Sol Mamakwa re-elected for second term as Kiiwetinoong MPP

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Kingfisher Lake's Sol Mamakwa was re-elected for a second term as Kiiwetinoong MPP on June 2 with 55.98 per cent of the votes according to Elections Ontario's unofficial election results on June 4. Mamakwa had 2,426 votes with a margin of 1,097 votes over second-place candidate Dwight Monck with 45 of 51 polls reporting as of June 4. About 27.4 per cent of the 15,820 registered electors on the list in the Kiiwetinoong riding voted.

"I'm proud and honoured to be able to serve again for the people of Kiiwetinoong," Mamakwa says. "This time around its unique in the sense that you kind of know what to expect. You know, with four years under my belt, what's going to happen and how the system works."

Mamakwa adds that the NDP will be selecting a new leader after former leader Andrea Horwath stepped down after the election.

'So that's a step in itself in order for the NDP to move forward as a party in Ontario," Mamakwa says. "I'm sure there is going to be a process in appointing an interim leader and eventually a leader."

Mamakwa says there are a number of issues that need to be addressed in the Kiiwetinoong riding, including the high cost of living, access to services, the opioid drug crisis, resource development in northern Ontario and the potential selection of a nuclear waste site near Ignace.

"Everyone in Kiiwetinoong is impacted by (the high cost of living)," Mamakwa says. "The cost of fuel is also an issue — the cost of fuel is horrendous right now."

Mamakwa says the provincial government needs to bring services closer to home for people in the Kiiwetinoong

"Another issue that is coming up is the opioid crisis," Mamakwa says. There are people dying in big numbers in our communities and we need to be able to address that."

Mamakwa says there needs to be a process where everybody benefits from resource development in northern

"What's happening is because of COVID-19 both levels of government are having to do the economic recovery and they are focusing on the north and the lands and the rivers and the creeks that we have and not only that. the minerals that are in those territories," Mamakwa says. "So we have to be able to have a process that we are at the decision-making table. We need to be able to find that process to make sure they work with us as partners, not stakeholders."

Mamakwa says the First Nations teachings and ways of life, their language, identity and history come from the lands that they have been living on for thousands of years.

"If we start developing it, what is the cost," Mamakwa says. "What is the cost of that way of life, what is the cost of the identity, what is the cost of our language because that is where the lan-

guage comes from. We need to be able to benefit without putting us in the state where we eventually in 60, 100, 150 years lose our identity, we lose our language."

Mamakwa says he has been able to raise awareness of some of the issues affecting First Nations communities throughout the Kiiwetinoong riding during his first term as MPP.

"When we talk about the suicide crisis, the housing crisis, the infrastructure crisis, all these issues that are happening and the water crisis, we've been able to elevate those issues and change the trajectory of the thinking of the people that make the decisions up north," Mamakwa says. "It was important as well to be able to bring that voice on the impacts of climate change, the environment, on our traditional territories because we are the first ones that feel those impacts and we need to be able to tell those truth telling stories about the people that are impacted by it and the unnecessary suffering that happened."

Mamakwa says the discovery of the 215 potential burial sites at a former residential school in Kamloops, B.C. about a year ago provided him with an opportunity to speak about residential school issues.

"It gave me a platform to be able to speak on the real history of what Canada was built on when we talk about oppression, colonialism, even genocide," Mamakwa says. "So I think we need to be able to share those stories to the people that are in those places that make the decisions.'



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Kiiwetinoong MPP Sol Mamakwa was reelected with 55.98 per cent of the votes during the 2022 provincial election on June 2.

The PC Party was elected in 83 ridings, the NDP in 31 ridings, the Liberal Party in eight ridings, the Green Party of Ontario in one riding and an independent in one riding according to the unofficial election results on June 4. About 43.03 per cent of the 10,760,433 registered electors on the list voted.

About 56.67 per cent of the 10,246,066 registered voters voted in the 2018 provincial election, with the PC Party elected in 76 ridings, the NDP in 40 ridings, the Liberal Party in seven ridings and the Green Party in one rid-

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Politics

National Assembly of Remote Communities holds first meeting

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Nishnawbe Aski Nation leaders highlighted the importance of working with leaders from other remote communities on northern remote issues during the initial meeting of the National Assembly of Remote Communities, which was formed in 2021. The May 31-June 2 meeting was cohosted by Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) First Vice Chief David Pratt and Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

"I'm very excited about this endeavour with FSIN and the many other regions that are getting together for the sake of our remote communities," says Grand Chief Derek Fox via the Zoom virtual platform. "For those who don't know what it's like to live in the remote north ... they endure the high cost of living, the cost of fuel, delivering any kind of services to say Neskantaga or Bearskin Lake. These are things that are often not taken into account when it comes to announcements of funding and ensuring that First Nations get the resources they

Narcisse says the leaders want to bring more attention to the plight of remote communities and to identify the severe gaps in services that are prevalent amongst children, youth and families.

"Many of our communities within the remote north sit on very rich resource lands," Narcisse says. "Our children, youth and families should be enjoying a quality of life that is exceeding what they (have) right now."

Deputy Grand Chief Victor Linklater says it is important to keep speaking up because "our children are precious."

"We want them educated, we want them strong, we want them powerful, we want them



screenshot

Grand Chief Derek Fox speaks about the high cost of living in remote First Nation communities during the National Assembly of Remote Communities, held May 31-June 2 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

healthy, so we need to work together," Linklater says. "It's nice to see a good mixture of Elders, knowledge keepers, youth, leadership, technical people — together we can do great things."

Mushkegowuk Council Deputy Grand Chief Rebecca Friday says it is important to fight for the children, noting that the current generation of children is facing a loss of their language.

guage.

"The grandparents can't understand their ... great great grandchildren — it's sad to see that because we need to speak in our language," Friday says. "That's why I spoke (Mushkegomowin) in my opening remarks. I'm trying my best to speak my language the way I was taught. All of my kids speak (Mushkegomowin), but my grandchildren don't."

Theresa Sutherland, member of the NAN Women's Council and Fort Albany citizen, says she has seen how the lack of mental health resources and services impacts First Nations women and by extension their communities.

"While there are a handful of community-based treatment or land-based detox programs scattered throughout the NAN territory, they are underfunded and under resourced," Sutherland says. "We need holistically comprehensive addictions treatment programs in every community. Women are the heart of our families, the heart of our communities, they can't be expected to leave for the extended time needed to detox, then enter treatment and then move into an aftercare plan."

Ashley Bach, member of the NAN Oshkaatisak Council and Mishkeegogamang citizen, says she didn't have an opportunity to grow up in her community due to funding inequities in rural and remote communities, noting she was apprehended at birth and adopted by a non-Native family in B.C. when she was five-years-old.

"We feel at this present time there is no possible means of providing the special needs required by this child and there is simply no resources or facilities in our community that would enable this child to receive the best care possible," Bach says, quoting a letter written by current Mishkeegogamang Chief David Masakeyash, who was a councillor at the time. "In that letter, that's where they had to sign away saying that a family outside that wasn't First Nation could adopt me and take care of me because they didn't have those resources to do it themselves.

The National Assembly of Remote Communities was scheduled to focus on three major themes: the Journeys of Remote Communities; the Science of Measuring Remoteness; and Community Vulnerabilities Respecting Settlement Payouts.

"Canada has failed our youth and families for decades, but I am encouraged that we now have a healing path forward,' Narcisse says. "The launch of the National Assembly of Remote Communities is an important step on our journey of long-term reform that will be First Nations led, as treaty and Indigenous rights holders, and based on our inherent authority to care for our children. I look forward to taking this historic step with our brothers and sisters from many nations."

Pratt says the National Assembly of Remote Communities was created by First Nations for First Nations.

"This assembly will address the serious funding issues our northern and remote nations face daily and address those areas where investments are critically needed," Pratt says. "Our First Nations children are our future, and we need to create a better path forward for them. This is the first step in that process."

