NAN youth attend suicide prevention conference in Australia

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Marten Falls' Albany Sutherland and six other Nishnawbe Aski Nation youth attended two Indigenous suicide prevention conferences in Australia with the Wiicihiitowin: Youth Crossing the Waters to Help One Another delegation in late November.

'Overall, I think the trip to Australia was a really great experience for everyone in the group, especially myself because it was great to interact with other youth and learn about their culture," says Sutherland, a Grade 12 student at Hammarskjold High School in Thunder Bay who previously served as a page in the Ontario Legislature in 2014 and as an Indigenous cultural youth ambassador with the City of Thunder Bay. "Some of the things in their culture were similar to ours, but we also got to see their different songs and dances. And obviously the language is different too, so we got to hear them speak their language, which was

Sutherland says the group of youth, aged 16-24, who participated with the Wiicihiitowin delegation had a day to get accustomed to the time zone change and summer climate in Australia before they attended a cultural exchange day on Nov. 19 to kick off the two conferences, which were held in Perth. The 2nd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference was held Nov. 20-21 and the 2nd World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference was

held Nov. 22-23.

"A definite highlight was seeing Anna Betty Achneepineskum present on NAN's Choose Life program," Sutherland says. "And I also liked working with my group and presenting with them."

Sutherland says the other participants at the conference were surprised to hear that Indigenous people in Canada have the same struggles as Indigenous people in Australia with colonialism and its effects on society.

"When I was attending the conference for (sessions about) other groups of people, they talked about their very high suicide rates, which were also similar to Canada's," Sutherland says. "But the main idea of them was connecting youth back to their culture, being able to have something to be connected to."

Sutherland says people have been asking her how her trip was since she returned from the conference.

"It was a really great experience, maybe like a once-in-a-lifetime experience even though I hope to go back," Sutherland says. "People were just really interested in the conference and what it was. Some people had never heard of it before, so I think that was really good."

Sutherland's mother Denise Baxter, vice-provost of Aboriginal Initiatives at Lakehead University, travelled with Sutherland as her chaperone for the trip.

trip.
"It was an incredible privilege and experience to be travelling with such accomplished youth," Baxter says.



submitted photo

Paul Chapman, Jasmine Panacheese, Kyra Matatawabin, Alyssa Hoey, Samuel Kloetstra, Albany Sutherland and Erikson Owen travelled to Australia with the Wiicihiitowin: Youth Crossing the Waters to Help One Another delegation in late November.

"And we got a great opportunity to talk with Indigenous people from the United States, Australia, the Pacific and New Zealand. So that was really interesting."

Baxter says a graph was displayed during the conference that showed "very high suicide rates" in all of the participating countries.

"Unfortunately, Canada's was among the highest," Baxter says.

"But for me it was really great to see so many Indigenous people coming together with community-led solutions. All the solutions were different, but they were all community-driven, which for me was quite exciting to see."

The other Wiicihiitowin youth were: Alyssa Hoey, Bearskin Lake; Samuel Kloetstra, Mattagami; Erickson Owen, Poplar Hill; Jasmine Panacheese, Mishkeegogamang; Kyra Metatawabin, Fort Albany; and Paul Chapman, Sachigo

The Wiicihiitowin delegation was developed after Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler participated as an international keynote speaker at the Indigenous Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum in Perth from Feb. 21-23. Organizers of the February conference extended an invitation to NAN youth to attend the two November conferences.

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Northern Lights photo contest

Communities can send in their best pictures of the Northern Lights and Wawatay Communications Society will use it on our logo. Winner will recieve an iPad. Deadline is January 15th, 2019 and the winner will be announced in the February 2019 Edition of Wawatay News. For more information please visit: www.wawataynews.ca





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Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler leads in the chiefs and proxies with the community flags to begin the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Chiefs



Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler met with former national chiefs Matthew Coon Come and Ovide Mercredi and Kiiwetinoong MPP Sol Mamakwa during the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Chiefs Fall Assembly, held at the DaVinci Centre in Thunder Bay.

NAN Chiefs fall assembly addresses cannabis

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Cannabis use was one of the issues up for discussion at the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Chiefs Fall Assembly, held at the DaVinci Centre in Thunder Bay.

"It is interesting because with the area that NAN covers and which we represent, the issues and the concerns surrounding cannabis are so diverse," says Deputy Grand Chief Jason Smallboy. "We have some communities that are for it and we have some communities that are against it. And what we are finding is a lot of communities want education and awareness, as to, say if they are for it, they want to look at economic development opportunities to become involved. For the ones that are against it, they want to know how it is going to be enforced, like if they pass a BCR to say: 'No, we are not allowing cannabis to be allowed in our community.' So it is really interesting right now."

The federal government passed the Cannabis Act, Bill C-45, in June. The legislation came into force on Oct. 17, making it legal for adults 18 years of age or older depending on provincial or territorial restrictions to: possess in public and share with other adults up to 30

grams of legal cannabis; purchase dried or fresh cannabis and cannabis oil from a provincially-licensed retailer; grow up to four cannabis plants from licensed seed or seedlings per residence for personal use; and make cannabis products, such as food and drinks, at home as long as organic solvents are not used to create concentrated products.

"I am proud of the work accomplished by our government, parliamentarians, and all Canadians who contributed to this important shift in our country's approach to cannabis," says Justice Minister and Attorney General Jody Wilson-Raybould. "Our goals are to protect our youth from the health and safety risks of using cannabis and keep criminals and organized crime from profiting from its production, distribution and

Smallboy notes Attawapiskat Chief Ignace Gull stressed his community's opposition to the use of cannabis during the Assembly.

"So we are going to be going up there to provide some information and try to help out the community in any way we can," Smallboy says. "We're trying to get as much information as we can out to the communities at every level, because we have chiefs and councils coming to us that want to know what this means, say from an employers standpoint and also what it means for the membership."

Smallboy says there have been concerns expressed about children being exposed to the use of cannabis.

"They want to make sure that everything is in place so that the drugs are out of the kids hands," Smallboy says.

The development of a hospital located to the north of Sioux Lookout was also raised during the Health Transformation presentation by Ovide Mercredi, Health Transformation lead and negotiator for NAN, on the second day of the Assembly.

"To me that is a long-term vision and I am hoping the chiefs will agree with me on that," Mercredi says. "It is better for our people to have access to a hospital near to their communities, something familiar in terms of their land and their jurisdiction. I think they would feel a little more confident going to a hospital run by their governments rather than going to say Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout or Winnipeg.'

Mercredi says some patients would have to be sent for treatment to a hospital that specializes in certain areas, such as heart problems, but most health

needs could be addressed in the hospital north of Sioux Look-

"There's one in the Mushkegowuk territory, so it is possible, Mercredi says. "It is not out of the question."

Mercredi adds that an Elder spoke about the need for a return to the land and the need for a spiritual foundation during the Assembly.

"Each young person needs to grow up that way to have a sense of identity and a sense of purpose and the strength to achieve their goals," Mercredi says. "If you feel confident about who you are and you have a strong sense of belonging, you can deal with crisis and problems along your path."

Deputy Grand Chief Derek Fox says child welfare and education funding were also major issues during a press conference at the beginning of the Assem-

"Currently in Fort Albany and Kashechewan, we are without Grade 7 and 8 teachers — we just can't compete with providing resources to those teachers, and they end up coming to our communities and leaving," Fox says. "And the whole child welfare issue, that's been going on for a long time. Our children being apprehended, it's an issue that Deputy Grand Chief Wal-



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

ter Neveau will speak to, but what is the solution, what is the answer, that's going to take a collaborative effort by the chiefs, our executive, our leadership, our women, our parents (and) any people who are in the

Deputy Grand Chief Jason Smallboy.

audience here." A special ceremony was also held to recognize Oshkaatisak (All Young People's) Council member Clyde Moonias for his

For the past three-and-ahalf years I've met many great young leaders, First Nations and non-First Nations, throughout Ontario," Moonias says. "And some of the highlights were just making those connections and making friends along the way and obviously being one of the leaders with the NAN youth gathering we have annu-

Moonias plans to work for his community, but also to do the last two credits he needs to finish his Bachelor of Arts degree at Lakehead University.

"Future goals are to eventually go back to school and work on a masters, but I think at this time in my life I'm more focused on working and getting some experience," Moonias says.

The Assembly also included an update on the development of the NAN Housing Strategy.

Thank You, Airlines!

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













Editorial

Publisher's Note

A treatise on addiction

John Gagnon

Triters are required to research and educate them-selves on whatever topic they may be delving into. Many great writers have stated, "you can't write about it if you haven't lived it." This may be true in many genres of writing, but not so much for academic and scientific. Academia and science use what is known as qualitative and quantitative research; qualitative research being interpretive and quantitative data ranked in units of measurements- dry and devoid of humanness, and the outcome is writing about other people and their issues. There are countless neurological studies on addictions, but few look into intergenerational abusive traumas or spiritual healing.

In my humble search for truth, academic writing-a sour acquired taste-grew on me over the years since University. It expanded my knowledge and fed my need to learn, but really, it was a rabbit hole. The more I read it seemed the more I had to read. For example, when I began writing this treatise, I was reading up on genetic memory and equating it to "blood memory" of which I learned from an Elder from Batchewana. My original question was, "is addiction a genetically inherited trait?" And the following rudimentary argument was formed.

Steven E. Hyman, M.D. classifies addiction as learning disorders and defines addiction as compulsive drug use despite negative consequences. Hyman states that people take drugs solely for the euphoria and pleasure, and "the ability of drugs to produce positive affective; and because their peers are doing it, and for many other complicated psychosocial reasons."

This got me thinking, that with Hyman's logic, compulsive drug use without negative consequences cannot be considered addiction. More so, I was inspired to explore the "many other complicated psychosocial reasons," which seems illusive in academic papers on addiction. It seems to be all numbers and thinking with no heart or spirit.

The medical establishment rarely

The medical establishment rarely takes into account the other complicated psychosocial reasons for addictions. These are the literal trauma's the patient is trying to escape with the addiction.

Human consciousness is made up of a variety of knowledge bases that work with our intelligence quotient IQ, emotional quotient EQ capacity. And, most importantly, what some of us in our circles call spiritual quotient

Spiritual quotient (SQ) can be better understood as spiritual intelligence: a feeling in our hearts that cannot be given to us, it is something we must find on our own. This feeling is so powerful you cannot go a minute without giving thanks or feeling grateful for each breath, and its awesome power will drop any human to their knees.

It is more than faith; it is a secure and sacred knowledge of a greater source. So, the body-our physical lives are a working combination of spiritual quotient-from a greater source, and also the physical elements of our emotional and intellectual capacity.

In saying this, and if we think of ourselves as similar to a computer, we're made up of software and hardware. The software being the spirit with its own SQ and the body is the hardware with its IQ/EQ. The two work together in its own defined harmony that breaths life into us every moment.

"Essentially we are all just computing life and trying to live in the here and now..."

Essentially we are all just computing life and trying to live in the here and now, and obviously the here and now is the addict's greatest selfmanipulation.

The difference between addicts and non-addicts is this: addicts are devoid of IQ/EQ and SQ, and when in deep torment of their trauma, an addict does not care whom they hurt to get that ill medicine. This is all they know that will take away the awful memories.

In my opinion, neurological and psychological studies trying to figure out addictions will never find a cure on their own without the exploration of IQ/EQ and SQ. Most importantly, it must be remembered that addiction is not the deepest level, and is merely a coping mechanism for traumas much deeper affecting the person at their core. Suicide is the final door the person will walk though in this kind of life.

It is abnormal to be happy every single waking minute. We all deal with the ups and downs of life and roll with the punches, so to speak. Work, family, the absorption of daily social media programming, school dynamics as well as many other situations has their positive or negative effects on us, which we take to heart. So, this is the normal ebb and flow of all people, families and communities and how we deal with them is what we perceive as normal. As Rocky Balboa says, "it's not all rainbows and butterflies."

Now compound this with the negative aspects of the IRS legacy and their traumas that have affected many of our families, which vastly altered our communities.

These traumas infect our spirit and emotional well-being, which in their darkest moments the only answer seems to be suicide.

This is the core, and addiction is merely the last vestige before suicide, which in itself is a slower coping means of suicide, as death by drugs should be viewed as suicide.

Suicide, the final end that murders love and loyalty, that robs families and communities of joy, is what the person lost and went through silently while alive.

And, many of us turned our backs. Some even were specifically mean to the person and abused them even more. These are the dark images we are trying to escape: the abuse, the memories, the shame, and the selfworthlessness that presides in our DNA, our family and community.

Unless you have ever been alone and haunted by re-appearing images of your traumas, or been in position for someone to abuse you in the vilest ways, you should hold your comments and opinions on addiction and those with addictions at bay. Drugs and booze help in forgetting these traumas. Some people even become productive functioning addicts when not hindered by their memories. More so, they can be saving someone long enough to get serious help and learn a new way to take back power from the traumas; learn to live without addiction and learn to love themselves.

The darkness is what we fight daily, and no one will ever fully be without the traumatic memories, although the times between slowly dissipate. When in that darkness, you must reach out to other people who have walked this path through the dark and find illumination. Be honest, and listen to the wisdom and apply it to your life.

If your loved one refuses to begin their healing stages and are abusive themselves in the family home, then the only choice is tough love. They must be shunned away until they want to re-join the family in a healthy manner.

It is a detrimental impairment for the youth to observe these behaviours and is an abusive burden on the joy all families should enjoy. Remember it cannot be solely spirit or emotion to rid people of this virus.

When we pray we must do the footwork, which is why creation provided us with arms, legs, hearts and a brain.

Always remember that the healthiest computer is one with the least operational viruses, and we're all part of the same network.

Welcome home Hunter



Recently I have been dealing with sickness and the passing of family members and that certainly is a sad situation and does take its toll. However I am so happy to be able to welcome Hunter James John Francois Chum, a brand new baby boy into this world. Hunter was born on November 1 with the healthy weight of nine pounds. It is good to know that with the passing of loved ones hope springs eternal.

"It is good to know that with the passing of loved ones hope springs eternal..."

I am so happy for my niece Marissa, her husband Tony and their two daughters Toni and Kailyn as they are joined by little Hunter.

This little boy will be loved and spoiled by his grand parents Janie and Brian Wesley and Karen Chum and Francois Mongrain as well as Erik Gunner. He deserves to be loved so much and of course spoiled as he will be walking the life trail of some very strong, traditional ancestors.

His names comes from the fact that his dad recently came back from a moose hunting trip with a successful harvest.

On his return when the baby was born Tony and Marissa decided his name would be Hunter.

Hunter will also have the opportunity to grow up with all of his traditions and language if he chooses to, as his mom and dad and grandparents know so much about our Native culture, history and language. He is one lucky boy. Right now Hunter and the family are sharing a home in Moose Factory with great grandfather Peter Chum who is happily showering this new baby with love and affection.

That connection to the Elders is so important for our children. Tony and Marissa decided to live with their grandfather as Peter's wife Leona had passed on several years before.

Marissa has always been a very creative and industrious person and her husband Tony has a similar personality and that makes them great parents. Hunter will learn to hunt, fish, live on the land and gather with

an extended family of relatives and children. Those will be huge and fun gatherings.

