different locations, one against a fallen tree and one where they made a shelter using resources from the land.

"They're using nature to help them with their building of the shelters," Lentz says. "Those are the experiences we're going to pull away and talk about back in the classroom."





Oshki-Wenjack Management, Staff and Students would like to wish everyone a safe and Merry Christmas.

Remember to keep checking our for upcoming programs in 2022: www.oshki.ca.

To inquire by phone, contact Oshki Recruitment Officers, Sterling and Archie at (807) 626-1880. Mii-Gwetch!



NORTHERN COLLEGE MOOSONEE CAMPUS

Award Recipients Fall 2021

Congratulations

Five Nations Energy Entrance Scholarship

Aleena Cheechoo-Katapatuk Cheryl Weapenicappo Brent Wesley

Indigenous Student Bursary

Katrina Sutherland Karene Trapper

Student Assistance Bursary

Aaron Rickard Conrad Therrien Sarah Matthews Jonathan Tomatuk Congratulations to the students who are going above and beyond to work on their studies!

You inspire us with how far you have come with steps taken to invest in your future.

We look forward to watching you soar!



Thank You to Our Donors!

Because of the generosity of those who give to us, Northern College students will receive close to **One Million Dollars** this academic year in scholarships, bursaries and awards.

I am writing an appreciation letter for the Walkerwood Foundation Northern Spirit Award I received which I could not be more pleased to receive.

As a student of the Communitybased Paramedic program, I am thrilled with excitement and joy with the award that I was presented.

It is with gratitude that I accepted the award.

I am thankful for the great opportunities Northern College has to offer along with their Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards program.

Kind regards,

Tanner Cheechoo

Northern College Moosonee Campus Paramedic Program



I am extremely grateful to have

been chosen as
the recipient for the Indigenous
Student Bursary. This bursary
brings tremendous hope and
assistance to complete my studies.
I am very thankful for this bursary.
With support from Northern
College and my amazing teachers,
I will continue to work towards
my education and goals. Thank
you to all the generous donors for
supporting our students!

Karene Trapper

Northern College Moosonee Campus Personal Support Program





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3. Receive a appointment card with the time and date of your video appointment.



4. Arrive at your health centre in time for your appointment.



5. Attend your video visit securely and privately at the health centre.

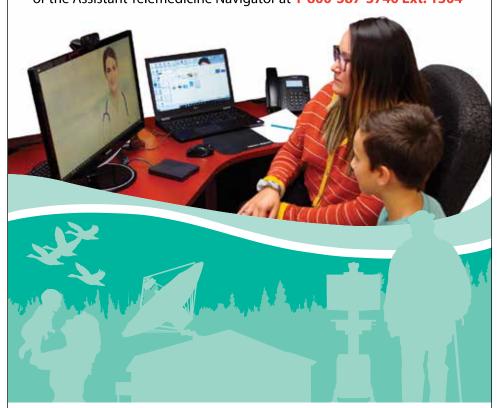
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Arts and Entertainment



screenshot

Piitwewetam Making is Medicine exhibition co-curators Leanna Marshall and Jean Marshall and artist Shannon Gustafson, centre, were featured during the announcement of the Exhibition of the Year Budget under \$20,000 award at the 44th Annual 2021 Galeries Ontario/Ontario Galleries (GOG) Awards.

Thunder Bay Art Gallery hosts 2021 exhibition awards

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Thunder Bay Art Gallery's Piitwewetam Making is Medicine exhibition was recognized with the Exhibition of the Year Budget under \$20,000 award at the 44th Annual 2021 Galeries Ontario/Ontario Galleries (GOG) Awards. The GOG Awards celebrate the outstanding achievement, artistic merit and excellence of arts institutions and professionals in the public art gallery sector.

"It was really surprising and really humbling," says Leanna Marshall, co-curator of the Pittwewetam Making is Medicine exhibition. "There are so many galleries in Ontario and most of them are in southern Ontario, so we all feel really proud that people from the south were able to see the value and importance of the exhibition."

Marshall says the Piitwewetam Making is Medicine exhibition was about the Gustafson family honouring their loved one, Piitwewetam (Jesse), who died in a car accident in 2015.

"It's like they're sharing with the community their story of how they dealt with the pain of losing someone they loved so deeply and dearly, and how they did that was through making," Marshall says. "With the passing of their son, Ryan and Shannon really had to work hard to keep their family intact with their two daughters, and how they did that was they spent every Sunday making stuff together."

Marshall says she and co

curator Jean Marshall wanted the Piitwewetam Making is Medicine exhibition to be a celebration of Piitwewetam's life.

"But also to show the community that this family has used ceremony and art as a way to help themselves through their grief and loss." Marshall says.

grief and loss," Marshall says.
Marshall says the Gustafson
family was "absolutely thrilled"
about the GOG's recognition
of the Piitwewetam Making is
Medicine exhibition, which ran
from Feb. 26-Nov. 21.

"They feel really proud, they're really just absolutely thrilled with the acknowledgement," Marshall says. "They want everyone to come and experience this exhibition because it's been so helpful for people who have been in that space. You can feel that it carries a different energy than a usual art exhibition."

The Piitwewetam Making is Medicine exhibition is currently scheduled for an exhibition tour beginning in January with the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation in M'Chigeeng on Manitoulin Island.

"The exhibition will travel in 2022 and into 2023 most likely," says Penelope Smart, curator at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery. "It will go to a few venues — the one we have confirmed right now is the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation on Manitoulin Island."