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Politics

NAN mourns passing of Chris Cromarty

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The late Wunnumin Lake Elder Chris Cromarty was honoured for his achievements as one of the founders of Grand Council Treaty No. 9 by Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) on June 10. Cromarty passed on June 9 at the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre.

"Chris was the founding vice-president of Grand Council Treaty No. 9," says Grand Chief Derek Fox. "He was part of a delegation that asserted the Declaration of NAN to the federal government in 1977. Chris, like all the leaders at the time, they just believed in preserving our traditional practices and of course were concerned with our young people losing touch with their culture."

Fox adds that Cromarty wanted to ensure that the people of NAN did not lose their

way

"I know he wanted us to fight for that language, to get it back, assert it and bring it back into our schools," Fox says. "That might be one of the ways we can honour him is to start fighting for those things that the government took from us. We need to find a way as leaders to get that language back, start by understanding it, encourage our leaders to learn to understand it and then speak it. I think Chris would really like that."

Cromarty's funeral was scheduled for June 14 at 1 p.m. at the St. James Church in Wunnumin Lake with Reverend Joey Bluecoat officiating. He was born in Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug in 1937 to Eila and Isaac Cromarty and he attended the Pelican Lake Indian residential school near Sioux Lookout and the Shingwauk Indian residential school in Sault Ste.

learn of Chris's passing and our love and prayers are with his dear wife Annie, his family and his home community of Wunnumin Lake First Nation," Fox says. "Most NAN First Nations didn't have electricity, airstrips or running water when leaders like Chris Cromarty established Grand Council Treaty No. 9 to improve the lives of our citizens. Our nations have come a long way since then, but the work we continue to do for our people was built on (the) vision that founders had for Nishnawbe Aski Nation.'

Cromarty was also an integral part of the 1997 Four Party Hospital Services Agreement that united two hospitals in Sioux Lookout into one regional hospital, which eventually became the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre. He served as the inaugural chair of the SLFNHA board of directors

and worked in health until his retirement. He had also managed the Big Trout Lake Co-op and later the Mistik store in Wunnumin Lake.

"As a leader Chris believed in preserving traditional practices and was concerned with young people losing touch with their language, culture and spirituality," Fox says. "He often spoke about seeing positive change in young people as they returned to traditional teachings. He once commented that (the) world changed in the 1960s with the growing recognition of Indigenous traditions and culture as people were joining together to share their values and the things they treasure. We are seeing more of this today, with Indigenous rights, culture and identity increasingly being recognized and celebrated."

Cromarty was awarded the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win

HOUS / SECONDARY

photo from Alvin Fiddler tweet

The late Wunnumin Lake Elder Chris Cromarty was honoured for his achievements as one of the founders of Grand Council Treaty No. 9 by Nishnawbe Aski Nation after his passing on June 9.

Health Centre's inaugural Chris Cromarty Excellence in Leadership Award in 2007 for his tremendous contributions to improving health care in the Sioux Lookout area, and NAN honoured him with a lifetime achievement award in 2012. "Chris was an inspiration to us all, and we cherish his life of leadership and friendship," Fox says. "Many of us have grown up with a strong sense of pride and confidence thanks to leaders like him who have guided us along the way."

Independent special interlocutor appointed

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Assembly of First Nations is still calling for an independent criminal investigation into unmarked graves and burial sites near residential schools after the federal government appointed an Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites.

"While the appointment of an Independent Special Interlocutor is one element needed to move forward with protecting unmarked burial sites, the Assembly of First Nations will continue to press for an independent criminal investigation so those responsible for the crimes that took place are held accountable," says Regional Chief Kluane Adamek. "Truth is required before reconciliation and having an impartial investigation of the critical violations of First Nations human rights, with the same urgency and investment as with this appointment, is required to pave the way for accountability and real justice."

National Chief RoseAnne Archibald had previously called for a United Nations (UN) Human Rights Commission Special Rapporteur to investigate crimes and human rights violations associated with residential institutions at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on April 25.

"I'm calling on the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples along with other special rapporteurs to conduct full-fledged investigations of the circumstances and responsibilities surrounding these institutions, including full redress, criminal prosecutions and sanctions and other remedies for human rights violations including genocide," Archibald says during an April 25 press conference at the UN. "Canada must not be allowed to investigate itself. Please help us ensure that something like this never happens again, not just to us but to anyone."

Archibald says that she calls the residential schools, which were established by the federal government, institutions of assimilation and genocide.

"These institutions were designed to kill the Indian in the child by forbidding them to speak their language, which disconnected them from their families and communities," Archibald says. "Some people refer to these institutions as residential schools — I don't call them schools anymore because no school I ever attended had children buried in unmarked graves. Thousands and thousands of our children died in these institutions."

The federal government announced the appointment of Kimberly Murray as Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian residential schools on June 8.

Murray's role is to work closely and collaboratively with Indigenous leaders, communities, survivors, families and experts to identify needed measures to recommend a new federal legal framework to ensure the respectful and culturally appropriate treatment and protection of unmarked graves and

burial sites of children at former residential schools.

"I am honoured to have been entrusted with this important responsibility of being the Special Interlocutor," Murray says. "I am committed to supporting the work of survivors and Indigenous communities to protect, locate, identify, repatriate, and commemorate the children

who died while being forced to attend Indian residential schools. I pledge to do this work using my heart and my mind in a way that honours the memories of the children who never made it home."

see INTERLOCUTOR on page





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Commentary

Long Covid Has Affected Thousands



ummer has finally arrived and the warm weather has us all excited and out and about. We have all en-dured a difficult winter and in fact a challenging past three years of the Covid19 pandemic. We deserve to have a great summer.

The fact is that Covid19 is still alive and a threat to us. In Ontario the government is reporting that as of today June 7, 2022 526 people are in hospital with Covid19 and 114 in intensive care. In terms of death, if you are vaccinated with three doses you are generally safe from getting very ill if you get Covid19 or ending up in the hospital and dying. If you are not vaccinated there is more risk you could get very sick, end up in the hospital and perhaps

The good news is that Covid19 deaths mostly have to do with those over 80 years of age with 24,671 passing away in Canada as of the end of May 2022. To put things into perspective 8,765 people aged 70 to 79 passed away, 4,415 aged 60 to 69 died and 1,881 50 to 59 succumbed. There were 671 deaths in the age group 40 to 49, 316 died aged 30 to 39, 130 died ages 20 to 29, 18 in the age group 12 to 19 and 32 in those 6 to 11 years of age.

For anyone who was fully vaccinated and had any of the Covid19 variants, it seems their sickness was less severe, they were less likely to be hospitalized and less chance of deaths. For those who were not vaccinated the outcomes were more severe. It is understood that many people ended up with Omicron variants because of how contagious these variants were. However, many who ended up with Omicron hardly felt any symptoms.

I had one of the Omicron variants and I was sick for a week or more and then I coughed for more than a month. A couple of months later I developed symptoms again and coughed for a few more weeks.

I wondered what on earth was going on and then I discovered a condition that is affecting thousands of people who had gone through Covid19. It is referred to as Long Covid.

I know so many people who are still feeling unwell and not back to their good health since having Omicron. They

are complaining about brain fog, exhaustion, fatigue, a sore chest or back, sore throat, headaches and being short of breath on doing anything physical. Through recent study I have discovered that although there is a lot of research going on to discover just how wide spread Long Covid is there is some thought that it might affect about a third of the population who experienced Covid19.

It seems that the more severe cases are in those who were not vaccinated however many people who were vaccinated and did not have severe symptoms are still experiencing Long Covid. Groups like the Long Covid Cana-da support group is assisting those who are experiencing this condition.

People with severe cases have found they can not work, have trouble returning to a normal productive life and can not support family and friends as they did in the past.

Recent research points to the fact that people who had been infected with the virus experienced a reduction in grey matter and a greater cognitive decline compared with people who had not contracted Covid19. How's that for scary?