My sister Janie, who is the grandmother to little Hunter will be able to show him how to do all sorts of traditional crafts and art. As well she will keep him stuffed with traditional foods like goose, moose, caribou and fish as she is an excellent cook. Mom, Marissa is also an excellent chef who has studied food preparation and worked in that industry. Grandfather Brian will make sure Hunter has all the good introductions to technology and perhaps his interest in aviation. Tony's family also has a strong connection to traditional activities and living on the land and I am sure they will show Hunter these skills as he grows up.

The world is totally open to little Hunter and his path is full of good news with all the best options for a good life. His choices will take him on his way and he will have many family members to help him pick the good trail and stay on it.

Saying goodbye to family and friends as they pass is such a difficult thing for everyone but thanks to the way life works we get to move on with new life and wonderful fresh family friends like Hunter. Many thanks to all who supported Marissa and Tony on their journey with this new life and we know we can all count on family and friends to be there as time clicks on.

My mom Susan and dad Marius would have been so proud and happy to be able to welcome Hunter into the living world. In a way there will be a little bit of them in our new little Hunter to carry on their traditions and teachings. Hunter will be joined by so many wonderful little cousins who have been born in the past few years and I am sure they will be playing together and developing great friendships for the years to come.

A few days ago I was spreading a friends ashes on the ground in a family ceremony near a huge maple tree and on a wonderful forest path in Oshweken.

Today I am sprinkling words of welcome, joy and hope on a page devoted to new beginnings. Life is good and there is a balance and a yin and yang to it that we can all find hope in. We all have a great future if we take care of those new babies and help them grow into strong, wise, sensitive, open and courageous leaders and moms and dads.

Welcome home Hunter. Kee-sah-kee-eh-tee-nan Noo-see-sim ... We love you grandchild.

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Commentary

Bottled water is a poor choice



Tor some time now huge companies have been taking water from the ground, bottling it and selling it to make big profits. For the most part these companies like Nestle don't pay all that much for the right to draw this water out of the ground and they do a good job of marketing it all across Canada.

Many people believe that water as a resource is becoming the new gold and that future wars will be fought over it. We see wars now all over the world fought to control resources like gold, other precious metals and of course oil. As good drinking water becomes more scarce the demand by the public for water has become an opportunity to make lots of money.

Some estimates declare that global water shortages will be a problem in a decade and that things will only get worse from there. I can tell you that it makes no sense to me that huge water companies are taking water from the land and making incredible profits while many First Nations across Canada don't have decent drinking water. How can it be that this situation exists in Canada which is supposed to be a first world country. The truth is that too many First Nations are living in poverty and don't have access to clean drinking water.

In Canada we are fortunate to have so much fresh water. Although, nearly 70 percent of our planet is covered by water only 2.5 percent of it is fresh water while the rest is saline or salty and is contained in the earth's oceans. Three quarters of that fresh water is trapped as groundwater or is held as glacial polar ice or permanent snow. That leaves less than one percent of the water on the planet being accessible as drinking water for us to use. Brazil, Russia the United States and Canada are the top countries when it comes to fresh water resources.

Bottle water companies lobby governments and promote their industry even though they realize that they contribute so much plastic waste that is detrimental to our environment. You would think our federal and provincial governments would

take issue with this but obviously they have not. In Ontario it is estimated that one billion plastic water bottles end up in land fills every year. Incredibly these plastic bottles take hundreds of years to break down and pose threats to all kind of animal, bird and fish life on this planet. Some parts of the ocean have islands of plastic water bottles floating around and many beaches and coastal areas are covered in plastic bottles that are swept up from the sea in storms

The world wide bottled water industry is worth about \$200 billion dollars so it is a very powerful bunch of companies that are involved in this resource development and they lobby governments all over the world to get their way. Some of the top bottle water companies include Nestle, Dasani and Aquafina to name a few. There are so many operating here in Canada, I don't have room to list them. This is in stark contrast to so many of our First Nations who have very poor access to clean drinking water.

Recently, Six Nations of The Grand River through Chief Ava Hill and her council voiced opposition to the continued bottle water extraction by Nestle in its territory. The Chief and council were outraged that the company was extracting millions of litres of water a day while many residents of the Six Nations reserve are without access to clean drinking water in their homes. This makes no sense at all and I commend Chief Hill and her council for having the strength and foresight to make a stand on this important issue.

Like many people, I often reach for bottled water over tap but that is a mistake. Bottled water is not put under the same stringent demands made on tap water and in most cases it is not any better for you than what is coming out of your tap. The exception of course is in many First Nations where good and clean running water is not even available. For many people a good idea to make sure they are getting good water can be accomplished by buying a water filtration kit that you can install in your home. This ensures you will have top quality water and it is economical to buy and install. I am going to do my best to choose tap water over bottled water just for the fact that it makes good sense.

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Constance Lake holds Christmas Celebrations



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A group of Constance Lake citizens competed in a blindfolded drawing competition during the Constance Lake First Nation Christmas Feast on Dec. 6 at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay.

Winter: variations on the theme



ovember was cold enough to qualify as a winter month this year. As readers know this is not so remarkable. Occasionally there is a November that breaks the rules. Mild temperatures in 2015 persisted and ice thick enough to be safe for people and small vehicles did not form until January 2016.

The weather last month was a little complicated but not a serious rule breaker. The first week of November was warmer than average in Northwestern Ontario and normal in the Northeast, All of Ontario then shifted to well below normal for the next two weeks. Then there were several days of record low temperatures from around the Neskantaga (Lansdowne House) and Geraldton area to the Quebec border. Daily minimum records were set on Nov. 22 from Neskantaga (-33° C) to North Bay (-27° C). These record lows took place because north to south wind flow delivered cold Arctic air. This process was compounded briefly by flow from beyond the Canadian

Arctic . . . Siberia, on the other side of the North Pole.

The final week featured a quick change from frigid to melting conditions the next day. The transition took about 28 to 30 hours, a remarkable change in such a short time. Geraldton had a rise in temperature of 35° C most locations to the west and north warmed by at least 25° C. Average November temperatures ended up being around 3° C below long-term averages across all of Northern Ontario.

The region had some snow cover by December 1. Most areas had 5 to 15 cm on the ground - in other words, not a lot so far and not enough to ensure underground water lines from freezing. The usual snow belt between Wawa and Sault Ste. Marie had as much as 31 cm of snow on the ground.

Last month I mentioned El Niño, an ocean-warming process in the distant tropical Pacific Ocean, as a likely player in this winter's weather. I have observed in the past that an El Niño winter is usually preceded by a duration of very cold temperatures. It happens because of the changes in atmospheric circulation and jet streams.

In an El Niño winter the A tic cold air is abruptly replaced by air with origins over the North Pacific Ocean, i.e. unseasonably warm temperatures for as far as westerly winds take

So, the abrupt change part happened about three weeks ago and early December temperatures were close to average. The next week or two are forecast to be warmer than normal from Manitoba to Thunder Bay, normal around Neskantaga and Geraldton and slightly cooler than seasonal from James Bay to Timmins. Of course, these are merely forecasts at the moment.

If they become reality what follows depends on sea surface temperatures (SST) in the tropical Pacific. These now exceed El Niño thresholds but some features such as trade winds, cloudiness and pressure patterns in tropical ocean and atmosphere are not reinforcing the process. In Canada a weak El Niño results in warmer winter in British Columbia and Alberta, a moderate one extends the warm/cold transition into Ontario and a strong El Niño usually means warmer conditions across Canada.

The extra heat of even a weak El Niño in the Pacific Ocean contributes to a warmer global temperature average. Last month was the second warmest October in 138 years of record.

Notable dates in the next few weeks:

There are many notable and special dates coming up in addition to Christmas. The following dates are connected to the sky and weather events.

December 21:

The Winter Solstice occurs at 5:22 pm Eastern Standard Time/4:22 pm Central Time. The Northern Hemisphere is tilted away from the Sun by 22.5° which results in the "longest night/shortest day" of the year. We leave the fall season and begin winter at that minute according to calendars and astronomers. The change is not easy to detect. Sunrise and sunset are almost precisely at the same time for several days at this time of the year.

December 22:

The December full moon will occur less than one day after the December solstice – so we just miss having four full moons in this autumn season. This full moon is known as the "Long Night's Moon"; perfect timing this year. It is also known as the "Cold Moon", usually appropriate in Northern Ontario, but highly unlikely to be the coldest night of this winter.

Mid-winter:

If we define this as when verage temperatures stop getting colder and start to warm, this suggests January 20 to 22. Of course, the exact date varies greatly. Next month we can take another look.

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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 Thunder Bay

TRANSLATION Vicky Angees vickya@wawatay.on.ca

CONTRIBUTORS

Jenny Adams Allan Beaver Gail Duiker Rick Garrick Xavier Kataquapit Peter Moon **Graham Saunders**

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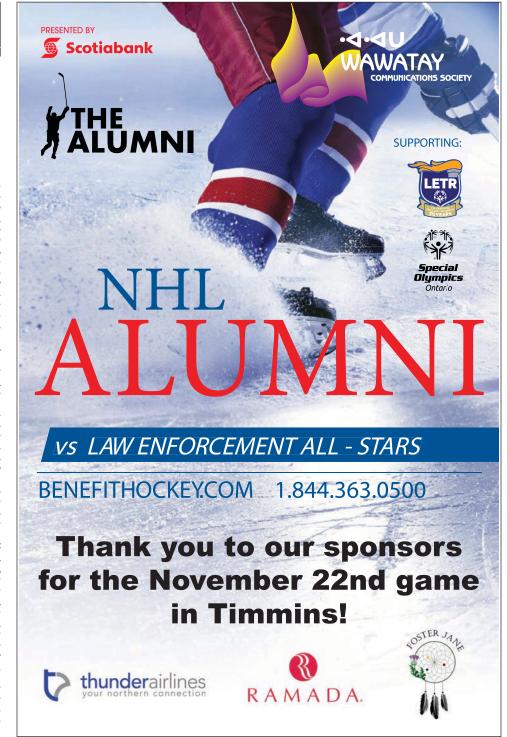
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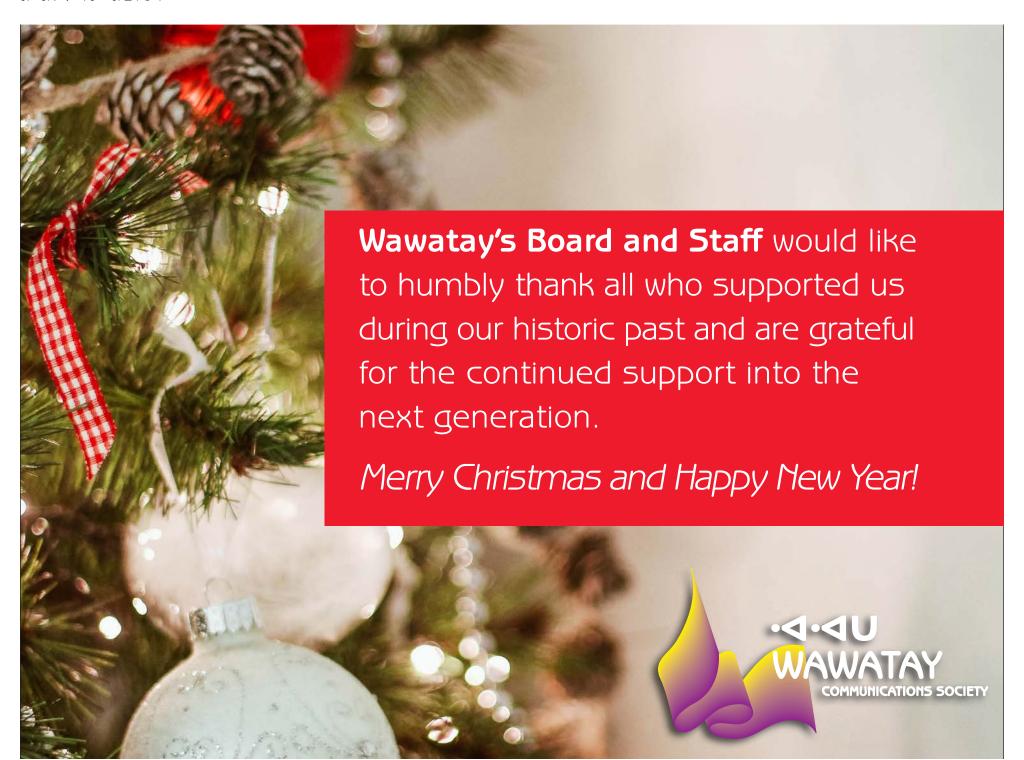
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Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

The Shelter House Thunder Bay SleepOUT participants slept in a large tent during the night of Nov. 30 and were served a complimentary breakfast the next morning at 6 a.m.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay New

The six Matawa First Nations Management employees who participated in the Shelter House Thunder Bay SleepOUT enjoyed a complimentary breakfast prepared by volunteers after sleeping out in sub-zero temperatures on the grounds of Shelter House Thunder Bay.

Matawa SleepOUT fundraises for Shelter House

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

A group of six Matawa First Nations Management employees slept out in the cold on the night of Nov. 30 to raise about \$1,400 in donations for the Shelter House Thunder Bay SleepOUT campaign. A total of about \$7,800 was raised by the 21 SleepOUT participants.

"It was cool, obviously, but it gave us an appreciation of what people go through," says Paul Capon, a Matawa employee. "And for myself, I learned to appreciate my pillow and comfortable mattress. It sounds very selfish, but when you think of people who don't have those luxuries, you are more grateful and also more conscious of people who don't have the privilege that I have."

Beedahbin Desmoulin, another Matawa employee, says the temperature started out "fairly warm" but turned cold in the middle of the night. Environment Canada recorded the temperature at -2 Celsius at 10 p.m. and -9 Celsius at 5 a.m.

"By 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock in the morning, it was waking up to freezing — it was cold and we were chilled," Desmoulin says. "But overall it was a really good experience, a really big eyeopener. And I hope next year we get some more participants to be able to spread the word. We are definitely going to spread the word and hopefully create some more awareness on the challenges behind funding and programming for the Shelter House."

The SleepOUT began at 10 p.m. on Nov. 30 and ended

at 7 a.m. on Dec. 1. The participants received a Nighttime Survival Kit, which included sandwiches, water and pastries, and a complimentary breakfast was served by volunteers at 6 a.m. The participants were also encouraged to bring a sleeping bag, flashlight, warm clothing and two items of their own choosing for the SleepOUT.

"I appreciated the comments, especially what Molly (Boyce) had given (about) her experiences on the street," says Ginny Michano, a SleepOUT participant. "It just made me reflect on how lucky I am. I think of my father who is in Sault Ste. Marie and a lot of times he sleeps at their homeless shelters. Growing up, we used the food banks, we used the system. Even when I come here to help, I come across people that I know, peo-

ple I grew up with. I still think even though I am lucky right now, I still have a connection to the people that are here and use the services, and I always remember that."

uncomfortable and we still had some comforts," Hauth says.

"So I can't imagine spending the night with a lot less than what we had. Everybody had very good sleeping bags and a few little

Boyce, a former client and currently a support worker at Shelter House Thunder Bay, says the SleepOUT initiative was "good."