Smart says the Piitwewetam Making is Medicine exhibition was "so powerful," noting the skill, love and time put in by the Gustafson family and the co-curators to create the exhibi-

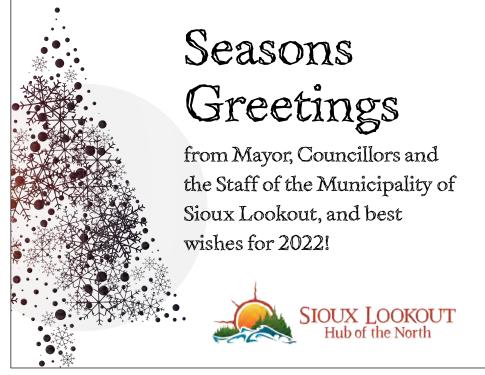
tion.

"I think it probably stood out from the others just because of the love and care that was part of this project from the beginning," Smart says. "Certainly the jurors would have felt that and seen that even though they were just seeing the show through images. The feedback we had from visitors coming into the gallery was that the show was incredibly moving and so heartfelt and really touched everyone who came in here in a really powerful way, so definitely that would have been felt by the jury too."

The GOG Awards was held virtually on Nov. 29. The jurors were Nadia Kurd, Vince Rozario and Clayton Windatt.

"The jury commented Piitwewetam Making is Medicine is an exemplary exhibition that connects bead working with themes of loss and healing," says Keith Cole, emcee of the 2021 GOG Awards. "The impec-cable work of the Gustafson family and the care given by the curators shows that lengthy collaborative practices are possible in the gallery environment. The beauty of the artwork was heightened by the supporting online tour videos and images. The jury recognizes the time taken to produce this exhibition and the knowledge it brings to audiences."

Information about the Piitwewetam Making is Medicine exhibition, including the video tour, is posted online at: theag. ca/piitwewetam/.



Arts and Entertainment

Christmas Fine Arts and Crafts show sees 19th successful year

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The 19th Annual Christmas Aboriginal Fine Arts and Crafts Gift Show and Sale was another success for Indigenous artisans on Nov. 27-28 at the Heritage Building in Thunder Bay.

'It was very busy (on Nov. 27) — I guess a lot of people were anxious to shop and also the artisans were anxious just to sell as well," says John Ferris, coordinator and founder of the Aboriginal Artworks Group of Northern Ontario. which hosted the 19th Annual Christmas Aboriginal Fine Arts and Crafts Gift Show and Sale. "Everything worked and everybody clicked together and a lot of people had sold out even before 4 o'clock. About eight tables sold out completely so it was successful, and we had a few people coming here today."

Ferris says there was a range of arts and crafts for sale, including jewelry, apparel, moccasins, mukluks, mitts, pouch bags, hats and other items

"We also had the Bannock Lady here this year," Ferris says. "It was really good — we're fortunate to have other businesses like that at our shows."

Gull Bay's Diane Davis-Nawagesic says she sold about 35 pairs of moccasins during the 19th Annual Christmas Aboriginal Fine Arts and Crafts Gift Show and Sale.

"It was packed in here yesterday and we had a good time," Davis-Nawagesic says. "So I'm excited for next year."

Davis-Nawagesic says she also had a variety of other items for sale, including regalia, gun cases and replicas of the original Ojibwe beaded moccasins.

"We did all of our beadwork in the past with black velvet or a black background," Davis-Nawagesic says. "So I'm excited about this new design, and it's gone well — I only have two pair left here."

Wiikwemkoong's Peggy Wabegijig says the 19th Annual Christmas Aboriginal Fine Arts and Crafts Gift Show and Sale was "pretty awesome."

"Saturday was really good — there was just tons of people," Wabegijig says. "We carry a wide variety of crafts so we did really well. People picked up a lot of gifts for Christmas or their own interest. Masks were a big seller. One of the artists up here, Shannon Gustafson, had

some fabric prints so we made masks with those and those were hot sellers."

Webequie's Donna Jacob says she did "pretty good" at the 19th Annual Christmas Aboriginal Fine Arts and Crafts Gift Show and Sale.

"I made beaded earrings and I brought my supplies too," Jacob says. "I made wristlets, small ones and mini ones, and beaded hats and popsockets."

Jacob says this was her first craft show since the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's nice to get out and see people," Jacob says. "There was more traffic (this year)."

Neskantaga's Barb Wapoose also enjoyed seeing people that she hadn't seen for a while at the 19th Annual Christmas Aboriginal Fine Arts and Crafts Gift Show and Sale.

"We were busy doing crafts during COVID-19 time, and then selling crafts (here)," Wapoose says, noting that she made baby bundles, necklaces and other items. "It was a good turnout. Most of our work is gone. We just try and keep our family tradition from our late grandmother's teachings. I just hope to see more craft sales coming up so we can gather



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Gull Bay's Diane Davis-Nawagesic sold about 35 pairs of moccasins at the 19th Annual Christmas Aboriginal Fine Arts and Crafts Gift Show and Sale at the Heritage Building in Thunder Bay.

again and meet friends, new friends and visit people at the same time."

Eabametoong's Jaylyn Cromarty, who sold most of her earrings, says it was "really great" to see other people at the 19th Annual Christmas Aboriginal Fine Arts and Crafts Gift Show and Sale.

"They haven't done a craft sale in a while because of COVID-19, so it was nice to be here and see all the crafts," Cromarty says.