There is so much we do not know about Covid19 and how it has affected those who ended up with it but research is going on all over the world now so we should know more soon. In the mean time the best way not to end up with Long Covid is not to get Covid19.

So it is a good idea to get vaccinated and take preventative measures to protect yourself. Although everyone including our governments are act-ing like Covid19 has ended, the fact is that this is not true and the evidence is that this virus is still circu-lating and making people

The good news is that if your are not in the older age category you proba-bly won't end up in the hospital, in intensive care or die, however you could end up quite sick and then go on to develop Long Covid which could affect you for many years.

So the best idea is to keep on wearing a mask in public when you are in a building with many people, wash your hands often and do your best to stay away from others who seem to be sick. It is very difficult for doctors to diagnose long term Covid and there are no known treatments currently so it is very much every person for them-

selves at this point. We can still have a great summer but we do have to be conscious that we need to be careful.

www.underthenorthernsky.com

Anishinabek Nation celebrates inaugural Anishinaabe Giizhigad



The Anishinabek Nation celebrated the inaugural June 6 Anishinabek Nation holiday, Anishinaabe Giizhigad, in honour of the historic proclamation of the Anishinaabe Chi-Naaknigewin (constitution).

"Today, we recognize June 6 as a day of great historical significance for the Anishinabek Nation, member First Nations, and citizens, and is cause for celebration across the Nation," states Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Reg Niganobe. "It is a day where we remember and acknowledge the assertion of our sovereignty and responsibilities that are foremost guided by the Seven Grandfather Teachings. It is a day where we celebrate Anishinabek and the resiliency of our people who have survived decades of assimilation and racism. Our beautiful culture, traditions, and people will continue on for generations to come."

Fast forward from reluctant spring to summer weather



orthern Ontario switched from below normal temperatures to summer heat on May 10. In the Northwest daytime temperatures ranged from 20 to 25 degrees Celsius until middle May, then returned to cooler then seasonal. In the Northeast many locations reported record high daytime temperatures at 30° C and more. In Moosonee, a temperature of 30.2° C on May 10th prompted media stories in Toronto about the north being 5 to 10 degrees warmer than in Southern Ontario. Some locations in the Northeast experienced two or three consecutive days exceeding 30° C. The unusual heat subsided for more than a week, then resumed by the end of the month. The Northeast was 1 and 3° C warmer than normal whereas the monthly average temperatures in the Northwest were near normal in May.

Precipitation amounts in Northeastern Ontario and the far North were near-average in May. There were some flood concerns in the far North because of the timing of the snowmelt and ice jams in some rivers. There were a few evacuations because of flood poten-

tial but little damage because of higher water levels.

Most of the consequences of snowfall were felt in Northwestern Ontario. The effect of a melting substantial snowpack was compounded by a Colorado Low (May 12-13) which brought overnight thunderstorms and 30 to 60 mm of rainfall to most areas. This rainfall, already saturated ground conditions and melting snow resulted in local flooding concerns for many communities. Some places like Kenora, Rainy River and other locations already had local state of emergencies because of April high

water levels. A storm system on May 30featured a variety of interesting weather situations. Many areas of Northwestern Ontario and northern Minnesota continued to cope with high water levels. Sometimes the expression "bank full" Is used to imply "any more rainfall means flooding is possible", i.e. additional water will spill over the banks and become overland flow. Environment Canada issued various watches and warnings during the day across Northwestern Ontario. "Severe thunderstorm warning continued" was a common message as the evening progressed.

"Tornado warning replaces severe thunderstorm warning for: Ignace, Atikokan, [and other area locations...]. At 9:26 p.m. CDT, Environment Canada meteorologists are tracking a severe thunderstorm that is possibly producing a tornado. Damaging winds, large hail and locally intense rainfall are also possible.".

About this time I received an email message from a friend who lives in Atikokan: "We are having some weather here right now....pretty exciting. I might turn this off now and think about going to the basement."

Tornado warnings

Environment Canada issues a variety of statements about specific weather events. These range from warnings to special weather advisories and vary according to the season. Only Environment Canada has the jurisdiction to issue weather alerts. These and other weather information is often passed on by the various media and other agencies like the Weather Network.

The Environment Canada goal is to issue Watches and Warnings six to 24 hours in advance, although severe weather associated with thunderstorms and tornadoes can develop rapidly. Recent media stories noted that "Environment Canada's tornado warnings falling well short of targets". The stories were based on assessments by the Northern Tornadoes Project (NTP) based at Western University in London, Ontario. The NTP noted that the success rate of one-hour warning was only 12.%.

Radar images can supply lues as to location, movemen and intensity of tornadoes. Radar images are colour coded with a spectrum such and the dark purple is heaviest precipitation.

On May 30 radar images showed purple surrounded by red and then yellow south of Dryden. This combination does not necessarily confirm tornado occurrence or precise location but does imply potential tornado activity.

Strong winds, heavy rain and tornadoes took place in northern Minnesota. Many downed trees left thousands without electricity. Environment Canada and NTP are investigating two possible tornadoes in the Dryden area. The intense thunderstorms resulted in 44 mm of rain in Fort Frances, 38 mm in Atikokan and 27 mm in Dryden.

Seven tornadoes have been confirmed by the NWS for Min-

Outlook for June and July

Northern Ontario is likely to experience near or slightly below seasonal temperatures with near normal precipitation for the final weeks of June.

Several forecasting agencies In April predicted a flip from below normal temperatures to much warmer than seasonal in the summer. We did see such a flip in May, especially in the Northeast. The chances of exceptional heat in July have declined, which also lessens the chances of a repeat of last year's forest fire season.

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Politics



Historic announcement was celebrated as Beaverhouse First Nation recieved official recognition as a First Nation by the government of Canada. Community citizens, Elders, First Nation leaders and visiting dignitaries came together at the Beaverhouse First Nation office on May 21, 2022 in Kirkland Lake to celebrate the official recognition of their First Nation by the government of Canada.

Beaverhouse First Nation achieves historic recognition

Beaverhouse First Nation made history when leadership announced to their community that the First Na-tion had achieved formal recognition as a First Nation from the government of Canada. The historic an-nouncement was sent by the government on April 19, 2022 as an official letter from the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations (ISC), stating that 'Beaverhouse First Nation has demonstrated it is a section 35 rights-bearing First Nation collectivity'. This means that Beaverhouse First Nation is now a recognized First Nation community with rights under the Canadian Constitution.

"It's been a whirlwind of emotions for all of us in the community. I have been involved in this fight for most of my life alongside many of our past leaders such as the late Chief Roy Meaniss, who was a long time advocate for the community. It's been an honour to carry on his legacy and to work with our community to achieve this goal," said Chief Wayne Wabie.

The event was led with a prayer and ceremony by Chief Wabie, along with messages of support by his father and community Elder Tom

The legal process for recognition was started by the late Chief Roy Meaniss in the 1980s Succes-sive Beaverhouse FN Chiefs who continued the process were Chief Gloria McKenzie and Chief Sally Susan Mathias Martel (Marcia Brown-Martel). The community and its leaders had fought for recognition for the past three decades with the major support and expertise of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN), the regional political organization that represents First Nations in the Treaty #9 area. Beaverhouse FN as a citizen of Wabun Tribal Council also had support

"This is a very emotional and proud moment for the people of Beaverhouse First Nation. To have this recognition from the government, from your partners within NAN, from townships and from neigh-bouring communities means that it is a powerful foundation to build upon. We will be there to support Beaverhouse First Nation and help their nation continue to grow. I am extremely happy to be here with the community today," said Grand Chief Derek Fox, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation in speaking to event partic-ipants.