"But like I said, they are cheating," Boyce says, noting that she did not have a comfortable sleeping bag when she was sleeping on the streets. "There were some nights where we (street people) didn't sleep—there was always one person up. Because we were aware of the dangers out there."

Thunder Bay Police Service Chief Sylvie Hauth, a SleepOUT participant, says it was an "interesting experience."

"It was cold, it was very

some comforts," Hauth says. "So I can't imagine spending the night with a lot less than what we had. Everybody had very good sleeping bags and a few little mattresses and we actually had a bit of a tent over our heads, so although it was cold you were still outside of the major elements for wind and everything else. So I can appreciate that people who do sleep outside day in and day out, that it is quite uncomfortable and very cold. And it is a very good eveopener in terms of taking for granted what we have every time we go to sleep at night in our beds."

Julie Harmer, a SleepOUT participant, raised the highest amount of donations for the SleepOUT campaign, with \$1,136.

"I set out to raise a \$1,000

and I pushed it on Facebook," Harmer says. "My friends came through and they were so happy to contribute to it — they were super generous."

were super generous."

Thunder Bay Councillor Rebecca Johnson enjoyed helping out with the SleepOUT by preparing breakfast with a group of volunteers.

"I was up at 4 o'clock this morning," Johnson says. "To me, it's giving back to the community. You actually feel what is going on when you are here. It's important to find out what is going on and the education and in joining everyone who is here this morning to create a better environment for our community."

Michelle Jordan, executive director with Shelter House Thunder Bay, says SleepOUT will be held again next year.



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A group of St. Patrick's High School Grade 12 drama class students helped launch the Dilico Anishinabek



Dilico Anishinabek Family Care's Carmela Hardy and three St. Patrick's High School Grade 12 drama class students are encouraging community members to help fill 850 Christmas Wish bags for children and babies through Dilico's Christmas Wish Campaign.

Dilico Christmas Wish Campaign fills 850 'wish bags'

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Dilico Anishinabek Family Care Christmas Wish Campaign is aiming to fill 850 Christmas Wish bags for children and babies after distributing more than 4,000 over the past decade.

"We've seen lots of happy faces with children and youth in the previous years, and we want to do this campaign again just to give back to the children and the youth this year," says Carmela Hardy, director of Child Welfare at Dilico Anishinabek Family Care. "This is our 10th year for our campaign, and over the last 10 years we've had over 4,000 (Christmas Wish) bags filled. The children and families are very helpful and very grateful for the generosity of the individuals that donate and sponsor these bags. To put a smile on a child's face on Christmas morning is priceless."

Dilico launched the Christmas Wish Campaign along with a group of Grade 12 drama students at St. Patrick High School in Thunder Bay. The drama class has supported the initiative over the past four years by filling bags, accepting donations and promoting the campaign during their annual holiday theatre production.

"These Grade 12 drama students are absolutely fabulous," Hardy says. "This is our fourth vear that we have partnered with the Grade 12 drama class, and each year they are just phenomenal. This year they are going to be contributing to 40 bags as a class, and we are just very grateful for that."

Family Care Christmas Wish Campaign with a performance at the Thunder Bay high school.

The students also accepted donations and served as a dropoff and pick-up location for Christmas Wish bags during their performances of Christmas in the Land of Oz on Dec. 6 and 7 at St. Patrick's High

"We know some of these kids we are helping are actually potential future (St. Patrick's High School) Saints, so we'd like to make sure every kid wakes up on Christmas morning with a present under their tree," says Julie Beach, Grade 12 drama teacher at St. Patrick's High School. "It's very important to us that we know these are future Saints and we are helping those in our community and northwestern Ontario."

Grade 12 drama student Paul Stoppel enjoyed participating in the drama class presentation for the launch of the Christmas Wish Campaign.

"It was pretty good actually, we had some good prep time and I think we did pretty good on the screen," Stoppel says. "The monkeys showed good character and I think they were really funny."

Stoppel adds that all of the St. Patrick's High School drama class productions are for char-

"Dilico is a very good cause, and like what our spokesperson Brady Hill said, it's important

that kids wake up on Christmas with a gift under the tree," Stoppel says. "No one wants to be the kid left out on the Christmas holidays."

People who are interested in participating in the Christmas Wish Campaign are encouraged to fill a Christmas Wish bag with essential items, toys, books, clothing and learning tools for babies, children and youth up to 18-years-old. Sovereign Dental funded the purchase of the Christmas Wish bags and provided tooth brushes for the children who are receiving bags this year.

"Today is known as the first day of the holiday shopping season, so embrace the true spirit of Christmas and fill a bag for a child in need," says Darcia Borg, executive director of Dilico Anishinabek Family Care. "The Dilico Christmas Wish Campaign helps make

the holidays so much brighter for children and families who sometimes find the season to be a difficult time."

Information on the Christmas Wish Campaign is available online at: www.facebook.com/ DilicoChristmasWish.



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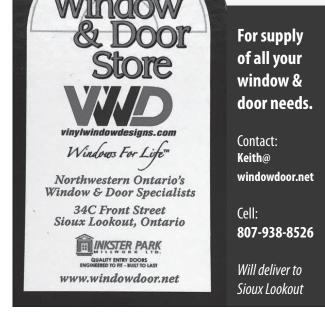
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Couchiching's Mary McPherson creates image for Canadian coin

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Couchiching's Mary McPherson, a fourth-year Lakehead

University visual arts student, was honoured to be chosen to create an image of Tecumseh for a recently released Royal Canadian Mint coin.

"It's been an honour to be able to do that depiction of Tecumseh," McPherson says. "I'm pretty happy that people are open and receptive and supportive to the work."

McPherson was asked by the Mint to participate in the design process for the new coin, and was thrilled when the Mint chose her image of Tecumseh, a legendary Shawnee war leader who led more than 2,000 First Nations warriors into battle during the War of 1812, for the coin.

"It feels incredibly different than the work that I usually produce," McPherson says. "I've never had an artistic experience quite like this one. I feel extremely grateful to have had the honour of drawing Tecumseh and having the design immortalized on a coin."

The 1 oz. pure silver goldplated piedfort coin, available for sale for \$129.95, with a mintage of 6,000 marks the 250th anniversary of Tecumseh's birth.

"I learned a lot about Tecumseh during the project," McPherson says. "Specifically I learned about how he, according to Olive Dickason and William Newbigging, sided with the British, not because he particularly liked the British but because he saw the British as the lessor of the two evils. I also learned how he united Indigenous nations to resist divide and conquer tactics."

McPherson says Tecumseh also fought for the "essential notion" that the land is not something to be owned.

"It's meant to be shared among everyone," McPherson says. "That is also something that Indigenous peoples are fighting to have recognized today."

The coin features a detailrich portrait of Tecumseh in traditional clothing with a King George III medal around his neck. He is flanked by an American eagle on one side and a British lion on the other side.

"Above him there is the star that represents him," McPherson says, referencing the shooting star on a rising path that Tecumseh is named after. "And in the background I really wanted to hint at the world view he was coming from, so I depicted weather systems, trees and the land of the people he was fighting for."

McPherson's initials, MM, are also on the right side of the image. She credits her education at Lakehead University for helping her with the design process.

"Through Visual Arts and Indigenous Learning, I was able to improve my drawing skills, research skills and time management skills, which aided me in completing this project," McPherson says.

McPherson says her volunteer work with Neechee Studio was also a benefit for her art.

"(It) allowed me to experience some situations working out in the community and how valuable and rewarding that work is," McPherson says. "I hope to continue it because it's been so much fun working with people and hosting those workshops."

McPherson plans to study Law after she completes her visual arts studies to better inform her future artwork.

"My primary goal going into law school is to better understand the systems that I am impacted by and a lot of us are impacted by," McPherson says. "I want to be able to understand the systems that are in place and the structures and the legal frameworks and policies and allow that to feed into my artwork so that I can better understand it for myself and be better able to communicate it."

McPherson was recognized with seven awards on March 9 at the Lakehead University Annual Student Juried Exhibition at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.



submitted by the Royal Canadian Mint



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News Lakehead University visual arts student Mary McPherson was honoured to create an image of Shawnee war leader Tecumseh for a recently released Royal Canadian Mint coin.





Aarianna Roberts, a 16-year-old St. Patrick's High School student, was one of 10 children and youth who



Manitoba NDP leader Wab Kinew reads from his book Go Show the World during the 2018 Step Up Hero Awards ceremony at the Kinsmen Youth Centre in Thunder Bay.

Step Up Hero awards held in Thunder Bay

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Manitoba NDP leader Wab Kinew shared a reading from his book Go Show the World, which was published by Tundra Books in September, during the 2018 Step Up Hero Awards in Thunder Bay.

Society of the District of Thunder Bay.

"This book is a highlight of different heroes that I have always looked up to over the years," says Kinew, an Ojibways of Onigaming citizen. "Some of them I've read about, like Jim Thorpe, who played pro football, pro baseball and won Olympic gold medals. Other people were people I had a chance to learn about from our oral traditions, meaning I heard about them from their great great grandkids."

Kinew noted the example of Te-Wau-Zee, an Indigenous woman from Oklahoma whose people were relocated hundreds of miles away from their home territory.

were recognized with 2018 Step Up Hero Awards by Dilico Anishinabek Family Care and the Children's Aid

"They told her she could only bring the stuff she could carry on her back, so rather than bringing belongings or furniture or even supplies, she brought the rocks for her sweat lodge," Kinew says. "And today I am very proud to tell you that her great great grandkids still practice the sweat lodge ceremony because of the sacrifices she made."

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care and the Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay held the awards to recognize 10 children and youth who stepped up in their communities and schools in a positive way.

"Children and youth inspire us every day," says Darcia Borg, Dilico's executive director. "It was truly amazing to see all of the nominations come in to the Step Up Hero Awards and we appreciate all of the talented and special children and youth that are out in our very own communities stepping up and making a difference every single day. Dilico is very proud to work with the Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay to raise awareness about Child Abuse Prevention Month. We are honoured to be able to acknowledge all of the children and youth in attendance with us today and all of the nominees. You are so awesome.

Brad Bain, executive director of the Children's Aid Society, says the award recipients are role models to their peers and will inspire others in the community.

"Dedicated, successful, humble and driven — these are just a few words to describe our 10 award recipients today," Bain says, "The Children's Aid Society is proud to celebrate local children and youth. The Step Up Hero campaign also reminds the community that together we are all responsible for protecting children. By stepping up, we collectively recognize the importance of each child having a healthy and happy

childhood. While celebrating our community's children and youth, the Step Up Hero campaign also empowers youth to believe in themselves.'

The Step Up Hero Award recipients were Caroline Di Felice, Benjamin Fedoruk, Justin Idman, Paityn Meredith, Neveah Morriseau-Charlie, Daanis Pelletier, Jake Perreault, Aarianna Roberts, Shannon Scott and Garrick Waswa.

The Step Up Hero Awards were held at the Kinsmen Youth Centre in Thunder Bay.

"It was pretty neat," says Waswa, a 16-year-old Hammarkijold High School from Eabametoong. "It was pretty exciting."

Waswa credits his participation in activities and leadership at school for being honoured with the award.

"I'm on the Fire Council," Waswa says.

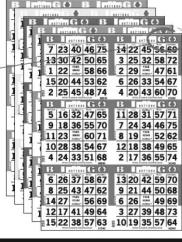
Beverly Idman, Justin's mother and a Shoal Lake #39 citizen, says her son, an eightvear-old Sherbrooke School student, was excited about the award and meeting Kinew.

"I'm really impressed that he got nominated and selected for (the award)," Beverly says. "He does really well with others and just being nominated is a big thing."

The Step Up Hero Awards were supported by ORIGIN, Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund, Lowery's and Bearskin

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BFF: Breast Friends Forever!

Crystal Davey, Nurse Practitioner Special to Wawatay News

Then First Nations, Inuit, and Metis women are diagnosed with breast cancer, it will likely be at an advanced stage due to late detection. Cancer found at this stage may have spread to other body parts – which is why it is so important to screen for breast cancer early before there are any symptoms.

Typical risk factors for breast cancer are: being a woman, getting older, family history of breast cancer, personal history of breast cancer, and having dense breast tissue.

Women between the ages of 50 to 74 should have a mammogram every two years. A mammogram is an X-ray of the

breast that is used to screen for breast cancer. During a mammogram, both breasts are compressed between two firm surfaces to spread out the breast tissue to take the X-ray picture. You may experience mild discomfort during a mammogram, but this test is important and could save your life. Mammograms can find lumps that you can't feel.

You can get a mammogram through the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP). There is no cost for this test and for Indigenous people who have to travel; Non-Insured Health Benefits may cover the costs. A referral from a health care provider is not needed for this program. The OBSP also oversees breast cancer screening services for women aged 30 to 69 who are identified as being at 'high

risk' for breast cancer. Please talk to your health care provider about when you should start screening with mammograms.

No matter your age, it is important to be breast aware – this means knowing how your breasts normally look and feel so you can notice any unusual changes.

Some changes that need to be checked by your health care provider include:

- A lump or thickening in the breast
- Fluid leaking from the nipple
- Redness
- Dimpling or puckering
- Skin changes Change in the breast size
- or shape
 Nipple changes

In order to reduce your risk of developing cancer, follow the 'Path to Wellness' which includes:

- Maintaining a healthy body weight, especially after menopause
- Being physically active as part of everyday life
- Eating healthy foods
- Being smoke-free
- Being sun safe
- Avoiding alcohol, or having no more than one alcoholic drink per day
- Limiting the length of time using hormone replacement therapy (discuss with your health care provider before making medication changes)
- Getting screened with regular mammogram tests

Cancer screening finds cancers earlier, when they are less likely to have spread and more treatment options are available. I encourage all women to become BFFs with their breasts by being breast aware and completing their breast cancer screening every two years.

Book your breast cancer screening appointment today by calling 1-800-461-7031. For more information about breast cancer screening, visit www. tbrhsc.net/screening.

Do you want a personalized assessment of your own cancer risk? Visit www.mycanceriq.ca.



Crystal Davey, Nurse Practitioner





Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Brianna Fiddler had a variety of her digital art pieces for sale during the Artisans Northwest 43rd Annual Art and Fine Craft Show at the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Cree Stevens had a range of birch bark-inspired art and jewellery for



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Jayan Arseneau-Daviau had a range of acrylic on canvas paintings based on mothers and family for sale.

43rd Christmas arts show features Indigenous artists

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The artworks of three Indigenous artists were among those featured at the Artisans Northwest 43rd Annual Art and Fine Craft Show at the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay.

"I do abstract digital art it's very nature inspired," says Brianna Fiddler, an artist from Saskatchewan who is currently studying at Confederation College in Thunder Bay. "I take pictures with my camera and I just like to experiment with the photos. I like to take certain elements of the photo and then just play around with it on Photoshop. I do a lot of layering processes."

Fiddler first began doing her digital art while studying at a university in upstate New York.

"I did a photography course in my environmental studies program," Fiddler says. "We went on weekly field trips to the Adirondack Mountains, so it was the perfect scenery for my style of art."

Fiddler says she began selling her digital art this past August and had a busy day on the first day at the Artisans Northwest show at the Valhalla. She had a variety of items for sale, including t-shirts, stickers, pinback buttons, canvas prints and tote bags.