ONWA's 2021 poetry night honours late artist

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The voice and legacy of the late Indigenous poet, author and teacher Lee Maracle was honoured at the Ontario Native Women's Association Poetry Night 2021. Maracle, 71, died on Nov. 11 in Surrey B.C.

"My first time meeting her was at the First Nations House at the University of Toronto," says Samantha Martin-Bird, who shared some of her own poetry as well as Maracle's poetry at Poetry Night 2021, noting that she had stepped outside of her Anishinabemowin class because she was feeling overwhelmed due to a heated discussion on Indigenous identity. "I was starting to feel really overwhelmed and very emotional and then I ran into Lee, and I didn't have any idea who she was. She was like: 'Oh, it looks like you need a hug.' And she gave me this



screenshot

Indigenous poet Samantha Martin-Bird spoke about how she was influenced by the late Lee Maracle at the Ontario Native Women's Association Poetry Night 2021.

great bear hug and then I cried and she said: 'I think we need to go chat.' She took me into her office and we had this big heart-to-heart about being (Indigenous) enough."

Martin-Bird says she later

enrolled in a few literature courses with Maracle.

"And I've just been reflecting since she passed a few days ago about how much of my own voice and style has been impacted by the ways in which she drilled us to be concise and brief and to the point," Martin-Bird says. "That's who Lee was."

Benjamin Murray, who shared some of his poetry at Poetry Night 2021, says the majority of the people he grew up with on the east end of Thunder Bay are now gone.

"(There) was a collective of us that was born out of skateboarding and music and it turned into something much darker later in life," Murray says. "I wanted to create this collective to honour their memories and to take something that we all carried with us, which was this ... mentality where you feel you don't belong, it's an urban Indigenous thing, but you feel like you don't belong in certain settings, like this room for instance. The intention was to change that for future vouth and really show them they can be something and they can do whatever they put their mind to."

Anishinabe musician Keith Secola, who shared some of his music during Poetry Night 2021, says he calls the guitar the little brother of the drum.

"I always put my guitar by a Native drum and let it absorb the songs," Secola says. "In many ways I feel it can go in places where only a little brother can go and shine a light in the darkness and shine a light to the people that need a light out there in places where maybe something bigger couldn't get through."

Secola says he likes to write songs that make people feel good.

"I like to take people by the land of misery and let them look out the window," Secola says. "Then I like to park them in the land of good sometimes and let them guys go back and look metaphysically at the truth."

ONWA executive director Cora McGuire-Cyrette, who

shared some of her writing during Poetry Night 2021, says writing is part of her healing process.

"I write a lot, hence my job and everything I do," McGuire-Cyrette says. "It's always about being vulnerable, that's where the healing comes from. So that's what tonight is all about, and even the awards earlier that we were participating in, it was all about women into leadership roles and it's about what we've always known as matriarchs and it's about reclaiming our matriarchy, reclaiming ourselves, reclaiming who we are and reclaiming our community."

Poetry Night 2021 also featured opening remarks and a poetry reading of Maracle's poem War by Ingrid Green, director of community development at ONWA, music by Jamie Labrador and Jasmine McGuire and other poets from the community.



ONWA's Executive Director wins leadership award



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News
Ontario Native Women's Association executive director Cora McGuireCyrette was recognized with the Women's Executive Network WXN
Mercedes-Benz Emerging Leaders Award.

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Ontario Native Women's Association executive director Cora McGuire-Cyrette was recently recognized with the Women's Executive Network WXN Mercedes-Benz Emerging Leaders Award for professional achievements of women aged 30-45.

"For me it's a collective win as Indigenous women are not recognized in leadership roles and to be able to be recognized within the feminist area, not just within Indigenous, it really goes to show that Indigenous women are reclaiming our role as matriarchs and leaders in the community," McGuire-Cyrette says. "The award really represents for me all the Indigenous women who have been working through their healing journeys and reclaiming their leadership."

McGuire-Cyrette, who was appointed as ONWA's executive director about six years ago, says Indigenous communities are beginning to see a reclaiming of women's leadership roles.

"That's when the community change will happen is when

we really start to unpack what colonization has done to us and being able to recognize Indigenous women as experts in their own lives," McGuire-Cyrette says. "Indigenous women's leadership is so unique in our communities because it's not about the individual, it's always about the collective, like how each community needs to begin to redevelop based on healing and safety and new ways of thinking. The resurgence of Indigenous women in leadership all across Canada is what we're seeing, and I think it's an exciting time in our communi-

The Women's Executive Network WXN Mercedes-Benz Emerging Leaders Award celebrates the achievements of women who have a proven passion for learning and innovation within their organizations.

"The one thing I've seen in my lifetime here is that working in the Indigenous women's movement is some of the most complex work you can do and the most challenging," McGuire-Cyrette says. "When you're an Indigenous woman working on these issues, you're never far enough away from the issues you're working on, when you have to work on issues such as everything from sexual violence to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and being a survivor from within those two spaces and being able to continue to do that work.'

McGuire-Cyrette says being able to make positive impacts and changes in the community is some of the most rewarding work she has participated in.

"That's what really makes the Indigenous women's movement so unique is being able to develop, right from the community all the way up, what our communities and what Indigenous women are saying are the issues they're facing," McGuire-Cyrette says. "And then to go back and strategize (about) what can we do here — that's really a part of what we've been able to do."

McGuire-Cyrette also represents ONWA at many tables with both the provincial and federal governments, and as co-chair of the Indigenous Women's Advisory Council she focuses on amplifying the voices of Indigenous women, resulting in policy that is responsive to their needs.