The lead legal representative for Beaverhouse FN, Kim Fullerton was instrumental in representing the First Nation over the years. He is a long time advocate for First Nation communities and organizations primarily in land claims against ${\bf Canada\ and\ Ontario.}$

"This is a very significant event because Canada is recognizing a new First Nation in the country, which does not happen very often. This is a very proud day for all of us, the community citizens, their leaders and Nishnawbe-Aski Nation who supported the First Nation. It's been a long time coming and it is very satisfying to be able to assist this wonderful group of people," said Fuller-

His wife Christine Dernoi, was one of the key researchers that worked with Beaverhouse FN and NAN to prepare the legal case with the government. Luke Hunter, Director of Governance, Treaty Im-plementation for NAN was also instrumental in advocating for and assisting Beaverhouse FN leadership in this process over many years.

First Nation recognition for Beaverhouse FN is the first step in starting the process of creating a new relationship with government. The community leadership and its citizens will now take the time to plan for the future direction of the First Nation and negotiate with federal and provincial governments. The federal government

has appointed a federal negotiator to start discussions on this process with a meeting planned

The lack of official First Nation recognition by the government in the past meant a lot of difficulty for the First Nation leadership in establishing, developing and maintaining social, health, education and administrative activities for its citizens.

Chief Wabie gave thanks to the community citizens, Elders and past leaders who supported the efforts and provided the information, research, historical documentation and input critical in establishing the record of their people's history.

"This is a very emotional event for all of us as it makes me realize what is next for our community. This new stage of development will bring healing not just in body, but in mind and spirit and as a whole for all our families," said Councillor Brianna Moore.

First Nation leadership is now hopeful for positive future growth for the commu-

"This is going to change Beaverhouse First Nation because nobody can say that we are not a First Nation any more. There is lots of work to be done but I have full faith in our community that we are go-ing to do great things," said Councillor Kayla Batisse.

Councillor Meaniss joined the event via live stream along with other officials and community participants who were not able to attend in person.

"It feels great to be here today. We are a strong community that has managed to hang on to our language and our history through our Elders. Now we will be able to move forward with our youth to build our community and make us stronger," said Councillor Diane

Independent interlocutor

from page 3

The Special Interlocutor position was created after David Lametti, minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, engaged with Indigenous leaders across the country and the importance of an Indigenousled response was reiterated.

"The identification unmarked graves and burial sites of Indigenous children at residential schools has caused us all to reflect on Canada's history and the truth of this troubling past," Lametti says. "I am honoured to announce the appointment of Kimberly Murray as Special Interlocutor. This work will be an important trust-building exercise that will help communities move forward, find healing for families and survivors, and push us all toward a more just framework for honouring the memory of Indigenous children who never returned home from residential schools.'

The federal Budget 2022 included proposed spending of \$10.4 million over two years for Justice Canada to support the appointment and work of the Special Interlocutor.

Budget 2022's proposed spending also included \$209.8 million over five years, starting in 2022-23, for Crown-Indige-

nous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada to increase the support provided to communities to document, locate and memorialize burial sites at former residential schools; to support the operations of and a new building for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation; and to ensure the full disclosure of federal documents related to residential schools, where possible.

Other proposed spending in Budget 2020 included \$5.1 million for Public Safety Canada to ensure the Royal Canadian Mounted Police can continue to renew and strengthen existing relationships between the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains, Indigenous communities and police agencies in providing support in missing persons and unidentified remains investigations; \$25 million over three years, starting in 2022-23, for Library and Archives Canada to support the digitization of millions of documents relating to the federal Day School System to ensure survivors and all Canadians have meaningful access to them; and \$25 million over three years, starting in 2022-23, for Parks Canada to support the commemoration and memorialization of former residential schools sites.

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Sports



Lakehead Public Schools holds Indigenous floor hockey tournament

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The 2022 Lakehead Public Schools annual Indigenous student floor hockey tournament hosted by Superior CVI on May 20 in Thunder Bay included teams from Superior CVI, Hammarskjold High School and Westgate CVI.

"It feels good to be undefeated and win a championship once again," says Kylan Whitehead, a Grade 12 Superior CVI student and Webequie citizen, who credited teamwork and not giving up for his team's win in the finals. "It was very fun, I enjoyed it. This was my first time playing against all the other teams in the tournament and it was very fun."

Harley Friday-Peters, a Grade 9 Hammarskjold High School student and Seine River citizen, says his team won three games during the tournament before losing to Superior CVI in the finals.

"But we got a good game out of it," Friday-Peters says.

Vernon Waboose, a Grade 10 Hammarskjold High School student and Eabametoong citizen, says he likes sniping and scoring goals in floor hockey.

"We've been practicing for like two weeks," Waboose says before the start of the tournament. "We just want to get the win today."

Lucas Sinoway, a Grade 11 Superior CVI student and Whitesand citizen, says he usually plays basketball and did not practice for the tournament.

"It's fun and exciting playing with people my age," Sinoway says before the start of the tournament. "It's going to be a fun day."

day."
Tanya Moses, alternative secondary school support worker at Kendomang Zhagodenamnon Lodge at Hammarskjold High School, says the students were excited about playing in the tournament.

"Especially with COVID-19, it was very restrictive," Moses says. "But now it's (fun) being able to get back in there and enjoy each other's company in a friendly safe competition."

Linden Waboose, First Nation Metis Inuit graduate coach at Westgate CVI, says his team was "pretty excited" about interacting with the students from the other schools.

"We're coming in as a rusty team but we're here to just enjoy and have fun," Linden says.

Braylen McDougall, a teacher at Superior CVI and one of the tournament organizers, says

the tournament was a "great success" with about 60 students participating.

"Everyone came out, got a good sweat on, tried their best, had a great time," McDougall says. "There was a lot of laughs, there was a lot of competitiveness but at the end of the day everyone remained friends. It's a good way to lead into the long weekend and hopefully we can do this again next year."

McDougall says it was fun for the students to play against teams from the other schools.

"It's more competitive, there's more variety of people that you're playing," McDougall says, noting that they didn't hold the tournament during the COVID-19 pandemic. "This is a pretty regular (tournament) that we hope to carry on."

McDougall says the tournament was about celebrating community, sportsmanship and a general friendship between all of the Four Directions programs at the high schools.

"Our main focus here is to build that community within the Four Directions programs," McDougall says. "We don't see a lot of each other but when we do we really want to build that community, friendships within that community and sportsmanship and that love for sport



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

TOP: A shot by a Hammarskjold Viking player is saved during the 2022 Lakehead Public Schools annual Indigenous student floor hockey tournament hosted by Superior CVI in Thunder Bay.

ABOVE: The Hammarskjold Viking players celebrate after scoring a goal.

National Indigenous Peoples Day

or really any activity where we all come together and participate as one."

McDougall says all of the participants received a customized water bottle with the Westgate Tiger, the Superior Gryphon and the Hammarskjold Viking

"We know it's really impor-

Celebrating

tant to bring everybody together so we can build those bonds and build those friendships," McDougall says.

The Four Directions program features graduation coaches who work closely with Indigenous students, their families, staff and community partners to ensure that students make a

The Thunder Bay Police Service says,

"Thank you for sharing

your rich culture!"

positive transition into Grade 9 and overcome barriers that may interfere with success and provide leadership opportunities to strengthen personal skills as well as guiding students towards achievement of their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.



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Education



Oshki receives funding to expand PSW and nursing programs

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute recently received funding from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities to increase the number of students entering the Personal Support Worker (PSW) and Practical Nursing programs. The provincial government announced on March 2 that it was investing \$34 million over four years to increase enrolment in nursing and personal support worker programs at six Indigenous Institutes, including Oshki-Wenjack, Anishinabek Educational Institute, First Nations Technical Institute, Kenjgewin Teg, Seven Generations Education Institute and Six Nations Polytechnic.

"There is an urgent need for more nurses and PSWs who are training, working and staying in their communities," says Rebecca Jamieson, chair at the Indigenous Institutes Consortium and president and CEO at Six Nations Polytechnic. "Indigenous Institutes have unique capacities to provide pathways to health care education that link our learners to community health care employers. This funding is critically important as we collectively work to recover from a global pandemic while continuing to create positive paths forward from our collective experience of intergenerational trauma and loss of language and culture.