"Yesterday was really busy," Fiddler says. "Today is a little bit slower, but my t-shirts that I sell are selling pretty good."

Cree Stevens, an artist from Thunder Bay, had a range of birch bark-inspired art and jewelry for sale.

"I recreated the look of birch bark and the texture of birch bark," Stevens says. "I use acrylic paints and pastes and sometimes beads and paper to recreate the texture and look of birch bark, birch bark being very important in this region and for Indigenous people. And for the jewelry, I pair it often with copper for the same reason. I just wanted to revive it because there doesn't seem to be much copper out there."

Stevens says many people think the birch bark pieces are made from real birch bark.

"So they look really close or look at the materials I use," Stevens says. "And that tickles me—I like it."

Stevens says she has developed different styles of her birch bark-inspired art over the

"I think that because birch bark is so important in this region, that people are really thrilled to see it used in a different way and in a contemporary art way," Stevens says. "It's used for so many reasons and ways and I feel like this is my way of honouring it."

Jayan Arseneau-Daviau, an artist from Thunder Bay, had a variety of acrylic on canvas paintings based on mothers and family for sale.

"My art is an expression of self, like lots of art," Arseneau-Daviau says. "My background is Metis, so I started about five years ago diving into my Indigenous background and looking into the Woodlands art and studying it a bit on my own. I kind of went from there and mixed it with Impressionist style art because I figure my background is a mixture of cultures and I wanted my art to reflect that."

Daviau says there has been a "very positive" response to her

"The art community in Thunder Bay is pretty tight-knit," Daviau says. "We seem to really support each other and I've got a lot of support from them as well as just Thunder Bay in general. I'm finding lots of people seem to like the mix of the two cultures coming together in art."





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Author Brian McInnes shares stories at DFC

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

A book about World War I sniper Francis Pegahmagabow was shared with Dennis Franklin Cromarty First Nations High School students by Brian McInnes, the author and Pegah-

Pegahmagabow was a highly decorated soldier from Wasauksing who was credited with killing 378 enemy soldiers and capturing 300 more during World

"It's always an honour to

magabow's great grandson, at be able to come and speak to Anishinabe people and (have) the chance to share some stories about my great grandfather and his life and his story," says McInnes, a professor of education at University of Minnesota Duluth and author of Sounding Thunder: The Stories of

Francis Pegahmagabow, which was published by the University of Manitoba Press in 2016. "I'm also happy to see young people like yourselves who are in school doing good things for yourselves, for your teachers, for your people. It reminds me a lot of the young person I used to be once when I was in high school and thinking about what I wanted to do to be able to help our people and our communities in the future.'

McInnes says teaching is a "great job."

"I don't know if your teachers here always understand or get a chance to appreciate how important their work is for us, but I'm always grateful for the teachers who helped me," McInnes says.

McInnes says he didn't hear about Pegahmagabow being the most prolific sniper in World War I when he was growing up, he only heard about him being a leader of the community.

"Who we heard about was Francis the great chief, the leader, a dedicated community man who really cared about his

family, who really cared about his children and really stood up for our Indian rights in a time when nobody was doing that," McInnes says. "So those are the stories I heard about him."

McInnes says his great aunts and great uncles shared stories about Pegahmagabow when he was about the same age as the DFC students. He recorded the stories with a tape recorder when they were sharing them. but he lost the recordings about 10 years ago.

"And I found them again and I had a chance to listen to them and it was really amazing," McInnes says. "They were very generous with their time, they were very open about their father's life. And every single one of those stories they told me was in (Anishinabemowin). So it was a unique opportunity for me to listen to the old stories again and hear my great aunts and great uncles' words.'

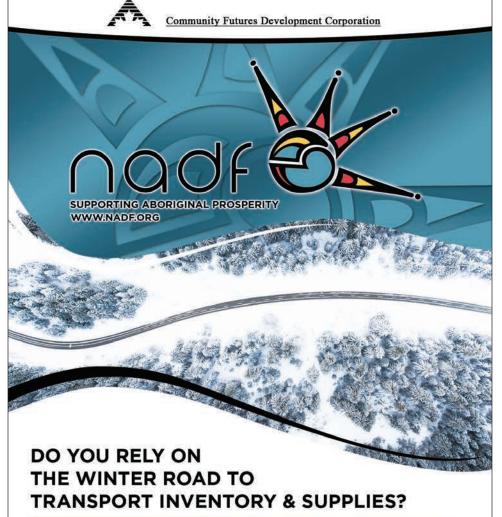
McInnes says one of the messages his great aunts and uncles shared was they wanted their father's stories to be heard by young people everywhere.

"They felt their stories were for everybody to learn from and be able to share together," McInnes says. "So that is what inspired me to create Sounding Thunder."

McInnes says he also heard from veterans of World War I who knew his great grandfa-

"They said he was a very interesting man," McInnes says. "He was very well spoken man, he spoke English well, he spoke French well, but he also always (Anishinabemowin) as his first language. And it was the language he always depended upon (for) his spirituality and his Indian ways. And that is what he always credited with being able to survive the

McInnes received a painting of Pegahmagabow on behalf of his family after his presentation from the DFC Art Club students who created it last year for their Mural project on the second floor of the school. He also signed copies of his book for the



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TOP: Sounding Thunder: The Stories of Francis Pegahmagabow author Brian McInnes signs copies of his book about his great grandfather, Pegahmagabow, for Dennis Franklin Cromarty First Nations High School students after delivering a presentation about the book at DFC.

ABOVE: Author Brian McInnes, centre, received a painting of his great grandfather, Pegahmagabow, from a group of Dennis Franklin Cromarty First Nations High School Art Club students and teachers.

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Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

The workshop participants displayed some of the small beaded pins they made on the first day of the Thunder Bay Art Gallery's Beading and Applique with Jean Marshall workshop.

Beading with Jean Marshall

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

A group of 10 participants recently enjoyed learning some beading, applique and edge beading techniques at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery's Beading and Applique with Jean Marshall workshop.

"It's been great — it's a really great group," says Marshall, a Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug citizen who was taught beading by her mother and has since been beading for about 15 years. "Some of them have previous embroidery, quilting and sewing experience, so we made something really small. And it's been fun.'

Marshall says the workshop was held in conjunction with the Uprising: The Power of Mother Earth exhibition featuring Christi Belcourt and Isaac Murdoch's artwork that ran from June 22-Nov. 25 at the

Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

"We're doing edging, which is a really nice technique used for finishing things," Marshall says. "We talked a lot about the Cristi Belcourt show and what is happening in there and how as beaders our work is always about the land as well, so lots of flowers and things that reflect

see WORKSHOP on page 14





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Arts and Entertainment



Jean Marshall, standing, shares some of her beading, applique and edge beading techniques with work-

Workshop was hands-on and easy to follow

Marshall says some of the participants brought in beaded items for the group to look at.

"And they shared the stories about where the beader was from," Marshall says. "It was really nice that they did that."

Robin Faye, one of the workshop participants, says the workshop was "really pleasant."

"It gave me the opportunity to sit and be with the other people in a really calm and nurturing environment," Faye says. "Jean gives really good, detailed information and teaches from a variety of styles. I myself am a visual learner as well as a hands-on learner, and I was able to follow her instructions very easily.'

Faye and the other participants worked on a small beaded pin on the first day of the workshop. They began with a circle of black wool, which they then tacked a piece of paper with

their design onto and then beaded the design onto the paper and wool. Once the beading was completed, they crimped the beaded wool to the pin with a clasp along the edge of the pin.

"I'm slow with mine," Faye says. "She gave us all the opportunity to create our own designs, and I made one which I've not finished — it's more complex and it is going to require more beading so I'll just continue to work on it."

Barbara Walberg, another participant, enjoyed making the small beaded pin.

'Yesterday I made a really nice little pin, which I finished at home last night, put on my jacket and lost this morning,' Walberg says. "So I'm starting over. I'm just happy to learn the technique. For me it's not so much about the product, it's the fact that in doing the product I learned all kinds of things

that I'll do differently next time. I've always been attracted to beadwork, collected it and have gauntlets and moccasins and all of those kind of things. So I'm just trying to learn how much hard work goes into it."

Redfern-Pucci, Maggie another participant, says the workshop was a gift for her mother and her for her mother's birthday.

"I love it — it's really therapeutic, and I can see that I'm going to be doing a lot more of it on my own," Redfern-Pucci says. "It's actually a flexible art form, so you can hide mistakes and you can learn from your mistakes. (I'm working on) birch bark earrings, with a beadwork fringe around the

Marshall is a practicing visual artist with an HBA in Native Studies from Trent University.

www.wawataynews.ca

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ONWA hosts poetry night to honour women

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Treaty #3 poets Jana-Rae Yerxa and Al Hunter enjoyed sharing their poetry along with other poets at the third annual Ontario Native Women's Association Poetry Night gathering.

"I did a few pieces around the theme of violence towards Indigenous women and also some pieces about Indigenous empowerment and liberation," says Yerxa, a Couchiching citizen. "I'm just really grateful that ONWA provides this space every year in regards to poetry in recognition of the Elimination of Violence Against Women. As Indigenous people, we have always been storytellers, we've always been creative and this is an outlet for us to do

Hunter, a Rainy River citizen, shared poetry about loss and healing from that loss at the gathering, which was held at the ONWA building in Thunder

"We're all hurting in some way — we all need to sup-

port each other," Hunter says. 'Poetry is the language of the masses, so that is how you reach people — through your voice, through your words.

Hunter enjoyed the opportunity to hear other poets expressing themselves through their

"When people express themselves, either through words or any other way, we're healing ourselves," Hunter says. "And someone else or maybe more than one person will also receive healing from those

ONWA held the Poetry Night gathering to raise awareness of violence against women in support of the United Nations International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women and to give voice to women, girls, survivors of violence and

"It went very well — this is the third time ONWA has hosted Poetry Night," says Karen Marconi, marketing manager for ONWA. "It was very successful. There was a pretty good turnout tonight. We had a



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Couchiching poet Jana-Rae Yerxa reads one of her poems during the third annual Ontario Native Women's Association Poetry Night gathering in Thunder Bay.

number of poets, some of them maybe first-time poets, some of them musicians turned poets and some of them actually published authors.

ONWA staff members Audrey Deroy and Michele Solomon also read some of the poems that were submitted by poets who could not attend the Poetry Night.

'Meegwetch to everybody who attended Poetry Night and of course to all of the writers who so generously shared beautiful, honest words with us about this issue," Marconi says. "Their words continue to raise awareness about violence against women and give hope to so many.'

ONWA also handed out copies of Strong Hands Stop Violence Poetry Book Volume II during the gathering. The book features a compilation of

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Ontario Native Women's Association staff member Audrey Deroy delivers a teaching during the ONWA Poetry Night gathering in Thun-

poems from last year's gathering, images from last year's collective art project and photographs of some of the participants. Poets featured in the book include Audra Santa, Rachel Seguin, Nichole Barkman-Lands, Timothy J. Boulanger, Brenda Kejick, Yerxa, Kyla Kokokopence, Dan Ducker, Donna Simon, Verlin Lloyd James and Sheila Santa. The Strong Hands Stop Violence Poetry Book 2016 is available online at: http://mmiwontario. ca/index.php/blog/poetry-

This year's Poetry Night gathering featured music by Robin Ranger, Glenn Jennings and Mark Soderlind, a collective art project and a range of appetizers and refreshments for the participants.

Munsee Neekan's unique skateboard paintings at Christmas craft show

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Mishkeegogamang's Munzeroy Neekan promoted his skateboard paintings at the A Step Into Christmas Craft and Vendor Market at the Italian Cultural Centre in Thunder Bay.

"I normally like to paint whatever I can find," Neekan says. "Skateboards are one of those common things I find during the summer. I usually run into them every time I go to the skateboard park and every time I am going home.

Neekan says he also buys broken skateboards from skateboarders

'The one with the tree on it, he actually broke it in front of me," Neekan says. "When he tried slamming the brake, it snapped. I gave him \$15 and I got myself a broken board."

Neekan says some of his cousins use the skateboard park but he usually just passes by when he is walking.

"I like painting them more than riding them," Neekan says. Neekan says people are "mostly surprised" when they

see his skateboard paintings.

"I've seen a few around, mostly in Toronto," Neekan says. "It's not common in the Thunder Bay area."

Neekan develops the ideas for his skateboard paintings by doodling.

"I got the idea for (this) skateboard from one of my sketches," Neekan says. "I don't know how my artwork came to be — it just came to be."

Neekan says he has been creating art for most of his life.

"In public school I started getting into artwork," Neekan says. "I got it from my dad — Perry Perrault."

Neekan says he sold one of his skateboard paintings this past summer.

"I'm trying to get my name out there," Neekan says. "This is my first craft show that I actually came to. People just look at the skateboards, smile, give me a compliment and bought a

Neekan had prints of his photography for sale at the craft show. Wawatay News previously printed a photo of Neekan capturing a photo of

former Algonquin Avenue Public School vice-principal Darren Lentz during the Ecole Gron Morgan powwow when he was an Ecole Gron Morgan student

"I like doing photogra-

phy," Neekan says, noting that he uses a Fujifilm camera. "I mostly like to take photos of animals. This is more of a hobby it gives me something to do.'

Neekan says he enjoyed his time at the craft show, which

featured a wide range of crafters and vendors including Bonnie's Crafts, Lighten Up Candles Inc., Wooden Roses Thunder Bay, Larry's Woodworking and

Jewelry Design by Diane. "I love the atmosphere,"

Neekan plans to participate in another A Step Into Christmas Craft and Vendor Market on Dec. 16 at the Italian Cultural Centre.

INSPECTION

Inspection of the Approved Long-Term 2 Year Forest Management Plan Extension for the Trout Lake Forest 2019-2021 Forest Management Plan

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), Domtar Inc. and the Local Citizens' Committee (LCC) would like to advise you that the long-term Forest Management Plan (FMP) extension of the approved 2009 – 2019 FMP for the Trout Lake Forest has been approved by the Regional Director and is available for Inspection.

The long-term FMP extension extends the period of the current FMP to April 1, 2019.

The long-term FMP extension includes a description and a map of the planned operations that will be carried forward in the plan extension.

How to Access the Approved Long-Term **FMP Extension**

The long-term FMP extension is available for Inspection at the following locations:

- Domtar Inc. office, 1 Duke Street, Janet Lane, R.P.F. at 807-223-9156
- on the Ontario government website (www.ontario.ca/forestplans)

Interested and affected persons and organizations can arrange an appointment with MNRF staff at the MNRF Red Lake District Office to discuss the long-term FMP extension.

For further information, contact:

Corinne Arthur, R.P.F.

Management Forester MNRF Red Lake District Office 227 Howey Street, P.O. Box 5003 Red Lake, ON POV 2M0 tel: 807-727-1337 e-mail: Corinne.Arthur@ontario.ca Janet Lane, R.P.F. Domtar Inc. 1 Duke Street Dryden, ON P8N 3J7 tel: 807-223-9156 fax: 807-223-9401

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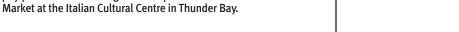
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The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is collecting your personal information and comments under the authority of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act. Any personal information you provide (address, name, telephone, etc.) will be protected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; however, your comments will become part of the public consultation process and may be shared with the general public. Your personal information may be used by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to send you further information related to this forest management planning exercise. If you have questions about the use of your personal information, please contact Kathy Crampton, MNRF Red Lake District Office, at 807-727-1332.