"Once you know their system and how they operate through their bureaucratic processes, it gives you a little bit more of a leverage to have the voice of community heard within those systems," McGuire-Cyrette says. "So that's probably been one of the biggest challenges, because when you're advocating for the community, the community wants change now. They don't care about a bureaucratic process, they don't care that you need to write letters and to do submissions and have all of these meetings which can take years, the parents want their children back today, they wanted them back yesterday, they want change immediately."

McGuire-Cyrette says they take also a non-partisan approach regardless of which political party is in power.

"Governments always change," McGuire-Cyrette says.
"Regardless of who is in power both provincially and federally, you have to work with the government in power."

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The grant amounts are set as follows:

Aspiring artists: \$3,000 Professional artists: \$15,000

Curators, programmers, presenters, literary editors: \$10,000

Application deadline: January 27, 2022, at 1 p.m. ET.

For questions about the individuals program stream, please contact:

Candice Jacko

Indigenous Arts Program Administrator

647-258-5075 | toll-free in Ontario: 1-800-387-0058

cjacko@arts.on.ca

Indigenous Arts Support: Grants for Collectives and Organizations

This grant supports Indigenous arts organizations and eligible artist collectives in administrative capacity-building and the development of artistic sustainability.

Application deadline: January 18, 2022, at 1 p.m. ET.

For questions about the organizations program stream, please contact:

Erika Iserhoff

Indigenous Arts Officer

416-969-7454 | toll-free in Ontario: 1-800-387-0058

eiserhoff@arts.on.ca

Submit your application online at grants.arts.on.ca.

Alternative application formats and accessibility supports are available.

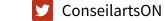
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GENERATIONPGM News Brief

Marathon Project Receives Sufficiency From Joint Review Panel

Generation PGM Inc. (Gen PGM) is very excited to share that the Joint Review Panel (JRP) established to review the Marathon Palladium Copper Project has determined that the information provided to date is sufficient for their review. On December 7, 2021 the JRP announced that the Project will proceed to a public hearing that will begin on February 15, 2022 and take place over 30 days.

The hearing is open for members of the public, Indigenous groups, governments and other organizations to participate virtually by video. The hearings will also be readily available for members of the public wishing to observe each session in livestream.

To learn about the public hearing proceedings please visit:

https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj /54755

Generation PGM would like to thank communities and community members that have provided ongoing support to the Project. We would also like to extend gratitude to the individuals and organizations that participated in the EIS Addendum and subsequent Information Requests.

comments@genpgm.com

GENERATION PGM LTD. -www.genmining.com-



screenshot

Elder Ma-Nee Chacaby was recognized with the Community Hero Award at Thunder Bay's 11th Annual Mayor's Community Safety Awards on Dec. 6.



screenshot

Cornelius Beaver was recognized with the Young Leader Award.



The Indigenous Food Circle was recognized with an Outstanding Community Project award.

Indigenous organizations honoured at Mayor's Community Safety Awards

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Thunder Bay's 11th Annual Mayor's Community Safety Awards were presented to Elder Ma-Nee Chacaby, Cornelius Beaver, the Matawa Safe Sobering Site, Northern Nishnawbe Education Council's On-Call Crisis Response service, Thunder Bay's Care Bus and the Indigenous Food Circle on Dec.

"We sit with the city when they're making decisions (and) we kind of help them if that's the right decisions for the programs they have," Chacaby says during the Community Safety Awards video. "I also work with the young people — when I look at them and the way they look at things it's really more good ideas than the adults see what the city should be like."

Chacaby, a two-spirit Elder, storyteller and author of A Two-Spirit Journey who was recognized with the Community Hero Award sponsored by Apex Investigation and Security, says she was surprised when she was named as the Community Hero. She has extensive experience in community work and volunteering and has counselled youth, individual struggling with addictions and homelessness and people living with HIV.

"I thought, well, the heroes are my young people," Chacaby says. "(There's) a lot of young people that deserve some of that award."

Beaver, a Nibinamik citizen who was recognized with the Young Leader Award sponsored by Generator, says he has been involved with many organizations in Thunder Bay, including Roots to Harvest, Regional Multicultural Youth Council and Magnus Theatre, during the Community Safety Awards

"Back in Grade 10 I started working with Magnus Theatre in the Creative Collective project, which is a program for high school students to come in and write a play on a social issue that is affecting Thunder Bay and to perform it on stage," says Beaver, an Onajigawin Indigenous Services student at Confederation College. "I did that for four consecutive years before I left high school — it was really impactful for igniting my passion for community involvement."

Beaver worked with Roots to Harvest in the Urban Youth

Farming and Seasonal Horticultural Outdoor Worker programs, which led to collaborating with other youth to produce a podcast series, Growing Through it: Stories from the Ground Up, and he volunteered with the Regional Multicultural Youth Council to plan and lead community events for peers at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School.

"It's been exciting to see the changes I've made in my life and how it creates changes in the community," Beaver says. "With Roots to Harvest I've done a lot of work surrounding food and food security. It inspires me to create changes not only in the Thunder Bay community but also the communities up north."

The Matawa Safe Sobering Site, which supports Matawa students from Aroland, Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Long Ginoogaming, #58, Marten Falls, Neskantaga, Nibinamik and Webequie who need safe and supervised detoxification and stabilization support, was recognized with an Outstanding Community Project award sponsored by Enbridge Gas Inc.

The On-Call Crisis Response service, which was established by Northern Nishnawbe Education Council to provide respectculturally-appropriate ful. after-hours support to ensure students' well-being and safety, was recognized with an Outstanding Community Project award sponsored by Circle K.