Oshki-Wenjack plans to offer new intakes of the two-semester PSW program during each semester from the fall of 2022 to the spring of 2025. The students will have their tuition and books fully paid for and they are also eligible to receive an additional \$2 100 scholarship.

additional \$2,100 scholarship. 'Over the next three years Oshki-Wenjack will be offering a new intake of Personal Support Worker (students) every semester," says Susan Sinclair, academic director at Oshki-Wenjack. "We have funding for books and tuition as well as a clinical stipend for the students when they go into their placement in the long-term care setting or the home and community care setting, which is wonderful because it does provide the student with improved access to the training. The goal is to increase the number of personal support workers that we train so they can go back to the community and work in those positions at the community level."

Oshki-Wenjack also plans to offer two additional Practical Nursing Program cohorts in the winter of 2023 and winter of 2024. Students enrolled in the five-semester program will receive scholarships valued at \$11,000.

"The goal is again to increase the number of practical nurses that are prepared and ready to go back and practice at the community level," Sinclair says.

Sinclair says Oshki-Wenjack is currently building a lab setting on campus for students to do their training.

"(The students) can actually go into the lab setting where they can learn things like how to transfer a patient, how to move a patient up and down in bed appropriately, how to administer medication," Sinclair says. "There's many different skills that the students learn, so we will have all the equipment for the training for the students here on site."

The provincial government says the \$34 million investment will support the training of about 340 practical nurses, 60 registered nurses and 400 PSWs over four years.

"By expanding enrolment in PSW and nursing programs at Indigenous Institutes, our government is ensuring learners continue to have access to culturally relevant, high-calibre education, training and supports," says Jill Dunlop, minister of Colleges and Universities. "Providing additional pathways to health care education close to home will also result in more nurses and PSWs who are training, working and staying in their communities."

Sinclair says Oshki-Wenjack is starting to see increased applications for the PSW and Practical Nursing programs since the new intakes were announced.

"The unique feature also about Oshki-Wenjack is we have support services for students on site, we have Elders that can do sharing circles or be there to support, we have tutoring available to students if they are having challenges with their school assignments, we have mental health counselling support, mental health referrals if we need to and we have student navigators who reach out continuously to the students to keep connected and just problem solve with the students and help support them," Sinclair says. "So it's a wraparound service that we provide and it's unique because we get to know the students individually and get to help and support them through their time away from their family and their community while they are training here.'

Information about Oshki-Wenjack's PSW and Practical Nursing programs is posted at: www.oshki.ca.





submitted photos

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute is increasing the number of students entering its Personal Support Worker and Practical Nursing programs through funding from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

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Education

Confederation College president highlights Indigenous STEM program at community report meeting





Rick Garrick/Wawatav News

TOP: Confederation College president Kathleen Lynch speaks about the new values they created while developing the Kaa-anokaatekin strategic plan, courage, equity and relationships.

ABOVE: Confederation College EmBark program manager Alicia Brink highlighted how EmBark students had the opportunity to work on a birch bark canoe during the President's Breakfast:Report to Community 2022 at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay.

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Confederation president Kathleen Lynch highlighted the EmBark Indigenous STEM Education Program during the President's Breakfast: Report to Community 2022 at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay.

"The EmBark Indigenous STEM Education Program was recently introduced and is a one-year certificate program focusing on teaching science, technology, engineering and math to Indigenous women and youth," Lynch says. "EmBark aims to remove barriers and ground students in cultural knowledge while helping them access STEM skills. Elder Melissa Roberts, who opened our morning, and

(EmBark) manager Alicia Brink are responsible for incorporating Indigenous learning into the program course work, and they are doing this by actually building a birch bark canoe."

Brink says the EmBark program provides students with the chance to experience learning that connects them directly to the forest and STEM prin-

"Sometimes we forget the forest, sometimes we forget the land that we are on but when you are building a birch bark canoe that's not possible," Brink says. "There is a sense of awareness that comes from working with the natural world that grounds us in principles that are older and call for a sacred relationship. The birch bark that makes up the hull of the canoe still looks like the tree that it came from."

Brink says students in the EmBark program were given the opportunity to upgrade their math and English skills before they entered the pro-

"In January we started our credit process and we started building the canoe," Brink says. "Every Friday since then we've been working on it, we learned to sew the bark together with spruce roots soaked in hot water and we learned to split and carve cedar ribs for the structure of the (canoe).'

Brink says the students in the program bring their own teachings with them.

"At the end of the day we take turns sweeping the wood chips off the floor, the cedar still fragrant and grounding, humbled by the gifts and amazed at the transformation," Brink savs.

Lynch also spoke about Confederation College's fiveyear strategic plan, Kaa-anokaatekin: The Work That is Now Carried, during the President's Breakfast:Report to Community

"What we didn't know when we launched this plan in 2020 was that the first two-plus years of the plan would take place within the context of a global (COVID-19) pandemic," Lynch says. "Like all of you and your organizations, Confederation College has had to adapt and respond to changing circumstances and legislation. In our case it meant adapting as required to keep our learning and work spaces safe while still serving our learners and the college community."

Lynch says they created new values for the college - courage, equity and relationships when they developed the Kaaanokaatekin strategic plan.

"These have been important staples with respect to how we have maneuvered the last two years and will continue to guide Confederation College as we move forward," Lynch says.

Lynch says the strategic plan features four pillars: access and success; Indigenous learning; institutional excellence; and community prosperity.

"Our first strategic pillar, access and success, speaks to creating a positive supportive environment that attracts students and meets their educational objectives," Lynch says, noting that they served more than 4,800 students and learners over the past year. "Of this total, 660 post-secondary students are learning via distance education and at our regional campuses located in Dryden, Fort Frances, Greenstone, Kenora, Marathon, Red Lake and Sioux Lookout. And our graduate satisfaction and employment rate are both over 80 per cent."

Lynch says the Indigenous learning pillar speaks to the college's aspiration to be a leader in Indigenous learning in Can-

"Just last month we had our first in-person event since 2020, a celebration of Indigenous cui-

sines and cultures, the fourth of its kind hosted by the college," Lynch says. "This year the event included the exciting unveiling of two Norval Morrisseau paintings that have made their way back to the college in Thunder Bay after being stolen in 1981. We were very happy to secure their return."

Lynch says the two paintings have been donated to the permanent collection at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

Tbaytel celebrates the heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada



National Indigenous Peoples Day, 2022

Mayor, Councillors and the staff of the Municipality of Sioux Lookout extend best wishes to all aboriginal residents, stakeholders, neighbours and friends on the occasion of National Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21, 2022.

We recognize and appreciate the value of aboriginal peoples' contributions to our community, including those who visit and do business here, and wish to foster continued relationship-building opportunities and ongoing efforts to work collaboratively on joint ventures.







Sysco is Canada's largest foodservice distributor and we know how important food is to communities, from coast-to-coast-to-coast.

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Education

Anishinaabe Kendaasiwin Institute launches at Lakehead University

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Anishinaabe Kendaasiwin Institute (AKI) was launched at Lakehead University with a naming ceremony at the Sweat Lodge site.

"And we had Bnesi, we had the Thunderbirds there with us through the ceremony — they made their presence loud and clear," says Lana Ray, director at AKI and Red Rock Indian Band citizen. "As part of that naming ceremony, just like you would have a naming ceremony for an individual, there's sponsors for the Institute."

Ray says the sponsors included herself, as a director of AKI; Andrew Dean, vice-president of Research and Innovation; Betsy Birmingham, dean of Social Sciences and Humanities; James Aldridge, vice-provost of Lakehead International; and Denise Baxter, vice-provost of Indigenous Initiatives.