Rick Garrick/Wawatav News Munzeroy Neekan displayed his skateboard paintings and photography prints for sale during the A Step Into Christmas Craft and Vendor



Jane and the Wolf screens in Thunder Bay



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Jane and the Wolf narrator and co-writer Rachel Garrick speaks about the creation of the film about Constance Lake Elder Jane Reuben during its screening at the Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship in Thunder Bay.



Former Constance Lake chief Roger Wesley speaks about the traditional ways

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship (LUF) recently held two screenings of the Jane and the Wolf film about Constance Lake Elder Jane Reuben.

"I loved it — what I loved about the story is that we're continuing the tradition of storytelling," says Stan Wesley, a national speaker from Moose Factory who attended the screening after emceeing a Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) conference earlier in the day. "And this is traditional storytelling because it is getting it out there to the whole world. We are amazing, strong beautiful people, resilient people, fun people. And this (film) right here just reinforces it."

Ron Kanutski, a Red Rock Indian Band citizen who attended the film screening after delivering a keynote presentation at the SLFNHA conference, appreciated the opportunity to watch the film.

"I love storytelling, so it was right up my alley," Kanutski says. "That's what I like is stories like that, especially about someone overcoming something that everybody else couldn't do. So that is what I enjoyed about it, the fact that this grandmother went out and did what all the guys couldn't do. I just loved that part of it."

The film, which was created by narrator, co-writer and Lac Seul citizen Rachel Garrick and co-writer and director Nadine Arpin, features the story of Reuben's journey to track down and kill a wolf that had been killing dogs from the community through the use of a traditional deadfall trap after the men in the community were unable to trap or shoot the wolf. Garrick's mother Minnie Garrick originally shared Reuben's story with her as she was growing up in Hudson. Reuben is Rachel's great grandmother.

Fort William Elder Marlene Pierre also enjoyed the opportunity to watch the film during the screening at the LUF Sunday service.

"The story drew me to tears almost," Pierre says. "It was just bringing back things that I know and things that I've missed and a lot of sorrow. That is the way it is with a lot of our people — we were raised in those settings that are portrayed."

Pierre adds that the film speaks of the strength of the people.

"I really appreciate that (Rachel and Arpin) were able to produce this wonderful story," Pierre says. "It really makes you want to do that yourself. I think (they) deserve a great deal of credit for doing a wonderful job for the people.'

Rachel and her cousin Roger Wesley, a former Constance Lake chief and a great grandson of Reuben's, delivered presentations on the film at the screen-

The reaction (to the film) was really responsive to the message of the film and the message of the story that my mom had originally told me, which was empowering, connecting with your roots, learning about your history and also the message linking to not forgetting who you are and how that can contribute to a positive life for yourself by connecting to your roots," Rachel says. "And I think that is what my mother had really wanted to convey, was to stay true to myself, to be proud of who I am, where I come from and the blood that flows through my veins because we come from a long line of strong people."

"...we come from a long line of strong people...."

- Rachel Garrick

Wesley adds that Reuben's message of following the traditional ways is not about just living on the land in a canvas tent or a teepee or a wigwam.

"That is not the message the Elders were passing down the Elders were talking about the values, the kindness, the care, the hard work, the appreciation for all of us," Wesley says. "That is what I think about this story — when we look at the storyline of using the old tools, it is also talking about using our old ways of staying interconnected, being one with

Wesley says the meaning of the land in the old language is

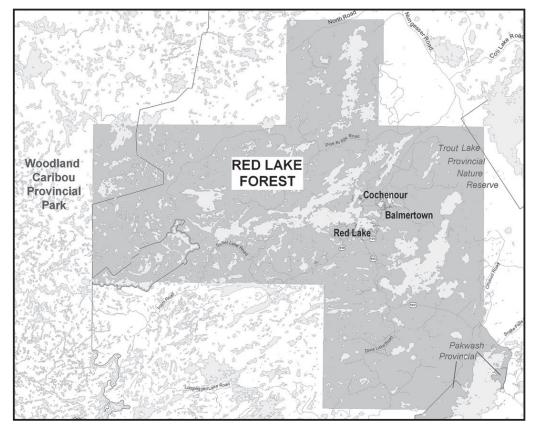
"It means live," Wesley says. "It's not something you walk on, it's not something you paddle on, it's something you live on and live with and we live for."

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Education





Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

TOP LEFT: A group of Oshki-Pimache-O-Win The Wenjack Education Institute and Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service staff and board members and Oshki Police Foundations students gathered at the Oshki campus after NAPS announced the students will have the opportunity to sign on with them after graduating in December 2019.

TOP RIGHT: Fabian Batise, vice-chair of the Oshki-Wenjack governance board and board liaison for NAPS, speaks with the students.

NAPS visits Oshki police foundations students

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win The Wenjack Education Institute's Police Foundations students are looking forward to the opportunity to sign on with the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service after completing their studies in December 2019.

"It's real exciting," says Joseph Meeseetawageesic, a Police Foundations student from Eabametoong. "The week before they did mention that they were looking to hire on some students from Oshki. We could look forward to being employed by them just by finishing this program."

Natalie Kamenawatamin, a Police Foundations student from Bearskin Lake, also appreciates the opportunity to sign on with NAPS after graduation.

"I'd like to see other options just to see what else we can get into," Kamenawatamin says. "But yes, what they're offering is pretty good."

Fabian Batise, vice-chair of the Oshki-Wenjack governance board and board liaison for NAPS, says the NAPS offer for the Police Foundations students to sign on with them is a "great opportunity."

"We've had some good luck here because we have a NAN (Nishnawbe Aski Nation) organization and another NAN organization, with both being envisioned by the chiefs, coming together to provide services that are required in order to get our people through their education cycle and into the employment world," Batise says. "Right now our provincial government is going in that direction — they want to see results and this is a results-oriented course. I think it is going to be a great opportunity."

Sean Mulligan, Police Foundations coordinator with Oshki, says Oshki is "excited" about the opportunity for the Police Foundations graduates to sign on with NAPS.

"It provides a lot of incentives for the students to complete the course and provides them with opportunities afterwards," Mulligan says, noting that 11 students are currently enrolled in the program. "This is their first semester. If they successfully complete the course, they will be prepared to move into the next level, which will be to be hired on by NAPS and then moving on to the Ontario Police College for further education."

NAPS Acting Chief Roland Morrison says it was important to establish a partnership with Oshki because NAPS and Oshki both serve communities across NAN territory.

"In the last semester (of the Police Foundations program), we are going to work directly with their students and have them fill out their applications to apply to NAPS," Morrison says. "Once all of them pass this policing program and their application is with us, we (will) look at hiring them on once they have successfully completed the Police Foundations program here. They will be required to go to the Ontario Police College after they are done this program, as with any Police Foundations program."

Morrison says all police officers have to go to the Ontario Police College in Aylmer in southern Ontario to complete the 13-week Basic Constable Training program.

"It's in southern Ontario, so there is a bit of an adjustment period for some of our people that come in from the north," Morrison says. "The program they have here (at Oshki) is in conjunction with Canadore College, so it is an accredited program."

Eileen Koostachin, a Police Foundations student from Deer Lake, has been enjoying the program since it started in September. The program runs from September 2018-December 2019.

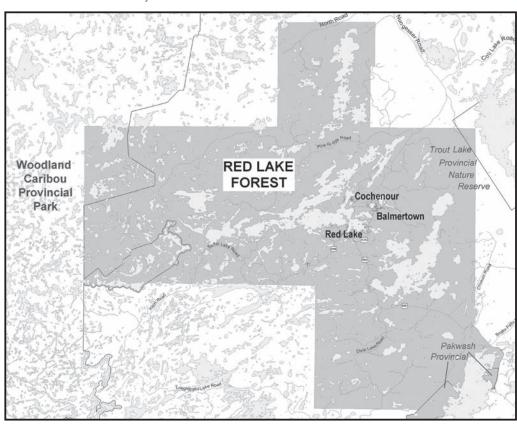
"I've always been interested in becoming a police officer," Koostachin says. "The opportunity came up and I grabbed ahold of it. I like the environment — we get to socialize with each other in the classroom and help each other out where we are struggling."

REVIEW

Minor Amendment Review Red Lake Forest 2008-2018 Forest Management Plan

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), Red Lake Forest Management Company Ltd. and the Red Lake Local Citizens' Committee (LCC) invite you to review the MNRF-accepted minor amendment to the 2008-2018 Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the Red Lake Forest and to provide comments.

This amendment provides for the exchange of harvest areas within the FMP in association with the 2018 Insect Pest Management Plan. This will provide Red Lake Forest Management Company Ltd. with the opportunity to harvest stands that are associated with the ongoing Jack Pine Budworm outbreak within the district. If this area is not harvested during these planned upcoming operations, then it is likely that Jack Pine and overall stand volume decline will have negative impacts on future economic viability of harvest interventions.



How to Get Involved

Minor amendment 12 will be available for review, by appointment during normal business hours, for a 15-day period from **December 15, 2018 – December 30, 2018** at the offices of Red Lake Forest Management Company Ltd. and the MNRF Red Lake District Office

The information will also be available on the Ontario government website at www.ontario.ca/forestplans

James Hallworth

Assistant Management Forester Red Lake District Office 227 Howey Street, P.O. Box 5003 Red Lake, ON POV 2M0 tel: 807-727-2575 e-mail: james.hallworth@ontario.ca

Robert Partridge, R.P.F.

Red Lake Forest Management Co. Ltd. 138 Howey Street, P.O. Box 1338 Red Lake, ON POV 2M0 tel: 807-727-3320 fax: 807-727-1142

Comments and/or concerns with respect to this minor amendment must be received within the 15-day review period and no later than **December 30**, **2018** by James Hallworth, Assistant Management Forester, of the MNRF Red Lake District Office. Further public consultation may be required if significant changes are required as a result of comments, otherwise, following the 15-day review period, the minor amendment will be approved on **January 3**, **2019**. After approval, the amendment will remain on the Ontario government website for the duration of the FMP.

During the 15-day review period, there is an opportunity to make a written request to seek resolution of issues with the MNRF District Manager or the Regional Director using a process described in the *Forest Management Planning Manual* (2017) (Part C, Section 7.1.5).

The MNRF is collecting your personal information and comments under the authority of the *Crown Forest Sustainability* Act. Any personal information you provide (address, name, telephone, etc.) will be protected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; however, your comments will become part of the public consultation process and may be shared with the general public. Your personal information may be used by the MNRF to send you further information related to this forest management planning exercise. If you have questions about the use of your personal information, please contact Kathy Crampton, District Business Coordinator, at 807-727-1332.



Education

Goyce Kakegamic unveils Seven Grandfathers mural

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Former deputy grand chief Goyce Kakegamic recently participated in the unveiling of a Seven Grandfather Teachings mural created by Grade 2 and 3 students at St. Vincent School in Thunder Bay. The students created the mural last spring with the assistance of Kakegamic, one of the Triple K Woodland artists from Keewaywin.

"I was honoured to participate in this program," Kakegamic says. "I did the sketches and then the students and the teachers applied the colours and I just put the finishing touch on them. So the teachers and students (can) sign their names also on the bottom along with mine."

Kakegamic says the students did a good job in applying the colours of paint to the mural.

"I picked the colours and they themselves decided which colours they wanted in what location," Kakegamic says.

Kakegamic says there were about 40 students involved in the Seven Grandfather Teachings Mural project. St. Vincent School has about a 50 per cent Indigenous student population.

"I believe as we start this new millennium, the greatest challenge we will have is to promote respect, tolerance and acceptance," Kakegamic says. "I think through the visitation of Elders and teachers and art is one of the ways to promote understanding and do away with some misunderstandings."

A group of the students also shared their viewpoints on being involved with the Seven Grandfather Teachings mural

"The painting of buffalo represents respect," says Kirsten



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Triple K Woodland artist Goyce Kakegamic, a former deputy grand chief, worked with a group of Grade 2 and 3 students at St. Vincent School in Thunder Bay to create a Seven Grandfather Teachings mural.

Noland, a Grade 4 student. "To honour all creation is to have respect. All of creation should be treated with respect. We must give respect to be respected."

Ålyssa Black, a Grade 3 student, notes that courage is carried by the bear.

"The word for courage liter-

ally means state of having a fearless heart," Black says. "It means to do what is right even when the consequences are unpleasant."

Thando Phiri, a Grade 3 student, notes that honesty is gifted by the Sasquatch.

"We learned to be honest first with ourselves," Phiri says.

"And then we will more easily be able to be honest with oth-

Dylan Taw, a Grade 4 student, notes that humility is gifted by the wolf.

"It is known by yourself as a sacred part of creation," Taw says. "In (Anishinabemowin) this word can also mean compassion. You are equal to others but not better."

Angela Deleo, Grade 3 teacher at St. Vincent School, says the Seven Grandfather Teachings mural was funded through a TBaytel Good Schools grant to create a stronger bond between the Indigenous culture in the community and St. Vincent School.

"The kids loved it — it was wonderful," Deleo says. "We talked about the Seven Grandfather Teachings and how they incorporate with our school virtues with the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board."

Rebecca Piccinato, Grade 2 teacher at St. Vincent School, says the Seven Grandfather Teachings and the Catholic virtues provide a framework for how people live their lives.

"Respect, humility, honesty,

courage are all among the qualities that we strive to develop in ourselves and in our students," Piccinato says. "The kids loved the painting, they loved the hands-on. They were really into it and it was hard for us to give up control and let the kids actually paint, but the final product was absolutely stunning."

Tracey Rabachuk, principal at St. Vincent School, says the school wants to promote understanding, awareness of culture and heritage and build a bridge between the communities.

"You will notice today that a number of people in the building are also wearing moccasins and/or turquoise ribbons," Rabachuk says. "That is in honour of Rock Your Moccs, which is another thing we are doing here to promote cultural aware-

NOTICE OF PROJECT CHANGE

Project Name:

Cochrane Solar Project

Project Applicant:

Northland Power Solar Abitibi GP Inc., Northland Power Solar Empire GP Inc. and Northland Power Solar Martin's Meadows GP Inc. (herein referred to as Northland Power)

Project Location:

The Empire property is on Part Lots 17 & 18, Concession 7; the Martin's Meadows property is on Lot 16, Concession 8 and the Abitibi property is on Part Lot 14 & 15, Concession 8, in the Town of Cochrane, Geographic Township of Glackmeyer.

Project Description:

Northland Power has been operating the 30 megawatt Cochrane Solar Project (consisting of the Empire, Martin's Meadows and Abitibi areas) since construction was completed in 2015, in accordance with Renewable Energy Approval (REA) number 1290-9A4KSE. The project generates electricity using solar panels on fixed, ground-mounted racking structures. Direct current generated by the solar panels is converted to alternating current by on-site inverters and stepped up to a voltage of 115 kilovolts before running through a 20-km long transmission line connecting with the provincial electricity grid. The project also includes internal access roads, a control building and site fencing.