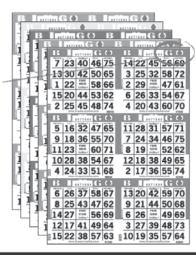
The Care Bus, which was launched by the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board in collab-

oration with NorWest Community Health Centres, Thunder Bay Drug Strategy and People Advocating for Change through Empowerment and in partnership with Thunder Bay City Transit to provide a safe, warm, dry place for individuals to seek shelter, rest, supplies and supports, was recognized with an Outstanding Community Project award sponsored by Matawa First Nations Management.

The Indigenous Food Circle, which is a coalition of Indigenous-led and Indigenous-serving organizations in the Thunder Bay region that are working to increase Indigenous food security and food sovereignty, was recognized with an Outstanding Community Project award sponsored by the Thunder Bay Police Services Board.

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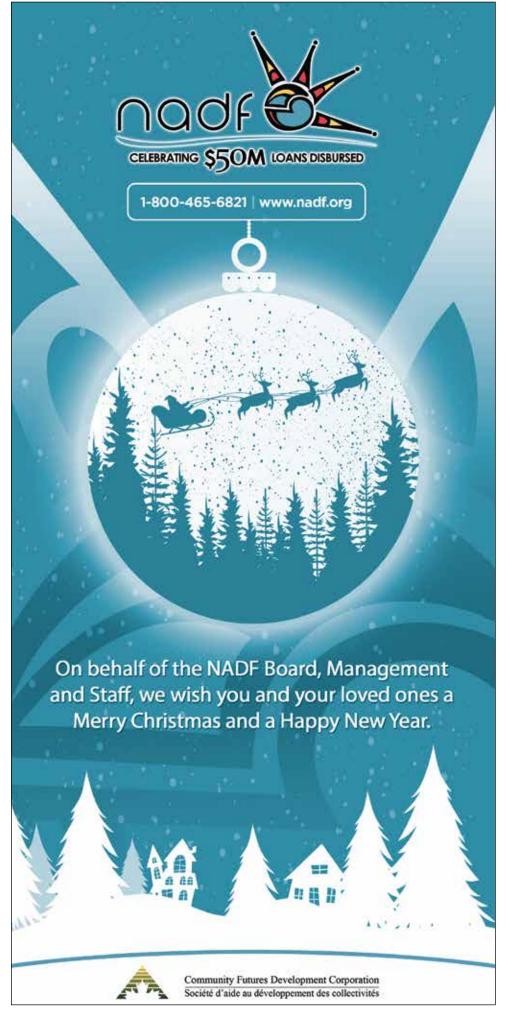
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Community



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care's 13th annual Christmas Wish campaign.

Dilico Christmas Wish campaign fills 700 gift bags

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care's 13th annual Christmas Wish campaign was another success with about 700 Christmas Wish bags filled with essential items, toys, books, warm clothing and learning tools for babies, children and youth.

"All the shopping and packing bags by the Dilico elves is finishing up today," says Tina Bobinski, director of mental health and addiction services at Dilico, on Dec. 10. "We're pleased to officially launch our Christmas Wish campaign commencing on Monday (Dec. 13). We were able to fill 700 bags for children in our communities this year."

The Christmas Wish campaign is known for its bright red Christmas Wish bags that are filled by people, organizations and businesses in the community and gifted to children for Christmas.

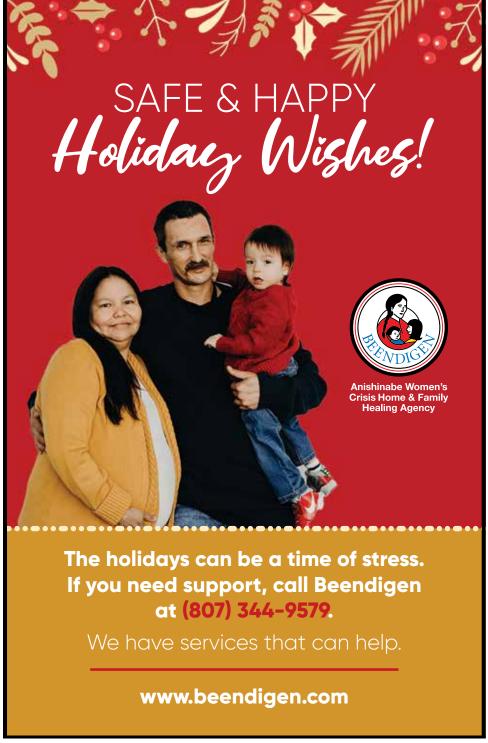
"We're very thankful to our community (citizens), businesses and organizations who participated in the Christmas Wish campaign," Bobinski says. "The bags received for the children have been overwhelmingly full and it just really shows the care of (citizens) in our community for children in need. One volunteer was brought to tears seeing how much thought and care was put into the gift, that included a baby jumper in an amazing bag full of everything for a newborn. It was incredible to see how much thought

and care went into selecting items and the worker knew how appreciative the family would be to receive such amazing things for their baby."

Bobinski says there was a variety of gifts this year, including winter sleds, large play kitchens for toddlers and art supplies.

"One child is even going to receive an authentic Montreal Canadiens jersey," Bobinski says. "So a lot of variety and a lot of thought and care to get kids what they wanted, and that's something unique about our Christmas Wish campaign is the bags are individual to the child."