"What differentiates AKI is it's really about being a place to connect as well, so part of the vision of the Institute is it will work to connect Anishinabek people here with Indigenous peoples in other places throughout the world," Ray

Ray says AKI is affiliated with

Lakehead University with an office in the Bora Laskin building

"It's newly formed and the mandate of AKI is to support mino-bimaadiziwin among Anishinabe peoples, nations and territories through research that is situated in Anishinabe Kendaasiwin or Indigenous knowledges and good relationships. So it's really about envisioning a way of research that is working to support the vision and needs of Indigenous communities and territories."

Ray says they will be seeking to privilege Anishinabe ways of knowing and being in research, advance research excellence defined by Anishinabe peoples and principles, expand and support Indigenous governed and driven research and support community building and mobilization between Indigenous peoples.

"Historically, research has been extractive in nature – to the detriment of Indigenous peoples and lands," Ray says. "We at AKI are committed to engaging in research that is relevant to Indigenous peoples and meets Indigenous defined ethical standards."

Sherry Copenace, one of four grandmothers on the AKI Grandmothers Council and

Ojibways of Onigaming citizen, says AKI is an important initiative which is based on having research into finding healing and wellness as Anishinabe people.

"So it's really grounded in our Anishinabe ways — in fact this morning we began in ceremony in ensuring that spiritual realm acknowledges and recognizes Anishinaabe Kendaasiwin," Copenace says. "We had that ceremony ... so that everyone that's involved can see the importance of the Institute and the research that it does, and ensuring that Indigenous ways and ceremony are always at the forefront of everything that Anishinaabe Kendaasiwin does."

Copenace says the Thunderbirds came to witness the ceremony and also to support the work of AKI.

"For me as a grandmother, I feel such gratitude and I feel honoured to be a part of this beginning of Anishinaabe Kendaasiwin and doing the work they need to do both with our non-Indigenous relatives on how we are all going to work together," Copenace says. "So for me I see this as a partial act of reconciliation, how we as Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people can work



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Lakehead University's Denise Baxter, Lana Ray and Andrew Dean participated with grandmothers Sherry Copenace and Dorothy Taylor in the launch of the Anishinaabe Kendaasiwin Institute at Lakehead University.

together for the well-being of especially us as Indigenous people but the well-being of society in general."

AKI kicked off their work by hosting the two-day Telling Our Stories: Indigenous Self-Determination in Data and Research regional Native American and Indigenous Studies Association conference, which brought together Indigenous organizations, communities and scholars to discuss Indigenous and anti-colonial approaches to research, data governance and ethics and engage in planning work, on May 30-31 at Lakehead University.

"We are so pleased at AKI to

be hosting this conference to raise up the important work of Indigenous scholars and communities who are reclaiming their roles as storytellers of their nations," Ray says. "By reclaiming our roles as data stewards, we actively assert our right to be self-determining and advance decolonial futures."

Kathleen Absolon releases second edition of Kaandossiwin



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Wilfrid Laurier University Centre for Indigegogy director Kathleen Absolon launched the 2nd edition of her book Kaandossiwin How We Come to Know Indigenous Re-Search Methodologies during the Telling Our Own Stories: Self-Determination in Data and Research gathering.

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Flying Post's Kathleen Absolon launched the 2nd edition of her book Kaandossiwin How We Come to Know Indigenous Re-Search Methodologies at the Telling Our Own Stories: Self-Determination in Data and Research gathering.

"My kokumis and my shoomis are very much a part of the spirit of this book," says Absolon, professor and director of the Centre for Indigegogy at Wilfrid Laurier University. "Their spirit has always guided me and the journey of rewriting and rewriting and representing what we've come to know is really what Kaandossiwin is about. A lot has evolved since 2011, since the first edition, a lot has changed and I have received a lot of feedback from people."

Absolon says people have shared with her how Kaandossiwin has helped them and given them a pathway to honour who they are, to honour where they came from and to situate how they search in a meaningful

"I want to acknowledge some of the folks in this next edition who are doing incredible work and whose searches are making huge contributions to the libraries we are building, to the ways we are gathering that honours who we are," Absolon says. "How We Come to Know is about honouring that truth and honesty in seeking."

Absolon says the 2nd edition is for people who are searching to lift up Indigenous methodologies and how they come to know in their re-search.

"We are building Indigenous libraries and resources that validate Indigenous ways of searching for knowledge," Absolon says. "Indigenous knowledge systems are living and fluid, not concrete and fixed like typeset words. The 2nd edition continues to illustrate the ways in which Indigenous re-search methodologies are guiding Indigenous knowledge resurgence and restoring Indigenity."

Absolon says the cover of the book was created by her nephew Tsista Kennedy to represent the "insatiable dominance" of colonialism and the different ways of searching for knowledge.

"The grey scale imagery at the bottom in the creatures are representative of the insatiable greed of colonialism," Absolon says. "Despite all of those things that are embedded in colonialism, we continue to emerge and I asked Tsista to represent the petal flower which is a very central framework in Kaandossiwin. I wanted the petals to be different, I wanted the petal flower to be vibrant and to be colourful to reflect the vibrancy of who we are and to also represent all the different ways in which we search for knowlres

Absolon says she also asked her nephew to include seeds on the book cover.

"My ancestors preserved seeds for us so we could continue to know a little bit about what they knew, whether it's seeds of language, seeds of knowing," Absolon says. "So we are picking up those seeds and we're planting them."

Absolon says the book is not about a formula or a prescription for Indigenous methods of

research.

"It moves people to think about who are you, what are your gifts," Absolon says. "And from that location, how will your gifts move you to generating the methodology that fits with you and fits with the communities and the people you are working with."

Absolon's book is available through the Fernwood Publishing website at: fernwood-publishing.ca/book/kaandoss-iwin-2nd-ed.

The Telling Our Own Stories: Self-Determination in Data and Research two-day virtual Native American and Indigenous Studies Association regional gathering was hosted May 30-31 by the Anishinaabe Kendaasiwin Institute (AKI), which was launched on May 30 at Lakehead University.

"The Telling Our Stories: Indigenous Self-Determination in Data and Research conference is a two-day event that is bringing together Indigenous ties and scholars to discuss Indigenous and anti-colonial approaches to research, data governance and ethics and engage in planning work," says Lana Ray, director at AKI and Red Rock Indian Band citizen. "We are so pleased at AKI to be hosting this conference to raise up the important work of Indigenous scholars and communities who are reclaiming their roles as storytellers of their nations."

organizations,



Arts and Entertainment

Thunder Bay Library celebrates stories of resilience with new mural

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Thunder Bay Public Library's Stories of Anishinaabe Resilience (SOAR) project was celebrated on June 9 at the Brodie Community Hub with the reveal of a mural honouring St. Joseph's residential school survivors by Brian Michon.

"I had already done three portraits of former survivors of St. Joseph's residential school," says Michon, a Fort William citizen who lives in Geraldton. "The people along the bottom (of the mural), I wanted those to represent the actual peoples of the past, the families and the children that actually went to the school."

Michon says he put the images of the people at the bottom to represent the foundation of the painting.

"They themselves provided to us a strong foundation for us to learn and to grow upon," Michon says. "The young dancer, she represents the hope and the looking forward into the future, the hope for that for all of us."

The mural was unveiled inside the Brodie Community Hub during the celebration, but it will eventually be located on the south side of the Brodie Community Hub building.

"I'm just hoping that (observers) can see these faces down below and put a face to the people of the past that went to these schools," Michon says. "In the majority of the painting I wanted to put a lot of colour into that dancer and the moun-

tain and I wanted them to hopefully get a positive message out of all of this and learn from the past."

Michon says his family was impacted by the residential school system as were many other families.

"I wanted to commemorate them and I wanted to commemorate my mother," Michon says.

Robyn Medicine, community hub librarian Indigenous relationships supervisor at the Thunder Bay Public Library and project lead for SOAR, says the mural unveiling was originally scheduled for later in June but due to renovations it was moved ahead to June 9.