Project Change:

Northland Power is proposing to construct an access road connecting the Empire and Martin's Meadows areas of the facility to improve the efficiency of the movement of operations and maintenance staff between the two project areas and minimize use of public roads. The proposed access road will require a culvert on an unnamed Tributary of Munroe Creek. Erosion and sedimentation control measures will be used to prevent negative impacts during construction. An amendment to the REA is required to permit construction and operation of the access road.

Project Documents

A Modifications Document has been prepared to provide additional information on the proposed project change, including a summary of how previous REA supporting documents have been revised. This document is available online at http://cochrane.northlandpower.ca/

Project Contacts

For more information on the proposed project change or to discuss any comments or concerns please contact:

Northland Power

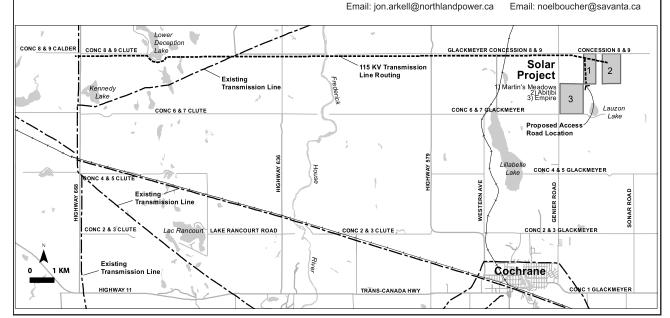
Jon Arkell, Environmental Engineer
30 St. Clair Ave. W.

Toronto, ON M4V 3A1

Tel: 647-288-1103

Noel Boucher, Project Manager 37 Bellevue Terrace St. Catharines, ON L2S 1P4 Tel: 289-929-6951 Email: noelboucher@savanta.ca

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Sports



A skater attempts to make a move on the goalie during the male tryout at the Indigenous Sport and Wellness Ontario 2019 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships Tryouts at Fort William First Nation Arena.

National Aboriginal Hockey tryouts visit FWFN

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Kasabonika Lake's Bradley Anderson enjoyed participating in the Indigenous Sport and Wellness Ontario (ISWO) 2019 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships Tryouts at Fort

William First Nation Arena.
"It went well — I think I did pretty well out there," says Anderson, a Dennis Franklin Cromarty First Nations High School student. "This is my second time doing this. It's my last year too in Midget. I went last year but I had a broken collarbone at the time, (so) I couldn't play.

Anderson says the ISWO, formerly the Aboriginal Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario, officials told him he needed to work on his speed.

"I hear like there's great opportunities to make it somewhere great, like a really good Junior team," Anderson says. "Or even a AAA team if you are still a Midget or even a Bantam. It's a great opportunity."

Cami Carpenter, a Beaver Brae Secondary School student from Kenora, also tried out and made the team last year.

"But I didn't get to play because I broke my wrist," Carpenter says. "I just played (at this tryout) like I usually do and hopefully it all works out."

Darren Mamakwa, a DFC stu-

dent from Deer Lake, enjoyed the tryout.

"It was good, but tiring," Mamakwa says.

About 25 male and 20 female hockey players participated in the tryout sessions for the male and female Ontario teams, which included a variety of drills and a game to conclude each tryout.

"It went awesome — there were a lot of boys out," says Keir Johnston, high performance and games manager with ISWO. "The tournament this year is up in the Yukon at Whitehorse, so I think it is going to be an exciting trip and a big opportunity for a lot of kids to come out and travel up there and play some good hockey."

Johnston says the female players looked "really good" during their tryout session.

"I was really impressed with six-to-seven girls," Johnston says. "I'm really happy with the tryout - it was awesome."

Johnston says they are looking for players with speed and

"The game has really gone into a speed game, so we are looking for a lot of speed, mobility, edge work, agility and obviously just a little bit of size and toughness and compete," Johnston says. "You're always looking for those kids who can compete and have a lot of heart and really want it. It's a tryout, so it's good to see (players) coming out and knowing it's a tryout and really going all for

Johnston says about four male hockey players travelled from Sandy Lake for the try-

"They took a flight (to) Sioux Lookout and then drove here," Johnston says. "It is a big commitment and it's really good to

Jamie Rae, a member of Sandy Lake's Choose Life program, says the players barely made it out of Sandy Lake due to the weather.

"We had a number of kids (interested), but we could only take four," Rae says. "They're a bit rusty because they weren't training over the summer. They were pretty eager and they were pretty excited and ready to play, but they didn't really get enough sleep last night because we got in late."

Wyatt Crowe, one of the Sandy Lake players, enjoyed the skating at the tryout.

"It was fun and alright playing with different players," Crow says.

The 2019 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships are scheduled for May 6-9 in Whitehorse with more than 600 Aboriginal athletes aged 15-18 expected to compete on 20 male and female teams from across Canada.

The Ontario Native Women's Association is growing & expanding services to our community members. We are looking for educated, skilled, experienced & qualified persons to join our team and fill the following full time position in Sioux Lookout:

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Michael Ferland: journey to the NHL is an inspiration of believing in yourself

Allan Beaver Special to Wawatay News

The journey to the NHL was not paved in Gold. It was a journey of taking a good honest inventory of making changes in life and putting in the hard work and perseverance to achieve a childhood dream of someday playing in the National Hockey League.

see IMPROVING page 20

CONSTITUENCY ASSISTANT OUTREACH/CASEWORK - SIOUX LOOKOUT Sol Mamakwa – Kiiwetinoong

Responsible to Member for:

- Staffing Sioux Lookout Office.
- Dealing with enquiries and solving problems and advocating for constituents (case work). Contacting and responding to constituents by telephone, writing, and in person. Contacting senior government personnel, officials from outside organizations, and local government on behalf of constituents.
- Assist with outreach and community events.
- Keeping informed and liaising with community groups within Sioux Lookout and surrounding communities and ensuring MPP is advised of key local concerns.

Qualifications:

- Knowledge of Northern issues is essential.
- Excellent writing skills. Good computer and office organization skills.
- Ability to understand and prepare cases and to advocate effectively on behalf of the MPP's constituents.
- Ability to travel as needed throughout the constituency.
- Familiarity with Kiiwetinoong, including key stakeholder groups in the region, is essential.
- Experience in NDP organizations and Ontario Government an asset.

The Ontario NDP Caucus is an equal opportunity employer.

Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Applications to: Human Resources, Room 200 NW, NDP Caucus Services, Queen's Park, Toronto, ON M7A 1A5, email: resumes@ndp.on.ca Fax: 416-325-2266.

Sports

Improving life before career part of hockey success

con't from page 19

Let's journey in the life of Michael Ferland and look at what brought him to being a 6'2, 215 lb fearless forward of the Calgary Flames Hockey Club. And at age 24, Ferland is just starting to gel and establish himself as a power forward who is having a career season. In 2016-17 season so far, Ferland has played in 71 games and has scored 15 goals, 9 assists for 24 points.

Ferland was born in the community of Swan River, Manitoba, its population having hovered around 4,000 for the past few decades. Swan River is located in Central Manitoba just east of the Saskatchewan border.

"... raised by a single mother who made a lot of sacrifices in order to allow her son, Michael, to play hockey."

Being raised by a single mother who made a lot of sacrifices in order to allow her



son, Michael, to play hockey. Amazingly, he played in only a hockey house league in Swan River from ages eight to 15 and the NHL dream never seemed possible to him, simply without many resources available.

With financial challenges, Ferland's mother struggled to fund her son's hockey and he ended receiving assistance from KidSport and the Manitoba Metis Foundation in order to purchase equipment and pursue his hockey dream. This is just one example of what great organizations can help create. Michaels' sister also gave up her chance to play sports in order to let Michael play, as the family couldn't afford for two children in sports.

Ferland went on to be invited



to a tryout by the midget AAA Brandon Wheat Kings and promptly earned a spot on the team. After he made the Wheat Kings Midget team, families of his Swan River teammates chipped in to pay for his hockey registration fees to keep the dream alive.

When Ferland was 17 years of age, he began his WHL career playing for the Brandon Wheat Kings. He scored 28 points in 61 regular season games for Brandon, and helped his team to third round of the playoffs. He played five Memorial Cup games for Brandon, in the tour-

nament as they were the host team.

That summer, the Calgary Flames selected Michael Ferland with their fifth round pick at 133rd overall. Ferland would stay in Brandon for the next two seasons, where he would tally 164 points and 204 PIM combined in all games played.

Before the 2012-2013 season began, Ferland had been accused of assault and aggravated assault at a Cochrane bar just west of Calgary. Eventually, he was acquitted of his charges and, there was little doubt that this affected him as he played

two hockey seasons while facing charges.

As the 2012-2013 season began, with him making his professional debut with the Abbotsford Heat. It was short lived.

After seven games he had registered no points and 10 PIM. He was promptly sent down to the Utah Grizzlies of the ECHL. Again, he was only in Utah for a short stay as after three games he was sent back to the WHL for the remainder of the season.

Upon returning to Brandon, Michael debated retiring

from hockey entirely as he had become unhappy during the turmoil that had been his season so far. He was promptly traded to the Saskatoon Blades as a playoff rental after playing only four games in Brandon that season. Michael would then go on to persevere and find it within himself to work to turn the Blades' season around, helping the team to reel off 18 consecutive wins on their way to hosting the 2013 Memorial

con't on next page



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This is only a sample of what we have to offer, for more information please contact us at: training@northern.on.ca







ports

con't from page 20 He ended his junior career with 29 points in 26 games for the Blades.

While the majority of us can't directly relate to the struggles of playing an NHL game or fighting such nasty opponents, Ferland has had to battle twice as hard to prove himself despite the struggles that he went through over the last 18 months during his battle with alcohol.

We've all known many others who have gone through a similar battle with addiction and the strides that Ferland has made have given us the motivation and inspiration to like Michael the person even more than Michael the hockey player.

Michael has overcome that and more and not only made him a stronger person but a better all around personality who is very humble and does not take for granted in playing in the National Hockey League.

"Each game that I play in the NHL, I thank God for being given me the opportunity to still showcase my talent and keep working harder to stay with the Calgary Flames," says Ferland.

Perhaps his biggest supporter is his former coach Bob Hartley.

The coach challenged him by telling Ferland that if he was ready to make a commitment to his life that he could help him. Hartley emphasized the importance of choosing to improve his life before his career and that was a message Ferland took to heart and still does to this day.

Ferland entered a rehab facility and slowly began on his healing journey from the addiction of alcoholism. He has known many very close to him that have fallen hard to

the addiction and has certainly learned from those as exam-

It's hard to believe that approximately over a year now that Ferland was in rehab and now he's thrashing opponents around and finding his technique of scoring goals.

"He has achieved everything through support from friends and family, his own hard work and perseverance, and the never quit attitude he has."

Ferland began this season impressing the brass with his mix of physical play and scoring ability during training camp.

He had also dropped weight down to 215 lbs from 260 lbs two seasons ago.

The evolution of Michael Ferland making an impact on the Calgary Flames is quite the story and easily motivates his teammates and opponents to seek a higher power and to deal with the demons of the past.

There were definitely no freebies during Michael Ferland's long journey to where he is today. He has achieved everything through support from friends and family, his own hard work and perseverance, and the never quit attitude he

Ferland has no doubt become a fan favorite in Calgary over such a short span. He has made his game into a unique one, and plays the kind of game that some wusses can't handle. And in stating that, Michael has fought with the so called best enforcers of the NHL and has proved himself to be a tough young man that is sure to make an impact with his scoring instead of knocking out his more experienced opponents.

Michael Ferland is making his stay with the Calgary Flames a long tenure and only he can determine how far he can go. With what many Flames have witnessed, he is sure to make an impact for many years to come.

Ferland began to prove he had the skills to go with his physical style of play. He had 25 points (15 goals, 10 assists) in 2016-17, then bumped those numbers up to 41 points (21 goals, 20 assists) in 2017-18, finishing fourth on the Flames in goals and sixth in points.

That attracted the attention of the Carolina Hurricanes, who acquired him in a trade with the Flames along with Dougie Hamilton and prospect Adam Fox for defenseman Noah Hanifin and forward Elias Lindholm on June 23, 2018.

During the off-season, Ferland participated in the living legend's namesake tournament in Saskatoon on April 2018, the Fred Sasakamoose "Chief Thunderstick" National Hockey Championship which attracted the best Indigenous teams from across Canada.

Ferland was very popular at the tournament as many youth wanted to chat with him, shake his hand, and mostly get an autograph from him.

To date, Ferland feels right at home in Carolina starting his 2018-19 season where he left







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Sports

From Oshweken to Anaheim: a star is born with the Duck's Montour

Allan Beaver Special to Wawatay News

A star is in the making with the Anaheim Ducks – home to Disneyland. No we're not talking about any actor or any character that will be starring in any Walt Disney Production but starring with the National Hockey League's Anaheim Ducks.

From Six Nations in Oshweken, Ontario, just on the outskirts of Wayne Gretzky's home town of Brantford, Brandon Montour has made an instant impression in 2016-17 when he played in 27 regular season games and scored 2 goals and assisted on 4 for a grand total of 6 points. Montour followed up in 2017-18 and played in 80 games and tallied 9 goals and assisted on 23 for 32 points. So far in the 2017-18 regular season, in 24 games Brandon has scored 2 goals with 9 assists and establishing himself as a solid offensive-minded defenseman.

Montour spent all of the 2015-16 season with San Diego after the Ducks relocated their AHL team and was named a First-Team All-Star and a member of the All-Rookie team. He spent the first half of 2016-17 there before being called up to the NHL. Montour made his NHL debut on Dec. 29, 2016, and scored his first NHL goal in his sixth game, against the Tampa Bay Lightning on Feb. 6, 2017.

On July 24, 2018, the Anaheim Ducks signed Brandon Montour to a two-year deal. The announcement comes on the same day as the scheduled arbitration hearing between the two sides, and allows them to settle on a pact prior to a ruling.

News of the pre-arbitration settlement doesn't come as a big surprise, as the two sides were reportedly discussing a bridge deal for the rising young star. Montour will still be an RFA once this deal is done, giving the Ducks a chance to lock him up long-term. Montour was the Ducks' only arbitration case this off-season.

Montour proved to be a strong part of the Ducks' deep blue line in his first full season at the NHL level. As the fourthhighest average ice time among his team's defencemen, Mon-



tour is still learning from the veterans and looks to stay for the long-term with the Ducks.

His strong skating and ability to move the puck out of dangerous situations have served Montour well in what seems like a lightning bolt to stardom with the Ducks.

"I've been happy with the play. My defense, I thought, has been really solid and that's what I've been focusing on. As we keep going now the offense will keep creeping in there, but right now, this year, I really want to focus on getting everybody's trust."

The veterans like Fowler and Manson have made the transition smooth for Montour. "They've been in my situation," Montour said. "They've been really good to me. Off the ice, I get along with them really well. If I make a mistake or they see something I can improve on, they'll definitely point it out. I'm happy to listen."

Montour has made his coaching staff provide him with the extra on-ice adjustments he has had to make and it certainly has paid off for the team. Montour has built-up his confidence during the Ducks play-off run

which has made many ask, "where did this Montour kid come from?"