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Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care's 13th annual Christmas Wish campaign, which reached its goal of filling 700 Christmas Wish bags for babies, children and youth as of Dec. 10.

Dilico delivers Wish bags

from page 20

Each of the Christmas Wish bags have a special tag attached with details about the recipient's age, interests and Christmas wishes.

"You get a little information about the children behind the wishes, like a little girl who loves to play with dolls, or a toddler who could really use some development toys," says Darcia Borg, executive director at Dilico. "Dilico wants every child and family to feel the joy and magic of the holiday season. We want to show every child that wishes can come true."

The Christmas Wish campaign was sponsored by Sovereign Dental, and the Redwood Park Church, which has partici-

pated in the campaign for the last six years, committed to fill 175 Christmas Wish bags this year.

"Year after year we just keep getting a larger amount of organizations and groups that are contributing and supporting the campaign," Bobinski says. "We're very proudly sponsored by Sovereign Dental and we also have other donors and organizations that are noteworthy because of the size of the donation they make is just incredible."

Bobinski says the Christmas Wish campaign received generous donations from Mortgage Connection Thunder Bay, Unifor, Dilico staff who donated through payroll deductions, Elks Lodge, Starbucks on Arthur St., Redwood Park Church, Winners, LCPS Chartered Accountants, Calvary Lutheran, Impala Canada Lac des Iles Mine and Biigtigong School.

"TacoTime on Arthur St. also made a big donation of toys," Bobinski says.

Bobinski says the Christmas Wish campaign has provided Christmas Wishes to about 7,400 babies, children and youth over the years since the campaign was launched in 2008.

"It really does warm their hearts," Bobinski says. "It shows them that the community cares for them, that they're special, that they deserve toys like every other child in our community, and they are very grateful and very humbled by the experience."

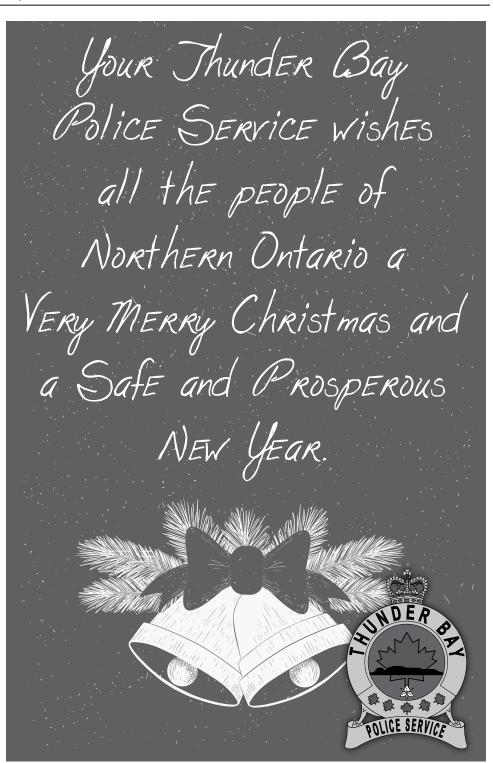






photo submitted by Ranger MCpl Chris Vernon/Canadian Rangers

The Third Canadian Ranger Patrol Group (3CRPG) recently expanded its successful Junior Canadian Rangers (JCR) youth program to include the northern Ontario First Nation communities of Aroland and Long Lake 58.



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Ontario Rangers bring their popular Junior Canadian Rangers youth program to two more First Nation communities

Ranger MCpl Chris Vernon Special to Wawatay News

The Third Canadian Ranger Patrol Group (3CRPG) recently expanded its successful Junior Canadian Rangers (JCR) youth program to include the northern Ontario First Nation communities of Aroland and Long Lake 58.

Similar to the national cadet program, the JCR program is open to youth between the ages of 12 to 18 who live in remote isolated locations, and is managed and facilitated by army personnel, local Canadian Ranger patrols and community volunteers.

Following the successful launches last week, there are 10 JCR recruits signed up in Long Lake 58 and 27 JCR recruits in Aroland First Nation.

Major Gary Johnson, Officer Commanding of the JCRs, said the JCR program plays a crucial role in promoting health and wellness within their host First Nation communities.

"The importance of bringing these Junior Canadian Ranger programs to these communities cannot be understated in the development and fulfillment of youth in their communities," said Major Johnson.

Funded by the army, there is no cost to join the JCR program or for training, and participants also receive a uniform free-ofcharge.

"The Junior Canadian Rangers will be training on The Three Circles, life skills, traditional skills and Ranger skills. These will be taught to them by the Canadian Rangers supporting the JCR patrols," said Captain Courtney Giles.

The Three Circles compo-

nents taught to JCR members include:

- · Map and compass navigation:
- First-Aid;
- · Hunting and fishing skills;
- · Conflict resolution;
- · Parenting;
- · Wilderness survival; and
- · Arts and crafts.

Aroland First Nation Chief Dorothy Towedo said the community and council believes the JCR program will provide much-needed opportunities for young people in the commu-

"It's a great thing for the community. I am delighted with the turnout. We have wanted this for a long time. We are happy for the youth," said Chief Towedo.

Although suspended for the last two years due to COVID-19, the training year culminates with Camp Loon, a 12-day summer camp held at Springwater Lake north of Geraldton.

The camp offers a range of activities, including instruction on air rifles, boating, ATV riding, and traditional arts and

"I joined because I want to join the army. I think (the JCRs) are awesome for the community," said Aroland recruit Makenna Mendowegan after receiving her new JCR uniform.