"It was really important for me to connect with Indigenous people who had attended St. Joseph's because it's a piece of Thunder Bay's history that is missing," Medicine says about the SOAR project. "There just needs to be more happening in the community to spread awareness, to listen, to give St. Joseph's residential school survivors an opportunity to share their stories and experiences."

The SOAR project included paintings by Michon, Quill Christie-Peters and Rufus Moonias; the Stories of Anishinaabe Resilience (SOAR) Podcast, which is available on Anchor by Spotify; the Research report: Stories of Anishinaabe Resilience by Sarah McPherson; and the Secondary Level Education Curriculum developed by Johanna Mousseau-Krahn.

Medicine says the St. Joseph's residential school survivors she interviewed for the



submitted photo

The Thunder Bay Public Library unveiled a mural honouring St. Joseph's residential school survivors by Brian Michon during a celebration of its Stories of Anishinaabe Resilience (SOAR) project on June 9 at the Brodie Community Hub.

SOAR Podcast shared experiences "very different" from those who attended the St. Joseph's boarding school.
"They shared traumatic

"They shared traumatic experiences of them getting their hair cut," Medicine says. "As Indigenous people hair is sacred, its strength for a lot of Indigenous people. So when you go to what you think is a school and they cut your hair, it stays with you — it's like they are taking a piece of your identity away."

Medicine says the residential school students were not permitted to speak their own

language and there was a separation of boys and girls at the residential school.

"So Indigenous families that were there weren't able to be with their family," Medicine says. "I learned from another person that they were able to see them but they couldn't hug them, they couldn't touch them. That was not allowed."

Medicine says the SOAR project has potential to continue.

"I hope this project is a starting point and will inspire other people in the community to continue this work," Medicine



July 13, 2022

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indiandayschools.com or call 1-844-539-3815 Hope for Wellness Help Line: 1-855-242-3310

Arts and Entertainment

Brian Michon sells painting to company in Geraldton

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Fort Willam artist Brian Michon continues to have success with his artwork after recently selling his Spirit Dancer painting to a construction company in Geraldton.

"It's a three-part piece that is now hanging in their board-room," Michon says. "It was just picked up about two weeks ago. The piece is representative of the dancers at the powwows — it's more like a figurative work but more abstraction in the background, so I wanted to bring the two styles together."

Michon says he made the painting panels to be hung sideby-side, but each of the individual panels could also be hung separately.

"Each painting would be able to stand on its own," Michon says.

Michon says he started doing

paintings of powwow dancers about five years ago after deciding that he wanted to explore more of his own style, noting he had previously been doing mainly portrait work and some landscapes.

"I go to the powwows here and I take pictures and I'll reach out to some of the dancers and I'll ask them if they mind if I use their image in some of my paintings," Michon says. "Most of them are very responsive to the idea."

Michon says he began drawing at a very young age in public school and art was his favourite subject in high school. He later studied and graduated with an Advertising Art-Graphic Design diploma from Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology, a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts Studies from Algoma University and a Digital Media Design diploma from the International Academy of Design in

Toronto

"I ended up in the sign industry for 13 years in Brampton — I worked as a graphic artist in a sign shop," Michon says. "I loved working there but in the back of my mind I always knew I wanted to start painting full-time. During that time I was painting on my own and I would take the odd commission here and there for portraits."

Michon says one of his portraits was selected in 2009 for a special mention award from the Kingston Prize, which is a fine art portrait painting and drawing competition across Canada.

"I've been concentrating more on painting larger pieces," Michon says. "Sometimes it's not easy to transport those around, but from a distance people will notice them, and it's probably what attracts them to my table. It's something I enjoy doing, painting and displaying my work and meeting people,

so I enjoy going to those craft shows."

Michon says he moved back to Geraldton in 2013 to help his parents in their senior years, and has since been doing more artwork after his mother passed on in 2019.

"It was my way of dealing with my grief, I was putting myself more into my art," Michon says. "I've painted my mom a few times as well, so that's a way I've dealt with losing her."

Michon says he usually gets most of his art supplies from Painted Turtle or Michaels in Thunder Bay.

"For this (Thunder Bay Public Library Stories of Anishinaabe Resilience) mural I ended up painting that on 1/4 inch plywood, four pieces of four by four, and put those together to make one eight-foot square painting," Michon says. "So most of the material I buy

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Fort Willam artist Brian Michon poses next to one of his portrait paintings at a craft show before the COVID-19 pandemic.

locally in Thunder Bay and even in Geraldton there's a store called Stedmans where I'm able to buy paint as well."

Michon says he also recently did a portrait of the late Elder Dave Courchene for Biigtigong Nishnaabeg.

"They were commemorating the work he's done and the (Turtle) Lodge he had built," Michon says.

Michon says he has been getting good sales of prints of his artwork that he prints using a high-quality printer he bought a few years ago.

"The majority of my sales will be those prints," Michon says. "The printer I got, it's all pigment-based ink which has great properties. You can archive these prints for a very long time."



MARTEN FALLS FIRST NATION
ALL SEASON COMMUNITY ACCESS ROAD

Join us for the Marten Falls First Nation All-Season Community Access Road Public Information Centre #3: Environmental Assessment / Impact Statement Introduction

The Marten Falls First Nation (MFFN) Community Access Road Project Team will be hosting the first Public Information Centre during the provincial Environmental Assessment (EA) / federal Impact Statement (IS) phase of the Project. Join us to learn more about the EA / Impact Assessment (IA) processes and the progress made to-date. Importantly, it's also an opportunity to share your feedback, ideas and values related to the proposed all-season access road.

About the Project

MFFN is a remote First Nation community in northern Ontario, located at the junction of the Albany and Ogoki rivers, approximately 170 km northeast of Nakina, Ontario.

MFFN has a winter access road but it is not reliable and makes transportation of goods and people difficult. All season road access connecting MFFN to the existing provincial highway network is needed to improve the well-being of the community. The EA / IA will assess the potential impacts and benefits related to the proposed Community Access Road.

What is the Process

MFFN is preparing an Individual EA / IS for the proposed Community Access Road. On October 8, 2021, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) approved the Terms of Reference (ToR) with amendments, and MFFN published a Notice of Commencement of the EA October 29, 2021. The ToR serves as a framework for the preparation and review of the EA for the proposed Project, and the Project is now in the EA phase of the provincial process. The federal Government published a Notice of Commencement of the IA on February 24, 2020 and the Project is now in the Impact Statement phase. This is the first Public Information Centre held after ToR approval to support the EA processes; both EA and IA.

About the Public Information Centre

Join us to learn about and provide feedback on:

- The Community Access Road's history and updates since the ToR and latest virtual meetings;
- Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and Interests;
- The EA / IA Indigenous Knowledge Program and Community Coordinator Program;
- The EA processes, study areas and schedules, including Project phases and milestones;
- · Approach to consultation and engagement;
- How we're assessing impacts and comparing route alternatives; and
- Preliminary results of field studies, and information on upcoming field studies.

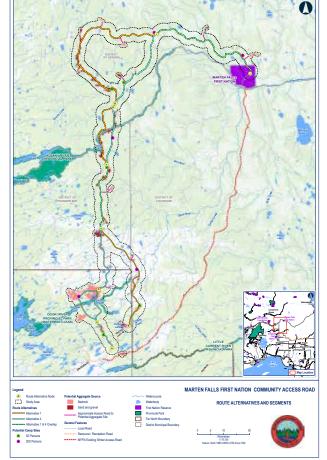
Information panels will be available for review, along with maps, fact sheets, including information on the Indigenous Knowledge and Community Coordinator Programs, and feedback forms. Project Team members will be available to answer questions and receive comments.

If you cannot make the in-person session, you can find the information posted on our website (www.martenfallsaccessroad.ca). Public Information Centres are wheelchair accessible; contact us if you require other accessibility accommodations.