"He jumps over the boards and he goes for it," Ducks Coach Randy Carlyle said. "He's not being reserved. He's attacking versus sitting back and waiting for things to happen. That's the kind of personality he has."

Montour already has earned high marks from his peers and certainly will be in the Ducks line-up for years to come.

"As a young player, the one thing you look at is, does he try to make plays?", says teammate Cam Fowler. "Is he afraid of the moment? Is he confident? And he displays all those characteristics. He's maybe even a little bit ahead of me when I was that age. I would tend to force things. There's a huge learning curve with defensemen coming into the league, but I see he progresses every game."

Let's take you back in time a few years to 2009-10, Brandon skated for the Cambridge Hawks minor midget AAA team in Ontario. He scored 4 goals with 14 assists and 12 penalty minutes in 40 regular season games and had 2 assists and 6 penalty minutes in 11 playoff games.

Moving to 2010-11, Montour played for the Brantford Golden Eagles in the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League as a 16-year-old and played for the Cambridge Hawks midget AAA team. He scored 1 goal with 13 assists and 22 penalty minutes in 37 regular season games for Brantford and had 3 assists with 6 penalty minutes in 10 GOJHL playoff games. Montour scored 3 goals with 8 assists and 38 penalty minutes in 19 midget games with the Hawks.

As Montour keeps improving his game, in 2011-12 he returned to Brantford for a second season as the Golden Eagles finished first in the GOJHL's Mid-Western Conference and won the playoff title; falling to Golden Horseshoe Division champion St. Catherines in the Sutherland Cup final. Montour scored 14 goals with 22 assists and 65 penalty minutes in 51 regular season games and scored 6 goals with 12 assists and 30 penalty minutes in 19 playoff games.

With the passion building up each season as in 2012-13, Montour went from Brantford to the Caledonia Corvairs in his third GOJHL season. In 49 regular season games he scored 18 goals with 49 assists and 94 penalty minutes. Caledonia finished first in the Midwestern Conference but lost to Mon-

tour's former team, Stratford, in the playoff semifinals. In 12 playoff games he scored 4 goals with 11 assists and 22 penalty minutes. Montour was selected by Waterloo in the 18th round (267th overall) of the 2013 USHL Entry Draft.

The accolades slowly trickle in and in 2013-14, Montour was named the USHL's top defenseman and was the second-leading scorer for Western Conference champion Waterloo as a 19-year-old. He committed to playing college hockey at Massachusetts-Amherst in 2014-15 in September before scoring 14 goals with 48 assists and finishing +35 with 36 penalty minutes in 60 regular season games. After finishing first in the regular season the Black Hawks advanced to the Clark Cup finals against Eastern Conference champion Indiana.

Montour was ranked 92nd amongst North American skaters in the Central Scouting final rankings and was selected by Anaheim in the second round (55th overall) in the 2014 NHL Draft.

In 2014-15, Montour skated at three different levels — making his pro debut with the AHL's Norfolk Admirals after signing a three-year entry-level contract with Anaheim following his freshman season at Massachusetts-Amherst.

He spent the first half of the season with the USHL's Waterloo Black Hawks while straightening out eligibility issues with the NCAA. Montour scored 1 goal with 9 assists and was +10 with 8 assists in 14 games with the Admirals. Norfolk missed the playoffs, finishing last in the East Division. Montour scored 3 goals with 17 assists and was -6 with 30 penalty minutes in 21 games with UMass.

The Minutemen finished 11th in the 12-team Hockey East Conference; upsetting fifth seed Notre Dame, 4-3 in five overtimes in the first game before losing the next two games. Montour scored 6 goals with 15 assists and was -11 with 30 penalty minutes in 17 USHL games with Waterloo.

With the natural talent that he has displayed, Montour is an offensively-inclined defenseman whose style of play can make him a bit of a risk, but he has become very good at anticipating when to jump up into the play and when to exercise caution. A late bloomer, he was drafted in his third year of eligibility following a strong USHL season.

He skates and passes well and is strong with the puck. Defensively, his play in his own end is still a work in progress but should improve as he gains experience and strength.





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Health

SLFNHA conference focused on harm reduction

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority Stronger Together: Sharing Wise Practices in Harm Reduction conference featured five presentations by experts from across the province and country. The conference was at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay.

The opening keynote presentation, Harm Reduction is Love, was delivered by T. Sharp Dopler, an educator and community worker from Ottawa.

"It's coming from the perspective that harm reduction is more than just about substance use or tobacco use or any of those things that cause chaos in people's lives," Dopler says. "It's about loving people, and I base it on those seven sacred teachings. But love is the core of all of those things, so we need to create spaces where we can understand that people are making the choices they are making because of the pain they are carrying."

The second keynote presentation, Walking to Wellness, was delivered by Ron Kanutski, a mental health and addictions counsellor from the Red Rock Indian Band.

"I'm a firm believer that healing comes from movement and ceremony, when we dance,' Kanutski says, noting that both traditional and Christian people participate in dancing. "Everybody jumps up out of their seat and they're moving — that's how you heal. So I changed the way I work with people. I don't sit in the office. I take them out and let's go feel something, let's feel some cold, let's go feel some heat, let's go for a boat ride, let's go and do something. Let's go somewhere. So the big part for me for healing is move-

The third keynote presentation, Sharing my Journey as an HIV Positive Indigenous Male, was delivered by Rene Boucher, a member of the Chiefs of Ontario Health Coordination Unit from Lac Seul.

"One of the takeaways I want people to take away from this presentation is recognizing that it is important that we do pre-

The fourth keynote presentaeducator from Temagami.

is there are a number of people in this room who are working really hard to protect the families and the communities from any harm," Katt says. "This is

vention and awareness around HIV and other sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections," Boucher says. "But we also need to recognize that we have to support those people that are already living with or impacted by (these diseases) so they have their voices heard, because they are the ones that have the expertise to be able to share, not only how they were at risk for whatever that might be, in this case HIV, but also to provide prevention and steps they can take to help keep themselves safe."

tion, Creating Safer Places for Youth, was delivered by Mae Katt, a health administrator and

"The most important point all about harm reduction, and



when you look at the tools they have I think they are going to be doing a great job."

Katt adds that a new program called the Safe Sober Place has been developed for vouth in Thunder Bav.

"If they're intoxicated, they can safely come and sober up without any judgement," Katt says. "And that is reassuring to parents, for sure, and reassuring for everybody who works at the school and works with young people.'

A fifth keynote presentation, Indigenous Culture as an Intervention in Healing from Addictions, was delivered by Christopher Mushquash, a clinical psychologist and Canada Research Chair from Pays Plat.

The conference also featured eight workshops, including Why Community Readiness? What is it? by Geri Bailey, a retired nurse who worked in First Nation communities for more than 30 years; Using Culture as a Harm Reduction Strategy by Levi Sofea, a community well-being coordinator from Webequie; Decolonizing Health Care on Reserve by Mike Kirlew, a physician from Sioux Lookout; Crystal Meth and Drug Trends - Navigating the System by Jim Cullen, a registered social worker from Toronto: and Using Traditional Medicines for Self-Care and Healing by Kelly Jeffords, a counsellor and speaker from Serpent River.



TOP: Rene Boucher, centre left in vest, delivered a keynote presentation on Sharing my Journey as an HIV Positive Indigenous Male at the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority Stronger Together: Sharing Wise Practices in Harm Reduction conference in Thunder Bay.

ABOVE: Mae Katt delivered a keynote presentation on Creating Safer

Ryan McMahon speaks at CMHC healthy communities summit

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The CMHC Indigenous Youth Summit on Housing kicked off with a presentation by keynote speaker Ryan McMahon at the Fort William First Nation Community Centre.

"The initiative is about trying to get youth input on healthy communities, and I just tried to share some perspectives and ideas on what I think healthy communities need and what I think at our best our own lives and point of view and world view and cultural teachings already offer in that way," says McMahon, an Indigenous motivational speaker/comedian from Couchiching, "So (I was) just kind of highlighting some of the key concepts of love and of community and why it is important that we have youth perspectives in that regard."

The summit also featured a panel discussion by experts in housing, including Frank Horn, specialist, First Nations housing with CMHC; Roxanne Harper, partner in Turtle Island Associates Inc. and emcee for the summit; Courtney Buckshot, housing coordinator with Couchiching; Anne Headrick, housing manager with Garden River: and Greg Solomon, construction maintenance coordinator with Garden River.

"The idea of it was for us to share our experience in housing, how we got into our role and just to share stories and to inspire the youth in the room to maybe consider housing as a career option for themselves." Horn says, noting that one student asked a question about what person in their life inspires them to work in housing. "I



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Couchiching's Ryan McMahon shared some ideas and perspectives on what healthy communities need during his keynote presentation at the CMHC Indigenous Youth Summit on Housing, held in Fort Wil-

thought it was a really good question — it kind of makes it personal. I have a young daughter at home and I know just by casual conversations at home, the house is very important. She loves where we live."

David Muriella, specialist, First Nations housing with CMHC, says the summit included youth from about 25 different First Nations across northern Ontario, ranging in age from 16 to 25-years-old.

"They (were from) St. Patrick's (High School), St. Ignatius (High School), Matawa (Learning Centre), Dennis Franklin Cromarty (First Nations High School)," Muriella says. "And we had a few students here from Lakehead (University) and a few that came in from their own First Nations in vehicles that wanted to attend."

Carson Baxter, a Matawa Learning Centre student from Marten Falls, enjoyed the opportunity to participate in the activities at the summit.

"I learned how to fill in the air cracks (around doors and windows)," Baxter says about the renovation challenge held on the first afternoon of the summit. "It worked out pretty good. It was fun. I want to make a career as well in construction



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A group of experts in housing shared their experiences and how they got into their roles during a panel

work. (I picked up) a few tips, a few ideas.'

The summit also included a full day with Ryerson University's Together Design Lab, where the youth learned about improving housing in their communities.

"We've worked with Indigenous communities in the remote areas of northern Ontario for the last five years, so we were talking about some of the lessons around housing and thinking about longterm planning and governance structures around those," says Shelagh McCartney, a professor at Ryerson University. "A lot of time youth are not asked about how they would like to redesign homes, and they have a lot to give to that discussion. So we specialize in creating an engaged discussion with different games and activities to allow the students to share their priorities."

The lab included an activity where the youth worked on creating an air barrier around a

model of a house. "It allowed them to see how difficult it is to actually make a house really airtight, how much time it takes — you have to have the right conditions to do it," McCartney says. "But also

what happens when you put a single hole into it and the damage that can do to a house long-

McCartney says the youth were also shown how different materials react to being in

"I think that was quite impactful for the students to see what happens when these materials are in water," McCartney says. "It sort of explained the benefits of using rock wool, the fact that when it gets wet it doesn't get mouldy. And it begins to be a fire barrier as



Christmas Story

"What about Kokum?"

By Gail Duiker

Great Kokum's skirt is long and her shirts have long sleeves too.

This past few months, I have been learning more about Kokum. We go into town to shop at Wallys but she has her favorite stores.

In town, she likes to go shopping especially at 'Goodies' because she says "I like that place." And when things costs less, she is happy. Sometimes, she will buy me a Tee-shirt, something.

She likes cotton. Sometimes, she buys a Tee Shirt and it smells funny. Only 'Musty' is what she calls it. And she says to me and Mom; "We'll just wash them things and lay them out there on the lawn. Air-Out!"

I wore this one sweater to school and of course; that Darcy, he's got to ask. "Whew! What is that smell?"

And I tell him. "New Perfume."

Darcy he went on in class that morning. "Ohh. Da Perfume. It's that. Don't ever wear that again." He says.

It wasn't because my Mom's perfume and expensive. As the heat went on in the school, I got warm and the warmer I got, the smell of 'Musty' was emerging full force. Kokum must have forgotten to lay it on the lawn.

You never know about shopping in Kokum's favorite store. It now makes me nervous. When she pulls out her little change purse it is because she if a serious shopper.

I mean, who wants to wear a "Moose-With-A-Moose horn" Tee-shirt even if it is glittery?

Now, we have a TV. We have inter-net. We see these models wearing these fashion clothes. There is a shopping channel. "Too skinny. She says about the models. Too short!" she says about the skirts.

l asks her one time, "Why don't you dress up different something new style?"

She just shakes her head. I wonder what she doesn't say and why she is smiling.

Maybe wondering about me and the crazy mixed up clothes I have.

But me? I am nine years old and allowed to mix up polka dots and stripes if I please. I wear jeans to school and none of that frilly stuff please.

Great Kokum Maggie; she went to one of them Residential Schools. She never said too much about it to me. And I heard from Mom that she was there a long time. There are things I guess that are things that are hard to talk about.

She doesn't say too much about her childhood. Not even to her me or to Grand-daughter, and that is my Mom. I guess it was hard to be there without your family. Me and the other kids, we are learning about the schools that the kids lived at.

And my Mom she says to me. "Great Kokum, she will live with us now that Mooshum is gone. It is our turn."

My Mom, Cecilia, she works at the band office; a Secretary. She dresses different from Great Kokum and not like me, not at all. Dress pants are what she wears and black sweaters. You know the kind of fashion.

"Hey My Kokum," I say after Mom's gone to work. It is a Saturday, eh and she usually doesn't go in on a week-end. "Hey, Kokum?"

"What's that my girl?" She looks

"Can you make some grease bannock for our lunch today and Chicken noodle soup?" I ask her this.

Her brown eyes are sparkling. I know I am her baby, I maybe play that I am a big girl but I make a scrunchy smile. "Please and Thank you."

"How many are coming here today?" She tilts her head sideways like she has a habit to do. "I hope it's just a few kids; you know your Mom said. "We're not going to starts up feeding all the reserve

kids 'cuz it costs money, eh?"

"Just 3 of us, is that OK with you then? We're going to be listening to music and we're going to gets hungo."

gry."
"OK. I guess 3 is OK, not too many."

So I see her walking into the kitchen; she takes out that apron from the drawer.

"Kokumsis?"

"What?"
"I love you!"

My heart's glad that she says yes. It is hard you know being the only child. My friends are my family, or at least like a family of sis-

By 11 o'clock; the kids are here.

There is Donna, she is a full head taller than me. She's got a whole pile of brothers and some older and younger than her. Guess that is why she's got that spunk. Me and her became friends after she beat me up on the school grounds. "Say uncle!" she was punching me in the arm and sitting on my stomach last year. But you know, I never said that 'uncle'? And she said to me one day; "You are OK." We been friends since.

Then there is Millie; she's always laughing about something. It is hard not to like her. Bet if someone picked on her, she's still be smiling anyways and they'd have to give it up. Millie? Millie like she is my age and then a few months. She has crazy hair for an Indian girl; it's like curly and don't lay flat.

And then, there is Angel. How does one gets a name like that anyways? She is the short one and shorter than me. Her face is round and she's got a dimple on the left cheek. Me? When I smile, I got a dimple, right side. We are matching.

So there we are and we puts on music and we are sitting on the



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Christmas Stor

couch and I got my legs tucked in sideways. "Here." Listen to this," And we go on like that, all of us criss-crossed with wires and plugged in to someone else's phone.

Donna says. "Did you hear those Boys rapping at recess?"