3CRPG and the JCR program are based at CFB Borden near Barrie and is staff by military personal and army instructors who travel regularly to northern Ontario to train Rangers.

The Canadian Rangers are a sub-component of the Primary Army Reserve who live and serve in remote. Isolated and coastal areas of Canada.

Ontario's Rangers stand at the ready to help with First Nations' vaccination campaigns if requested

Ranger MCpl Chris Vernon Special to Wawatay News

Local Ranger Patrols and two "Ranger Go Teams" consisting of approximately 100 members of the Third Canadian Ranger Patrol Group (3CRPG) are standing ready to assist in a large-scale COVID-19 vaccination effort underway in 32 Northern Ontario First Nations communities, if requested.

3CRPG's preparation for the Indigenous Services Canadaled Operation Remote Immunity 3.0 (ORI 3.0) began on November 13, after Emergency Preparedness Minister Bill Blair and Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino approved Ontario's request for the Rangers to provide logistical support during vaccination campaigns in Northern Ontario. The operation is slated to conclude March 31, and this the third time Ontario Rangers have assisted with a community vaccination drive.

"We have stood up two Ranger Go Teams and 3CRPG is prepared, if requested by the community, to help in this current vaccination roll-out," said 3CRPG's Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Shane McArthur.

The goals of ISC's ORI 3.0 are

- Give third doses to all eligible individuals;

- Provide first and second



doses for children ages 5 to 11;

- Provide first and second doses for those aged 12 and over that have not vet been vaccinated and have indicated they want to receive a dose.

Members from 3CRPG, with assistance from army personnel, will help provide local transportation co-ordination, translation, assist mobile vaccination teams, distribute information materials, and provide administrative support, including conducting COVID-19 prescreening questionnaires.

"In the past, we have arranged transportation for elders to the vaccination clinic or transported the vaccination teams to and from the clinics, or supplied them with water. Whatever they needed. We are

pleased to help them in their vaccination campaigns. Whatever is in the best interest of the community," said Lieutenant-Colonel McArthur.

3CRPG operates patrols in 29 Ontario First Nations communities and will send a Ranger Go Team to support a vaccination campaign if requested by the band council. In addition to its

29 patrol areas, 3CRPG will also assist three communities that do not have patrols, if the assistance is requested.

Canadian The Forces (CAF) has received and responded to 70 COVID-19-related requests for assistance from provincial or federal partners since the pandemic began



photo submitted by Ranger MCpl Chris Vernon/Canadian Rangers The 3CRPG operates patrols in 29 Ontario First Nations communities and will send a Ranger Go Team to support a vaccination campaign if requested by the band council. In addition to its 29 patrol areas, 3CRPG will also assist three communities that do not have patrols, if the assistance is requested.

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From our family to yours, First Mining Gold would like to wish everyone a very joyous holiday season. May the New Year bless you all with health, prosperity, and happiness!



Business

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Business

ABPA hosts virtual mining conference

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

A group of Anishnawbe Business Professional Association (ABPA) directors recently delivered presentations at the Nov. 30-Dec. 2 Mining the North-West Virtual Conference hosted by TradeEx, publisher of Mining Life Magazine.

"We co-hosted the event (and) we also took the lead on putting together the program for what we are calling Inclusion Day to wrap up the event," says Jason Rasevych, president and co-founder of ABPA and national leader for Indigenous Services at Deloitte Canada. "We had presentations from four of our representatives that are on our board of directors."

Rasevych says he focused on ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) investment frameworks and how that (has) implications for the mining sector, government and First Nations.

"(ESG) is a way companies are tracked and rated related to corporate social responsibility and it's a big trend related to access to sustainable and $socially\ responsible\ investments$ into major developments," Rasevych says. "There is quite the movement across Canada to Indigenize this framework because there's challenges with the current standard where the only way Indigenous people or First Nations could impact a company's rating is if they litigate the company, which lowers their rating on the ESG framework. But that is counterproductive to reconciliation, so there is a lot of work that Indigenous professionals are doing to advocate to change the standards to support more involvement of measures that support Indigenous reconciliation."

Rachael Paquette, vice president at ABPA and founding partner of Paquette and Associates Lawyers, and Fiona Blondin, director of Indigenous Strategy at Cormorant Utility Services and board director for chromite exploration mining firm KWG Resources, discussed the critical importance of Indigenous perspectives on corporate boards for mining sector firms during their presentation.

"The Indigenous population continues to grow faster than



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Anishnawbe Business Professional Association president Jason Rasevych, pictured in an ABPA video, delivered a presentation about ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) investment frameworks and how that has implications for the mining sector, government and First Nations on Dec. 2 at the Mining the NorthWest Virtual Conference.

any other in Canada so to me it makes sense that we would have increasing representation on boards across the country,' Paquette says. "We often see one Indigenous person on a board which is not enough, but we have to start somewhere. It is positive to know Indigenous people such as Fiona are getting a seat and a voice at the board room table. Companies such as KWG Resources bringing in First Nations or Indigenous people to their boards will allow for critical and meaningful Indigenous perspectives and insights to be included in key decision-making processes."

Paquette says the ABPA received a "very positive" response from the organizers of the Mining the NorthWest Virtual Conference.

"A recognition is emerging in the mining industry that First Nation inclusion, participation and ownership is key to moving projects forward," Paquette says. "The reality is that we as Indigenous people are stewards of the land and must protect it, but we must also balance that stewardship with the economic needs of our communities. We are at a turning point where corporations are recognizing the importance of Indigenous perspectives in the board room, but corporations have a long way to go in this regard."