'Yah." Millie is giggling. "And so?" I ask because we gots to know. "What?"

Angel says "We could do that ourselves, too."

"Yah, hey?" I say.

Donna gets up and she turns her phone on. Up loud and "Hey, Hey! We gots the move-es! Got to get in a groove!" She flips her head this way, and back. Fast and her elbows out. Holds up a mike. "Who says and What?"

"Millie says. "That is so cool. Heh-Heh. Who wan'na be so-o-o-Cool?" Millie she points to Angel. Angel jumps up and she does an airplane pose pushing us back.

"We gots the moves and we gots the words and we gots style.... Fool."

So that was how we started. We just wanted to get together and laugh as most kids do, you know. Then, it was every Saturday we'd be meeting here in the afternoon. Angel says, "we are pretty good as a 'Rapp' band but we don't know it."

Someone. Was it Donna says "Your Kokum, she can be our audience."

So that is how it gots started. Kokum in the front row and her knitting. Her smiling with her knitting needles going 'clack-clack.'

Every once in a while we asks "How was that sounding?"

Kokum's eyebrow and that, goes up. "Sounding good, girls."

Only last week, she was telling us that we were singing too loud but now, Kokum's beginning to relax more, her foot beating time on the floor as she knits.

All of my friends smiled. Donna was the first one to tell me what she thought. "Why, I think she is cool!'

"Who?"

"Your Kokum!"

"My Great Kokum?" I said laughing. I hadn't thought of her as cool, just thought of her as my Kokum, traditional and quiet.

And the next time I was calling Millie, what does she say? (Giggle) Then she says. "I wish I had a Kokum. I never knew my own because she passed away before I was born."

"Ohh. Sorry. I never thought to ask you 'bout that." I said but that whole thing had me thinking. My Kokum was pretty old.

Now, it is Angel and she has had a cold for a while and hasn't been around my house. She phones me. "How is 'Kokum?"

"What? You didn't miss me and the rest?"

"Of course. But your Kokum, she dropped off some home-made soup for me...and..."

"Really. Really?" I didn't know whether to be jealous that Kokum was paying attention to one of my

friends instead of me. "And she even brought me bannock. Me and Mom shared it."

"Really?" There was another side to Kokum I guess, maybe I didn't know about. She must have walked over there. I thought.

One time, and all my friends were over and we were talking about Service berries, you know... Saskatoon berries; I like that pie though I wouldn't be able to tell you where you can grow them berries. Mom buys it in own, and it goes into the freezer.

Kokum here, she says to my friends. "We used to pick them berries all the time."

Donna says to her. "Oh, I thought they came from California.'

"Nahhh." Kokum laughs. Millie, she is giggling now. "I heard it down the Grape-Vine."

"Huhh? Them berries are not grapes." Angel says. "Yah, they grows on the ground, I saw them growing on a small bush when we were at the lake."

Kokum laughed. "No. Those berries, why they are 'blue-berries."

"I think Saskatoons are blue, too."

Kokum says. "Service berries, or Saskatoons, they grow on bushes like trees."

Millie gives a thumbs up sign. "Got cha."

But Kokum laughs. "I have a picture to show you girls, next time you come over, Saskatoons...how we used to pick them."

We all just look at each other. It was, maybe a week or so, and the kids are coming over to my house. And when they get there,

Kokum has this Saskatoon pie on the counter. "Hey, you made pie." "It was frozen, I just took it out." "It still looks good." I say and

kiss Kokum's soft cheek. "Your girlfriends should be here soon?" Kukom also has this box beside the pie and on the counter.

It is Saturday and Mom is up already and gone. I read the note on the table. "Gone shopping. I thought you would want to sleep in."

"Yah. She thought it was too early for you."

That is one thing about a Kokum,

a Kokum likes to re-say what is already known, that's what I think. Mom, she says to me and one time, you are lucky you got a Great-Kokum here. And if I hear disrespect, you will not be using your phone all day on a Saturday!'

"What? No phone?"

So, I behave because I had a good talk with my Mom. And she pointed out, I will be old one day and how would I be liking it if my Granddaughter gave me attitude? She is not here just to 'serve you' so just don't make too many 'demands' eh?"

So my friends, they came in one

by one, "Hello, Kokum," And "Hi there, Dawn," they say to me afterwards.

I mean, after we sing a few Rapp songs and practicing our little band, we take a break.

Kokum? After she makes us a cup of tea, we all sit down at the kitchen table.

Kokum-ski (I call her) has brought out an album of photos and she flips through. "This is me." $\,$ All my friends say things. "That

is you?" And. "Yah. Really?"

I walk around the table. "Yes." Kokum says.

And I see this one photo. "Yes, eh?" All the girls are leaning in.

"We used to pick berries, all kinds. You name them, we picked them. High-bush and low bush cranberries. They

> smell like old socks, you know. " "Old Socks?"

"They stink?" "Yah. And they tasted so-oo

good." The girls giggled.

"And we picked strawberries, tiny straw berries so small they were not bigger than the tip of your smallest finger.

Angel says. "We always buy Strawberries; the ones we buy. There almost big like a 1/2 an egg. Are you sure that you was picking 'Strawberries?"

"Wild ones."

"Wild?" "Yah, Small ones,"

I watched my Kokum and she was in thick with my friends.

"And the wild blue berries? Of course, you had to watch for the Bears too. They liked them too."

Donna's eyebrows went up. "Bears! Is that why berries are called "Bear-ies?"

"Yah. Things I guess, even ideas starts somewhere." Kokum says.

"Ever hear about Wesahchechak, the trickster?"

Millie goes. "I think I may have heard of him."

"The Coyotee man? He goes around and gets himself in trouble?"

Donna asks. "You mean like the Coyote on the Road-runner cartoon?"

"Ha Ha! Well, that's what I mean. Words, ideas must come from somewhere.

But the truth is that way before that Road-runner cartoon was thought of, why We' Indians had Coyote, and other Trickster Stories. But, some things influence other things. I guess that English word berries could come from bears liking that food.

Kokum points to this one photo. And there she is, small and wearing a skirt a little shorter than now. She has her braids. Her sleeves are

"That is you!" The girls sound all impressed.

I look closer. "Hey, what's this? A bandana!! You were wearing a bandana!"

"Cool!" Donna says. "You were with it!"

"Yah, eh? Hey, look at that basket of Saskatoons. We used to go out and pick them. Always, we girls would go out; Moms, Kokums and young kids. Even the men, sometimes." And Kokum said. "We would put them away for winter: dried Saskatoons in berries is good. And we even sold extra, there were white people used to buy them from us and by the road."

Millie says. "Today, there is a farmers market in town? I think I saw some there, a big bag costs money. But that means people still pick. White people, I guess like Saskatoons.

"Some call them "Service berries. You know?" Kokum was smiling a lot now.

"Hmmmn."

Silence. There was silence in the room as we all were thinking, I guess, all of our own thoughts.

Donna has a really big smile now. "Maybe, the places you used to pick still has berries."

And before you know it; there is talk about a berry picking trip. Whose Kokum drives?

I watched my Kokum talk about bringing a 'good' lunch because we'd all get hungry. And there must be someone on the reserve that still picks...she says. "After all. There is always Saskatoons at the feasts."

And, Christmas was coming up. "Maybe, your Mom, she'd pick up some Saskatoons at the Farmers market. We could have Saskatoon bannock next time we meet?" She says this to me. "We can ask?"

The kids are getting ready to leave now. Donna's Mom; Arlene is at the door. She is tall like Donna. "You girls ready?" She is driving them all home.

Arlene; she is wearing jeans and a slouch sweater. She is made up and her hair is high-lighted. She is a modern lady.

And all the girls are talking 'Kokum says."

"And we can all go, next summer..."

The door closes and we there iust the 2 of us. I say to Kokum. "A

bandana hev?" "Yah-h." And my Great-Kokum, she smiles like that.

"Why did you wear it that day?" "Fashion, My Girl, Fashion,"

My face must have looked surprised.

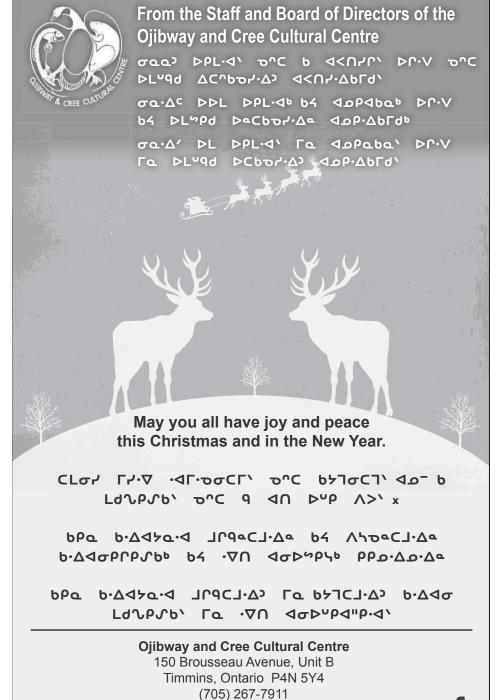
"I guess I gots it from Somewheres."

"Yeh, Heh?" And next thing you know; Great Kokum is talking about teaching us girls to make a

Christmas bannock special. "Raisons or Saskatoons or even dried blue-berries. And...we can all get together, baking you know...having fun and laughing, we can have a good Christmas together?"

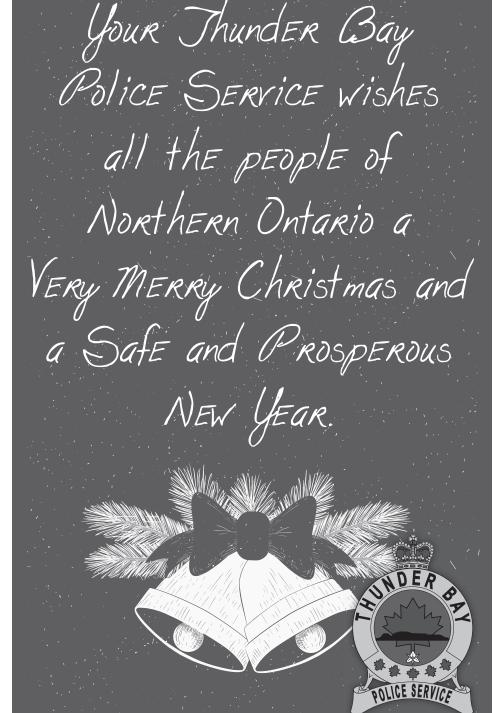
"Yah. There was no question about it. My Great-Kokum is 'Cool.'

Ekosi Maga (That is all) and Have a Merry Christmas too!



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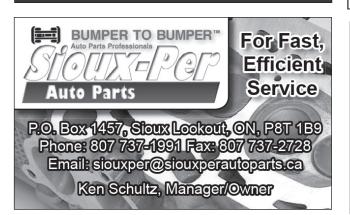
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Feature



photo submitted by Sergeant Peter Moon, Canadian Rangers

Warrant Officer Chris Thomson, an army instructor, trains Canadian Rangers in Constance Lake in the use of the new Panger rifle

Canadian Rangers receive first of the new C-19 Ranger rifles

Peter Moon Special to Wawatay News

The first of the new Canadian Ranger C-19 rifles have started to be distributed in Northern Ontario.

The first two deliveries were made to Ranger patrols in Constance Lake, near Hearst, and Peawanuck, near the Hudson Bay coast. The C-19 is a specially designed .308 calibre, bolt action rifle, that is replacing the venerable .303 Lee-Enfield Mark 4, which has been in service with the Rangers since 1947.

"We've been looking forward to getting the new rifle for a long time," said Sergeant Neil Neegan in Constance Lake. "We are glad to be getting them."

The C-19 is designed to meet the specific needs of the Rangers, who are part-time army reservists in the North. It has several specially designed features, such as a bigger bolt handle and trigger guard to allow the Rangers to fire it more easily with gloved hands in cold temperatures. It is shorter, lighter, and more accurate than the Lee-Enfield.

"It's a beautiful rifle," said Lieutenant-Colonel Matthew Richardson, commanding officer of the 3rd Canadian Ranger patrol Group, which commands the 570 Rangers in 25 First Nations across the Far North of Ontario. 'I've not heard anyone say a bad word about it. I'm certain the Rangers are going to feel the same way about it.

"They will use it for defensive purposes only, to protect themselves from predators. In the areas where our Rangers work there are dangerous animals, such as black bears, polar bears, wolves, and on occasion they will have to put them down if they can't scare them off with warning shots."

The old Lee-Enfields issued to the Ranger patrols in Northern Ontario are being reconditioned by the Canadian Army and given as gifts to selected serving Rangers who meet the requirements of the federal Firearms Act. Sergeant Neegan said he was pleasantly surprised to be given one of them.

"It is a good rifle for hunting moose," he said. "It has a nice weight and open sights for the hunting I do. I've shot a moose with a .303 on patrol for food. I've also slept with one next to me when I was scared a bear might come into my tent.

"So I'm happy to get one of the old .303s for myself but the new rifle is going to be great for us as Rangers."

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Feature



photo submitted by Sergeant Peter Moon, Canadian Rangers

Warrant Officer Christopher Thomson uses an improvised model to show Canadian Rangers how to make an emergency aircraft landing strip.

Canadian Rangers complete intense nine days of training

Peter Moon

Special to Wawatay News

Canadian Rangers from 14 First Nations from across the Far North of Ontario have completed nine days of intense training.

They trained in two groups. One was a basic leadership course for Rangers who want to become patrol leaders and the second was for the benefit of established local patrol leaders. "It worked well," said Captain Karl Haupt, the Canadian Army officer in charge of the training. "They are taking a lot home with them to make their patrols more efficient."

The training took place at the 4th Canadian Division Training Centre at Meaford, near Owen Sound. In Northern Ontario, there are 570 Rangers in 25 remote and isolated First Nations. The Rangers are parttime army reservists.

Ranger Danielle Bekintis of Sandy Lake, who was in the

basic patrol leadership group, said it was the first time she has taken a training course outside of her remote community "It was tiring and they kept us busy and each day we had a different subject.," she said. "It was hard work but I enjoyed it."

"The learned how to talk in front of people, how to give direction and give a briefing," Captain Haupt said. "They are not used to doing that but by showing them that they can do it it helped build up their confidence. We gave them a better ability to plan, a tool that they can use for taking complex tasks and getting them done efficiently."

The second training group consisted of sergeants, master corporals, and corporals who run the Ranger patrols in their communities. They held discussions in which they talked about a wide range of issues amongst themselves and with Canadian Army instructors.

"They brainstormed and dis-

cussed local issues and ways to deal with them and make their patrols more efficient and independent," Captain Haupt said. "The idea was to allow the Rangers to take more ownership of their own training and tell us what kind of training they would like and what would work best for them.'

Master Corporal Emily Beardy of Muskrat Dam was part of the second group. "It was a good experience," she said. "It allowed us to meet Rangers from other communities and learn from them, because we all do different things."

Three highlights of the training occurred at the end of the week. The aspiring leaders group had to build emergency airstrips in the daytime and at night in difficult snowy conditions. Both groups spent a day on the range firing the new Ranger .308 rifle. And on the last day they enjoyed a special Christmas dinner with all the traditional trimmings.