Jason Thompson, secretary/ treasurer at ABPA and president and owner of Warrior Supplies, spoke about best practices for leading change through action with attention to procurement

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and building effective partnerships with Indigenous partners during his presentation.

"We are a 100 per cent Indigenous-owned business but we've been battling with challenges in cracking different resource-based sectors probably since inception," Thompson says. "We've always said that change happens by action. Our businesses are about 40 employees strong, the majority are Indigenous and the majority are female, so we are walking the talk."

Thompson says they are currently working with Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment to do some cultural sensitivity training to build their knowledge of Indigenous people.

"We've got some cultural sensitivity training scheduled with them in the New Year," Thompson says. "So that's how things are changing."

Thompson says Indigenous people want to be a part of the prosperity that is taking place across northern Ontario and the country.

"As part of my presentation I said we're not anti-development as Indigenous people, we're anti-exclusion," Thompson says. "We want to be a part of it, we want to be a willing participant in the prosperity."

Brian Davey, director at ABPA and executive director at NADF, spoke about further guidelines and recommendations for non-Indigenous parties seeking to work with Indigenous businesses and communities.

Impact Assessment Agence d'évaluation Agency of Canada d'impact du Canada

Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire Area Public Comments Invited & Virtual Information Sessions

What is happening?

December 3, 2021 — In February 2020, the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change made a decision to undertake, under the federal *Impact Assessment Act*, a Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire Area, located approximately 540 kilometres northeast of Thunder Bay and 1,000 kilometres north of Toronto, in Ontario.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) and the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry have been in discussions on a potential agreement that describes how the Regional Assessment would be conducted.

The Agency is holding a public comment period on a draft Agreement to conduct the Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire Area (draft Agreement). Indigenous communities, organizations and the public are invited to review and provide feedback on the draft Agreement that sets out the goal, objectives and planned outcomes of the regional assessment, as well as key aspects of its governance and administration. It also contains the draft Terms of Reference for the independent Regional Assessment Committee that, once appointed, would be responsible for conducting the Regional Assessment.

How can I participate?

Comments can be submitted online by visiting the Regional Assessment's home page on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (reference number 80468). Participants who wish to provide their input in a different format, or schedule an online meeting, can contact the Agency by writing to regionalrof-cdfregionale@iaac-aeic.gc.ca.

Written comments in either official language will be accepted **until February 1**st, **2022**. All comments will be published online as part of the Regional Assessment file.

Virtual information sessions

The Agency will host virtual information sessions, between December 9, 2021 and January 19, 2022, to provide an overview of the draft Agreement, including the draft Terms of Reference. These sessions will consist of a presentation on key sections of the document, followed by a question and answer period. Links to the information sessions can be found in the Public notice on the regional assessment registry home page or by sending a message to the email address above.

Following the comment period, all comments will be considered. Additional opportunities for the public to participate in the Regional Assessment in the Ring of Fire Area will be announced in the future.

Follow us on Twitter: @IAAC_AEIC #RingofFireRA

For media inquiries, contact the Agency's media relations team by writing to media@iaac-aeic.gc.ca, or by calling 343-549-3870.

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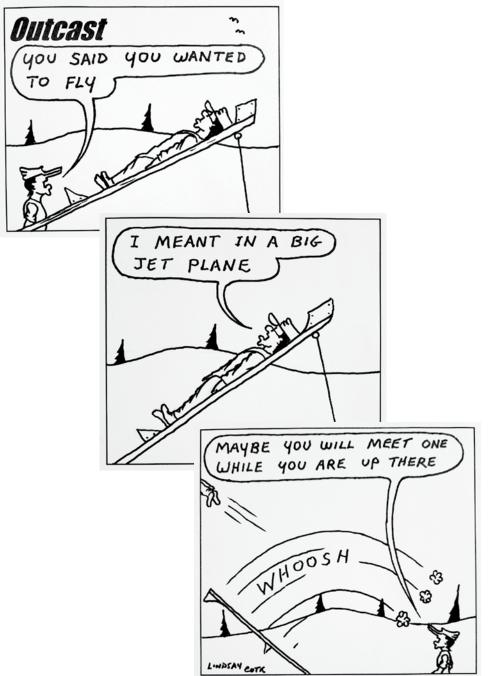
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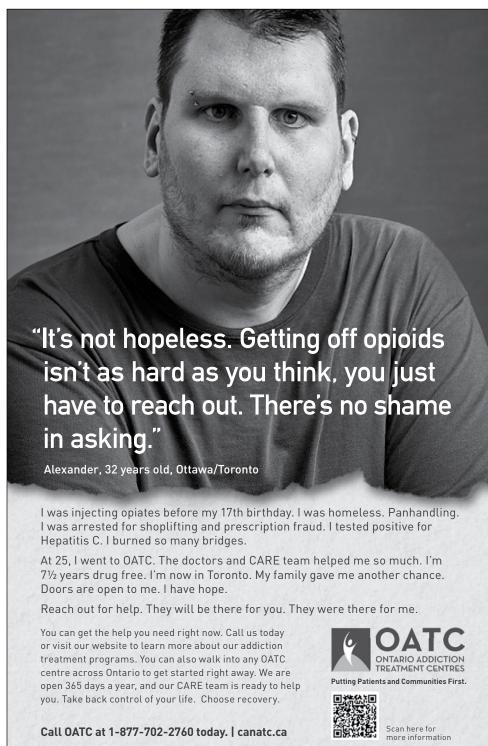


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