Contact

For information on the EA / IA process and progress related to this Project, please visit https://www.martenfallsaccessroad.ca

If you are unable to attend the event, or have any comments or questions regarding the Project, you are welcome to contact the Project Team at any time during the process at 1-800-764-9114 or info@martenfallsaccessroad.ca



When and Where?

Monday, June 27, 2022

Victoria Inn Hotel and Convention Centre Room: Regency A 555 Arthur Street West, Thunder Bay, Ontario 5:00* – 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, June 29, 2022

Geraldton Community Centre 200 Wardrope Avenue, Geraldton, Ontario 4:00* – 7:00 p.m.

*Indigenous community citizens are invited to join for the first hour of each meeting and the public is invited to join beginning one hour following.

Light refreshments will be served.

Thank you for your participation

Personal information submitted (e.g., name, address and phone number) is collected, maintained and disclosed under the authority of the *Environmental Assessment Act* and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* for transparency and consultation purposes. Personal information you submit will become part of a public record that is available to the general public, unless you request your personal information remain confidential.



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The Great Northern Ontario Roadshow is a production of Science North, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada

Arts and Entertainment



submitted photo

The Indigenous Youth Residency Program artists were celebrated during an exhibition of their artwork on June 9 at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

Maawandoonan Mino Bimaadiziwin features work by six young artists

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The artwork of six young Indigenous artists featured in the Maawandoonan// Mino Bimaadiziwin: In our hearts we walk the good life together exhibition was celebrated on June 9 at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery. The artists, Cornelius Beaver, Daanis Pelletier, Jada Ferris, Jesslyn Friday, Kennedy Hardy and Lily Moses, had recently completed the Indigenous Youth Residency Program's paid artist residency program from May 6-June 7. which featured a five-day trip to Manitou Rapids to learn about

the sturgeon. "During this five-week fulltime program, we also took a five-day camping trip to Manitou Rapids for the sturgeon run," says Quill Christie-Peters, creator of the Indigenous Youth Residency Program. "A big chimiigwech to Al Hunter for being our teacher and guide during our time in Manitou Rapids and really for providing such a generous way of teaching us all when we were there. The trip truly felt like a dream and it was just a beautiful complement to all of our discussions.

Christie-Peters says the Indigenous Youth Residency Program centres Anishinabek relationships to art making.

"This means we focus a lot on the process and not just the product of art making and that we treat relationship building as part of the artistic practice itself," Christie-Peters says. "We reject the compartmentalization of our art from life and our body from homeland, instead looking at how all these things intersect with one another. So our art is our life and our bodies cannot be separated from our homelands."

Beaver, a Nibinamik citizen, says the Indigenous Youth Residency Program was "really impactful."

"I've really built relationships that filled my heart up..."

– Cornelius Beaver

"I've really built relationships that filled my heart up and it's given me the energy to move forward in life," Beaver says. "It was really good seeing everyone's artistic practice and just how they make art was a really good experience, and it was an honour to witness that. I'm just grateful for having these relationships I've built over the past month."

Pelletier, a Fort William citizen, says it was an honour to be part of the Indigenous Youth Residency Program and to meet other Indigenous youth she could relate to in numerous

"It was just a wonderful and great experience and I'm glad to have learned so much from it and be able to create many relationships that I feel like are lifelong," Pelletier says. "My (art) piece was in honour of one of my friends and it connected to our culture and our relationship with each other, our identity and history. It's basically what it is like to be two young Indigenous women in today's society."

Ferris, a Constance Lake citizen, says the Indigenous Youth Residency Program was a "really good experience."

"We learned a lot about colonialism and how it affects us," Ferris says. "I learned a lot from (the other youth) and other people we met — everyone had a lot to bring to the program and I feel like I've grown from them and I've grown with them."

Moses, a Biigtigong Nishnaabeg citizen, says it was a "huge honour" to be a part of the Indigenous Youth Residency Program.

"I've made so many connections and it's a really beautiful thing to meet other Indigenous people who have similar interests," Moses says. "Hopefully we'll be able to take these connections we've made and use them in the future."

Moses says her artwork, The Moon Rises, is still incomplete.

"It's about my own personal relationship from self to other beings, such as land, our ancestors, people around us and our family," Moses says.

Moses adds that the youth had the opportunity to attend a full moon ceremony while on their trip to Manitou Rapids and to witness the lunar eclipse.

Culture



Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum (TOP), centre right, dances. The Gathering of the People Powwow featured dancers of all ages at Evergreen Park in Thunder Bay.

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News











Nishnawbe Aski Legal Services Corporation

Federal Indian Day School Assistance

Are you from a NAN First Nations community? Do you have questions about the Indian Day School Settlement form? Do you need Legal Assistance in submitting your claim?

If you need legal assistance with your Federal Indian Day School Claims Form, contact Nishnawbe Aski **Legal Services Corporation Staff:**

Megan Wood Staff Lawyer

Thunder Bay Office Phone: 1-807-622-1413 Direct: 807-627-8083 Toll Free: 1-800-465-5582 Email: mwood@nanlegal.on.ca

Cheryl Suggashie

Public Legal Education & **Communications Coordinator**

Thunder Bay Office Cell: (807) 620-9253

Email: csuggashie@nanlegal.on.ca *Who can assist in Direction and Resources

Adam Mack

Public Legal Education

Timmins Office Cell: (705) 262-3389

Email: amack@nanlegal.on.ca

*Who can assist in Direction and Resources

Mental Health Support and additional helpful resources

With the recent and on going discoveries of the unmarked graves across the country, and even when you are filling out your "Indian Day School" application form, please know that talking or thinking about painful past experiences can trigger intense thoughts, and or feelings. It really helps to talk to a trusted person, such as a friend, family member or an Elder. In some cases you may not be aware of your own Trauma, and it can resurface. Triggers can happen at anytime time. If your feeling overwhelmed, anxious and or upset, please reach out to someone immediately. Take time out, practice self care, especially through these trying times.

Please see below for free available Mental Health Resources:

Argyle Community Support Program (For Indian Day Schools only)

One-on-one support by a trauma informed Claims Assistant

for help completing the Claims Form

Phone: 1-877-515-7525

Monday through Friday 8am - 9pm Eastern (Interpretation services provided upon request) Email: idscommunitysupport@argylepr.com

https://indiandayschools.com/en/support/community-support-

program/

Talk 4 Healing: Talk, Text, Chat

Services in Ojibway, Oji-Cree, Cree, English, French 24/7 culturally sensitive counselling, advice, and support to Indigenous women.

Toll Free: 1-855-554-4325 www.talk4healing.com

Hope for Wellness Help Line

24/7 Services in English, Cree, Ojibway, Inuktitut, French Toll Free 1-855-242-3310

www.hopeforwellness.ca with Chat Feature

NAN Hope

Toll Free 1-844-626-4673 Text: 1-844-626-4673

www.nanhope.ca with Chat Feature

24-hour Residential School Crises Line

For immediate emotional assistance

Toll Free: 1-866-925-4419

Access Health Support Services & more information

Toll Free: 1-888-301-6426 www.healthcanada.ge.ca/irs

Indian Residential Schools Survivors and Family

Toll Free: 1-800-721-0066

www.irsss.ca

Native Women's Association of Canada

In-house elders offering support, Monday to Friday 9-11am and

1-3 p.m. Eastern Time Toll Free: 1-888-664-7808

www.nwac.ca

MMIW Crisis Line

24/7 support to family, friends and community citizens impacted by the loss of a missing or murdered Indigenous woman, girl, or Two-spirit person

Toll Free: 1-844-413-6649 https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/



Toll Free: 1-800-465-5581 Phone: (807) 622-1413 Fax: (807) 622-3024

Email: info@nanlegal.on.ca Website: www.nanlegal.on.ca

Please stay tuned for our future "Virtual Gathering" as we will be discussing; Indian Day Schools, mental health topics, and the discoveries of the unmarked graves. More information to follow!

For more information and or assistance on "Indian Day School Settlement" claims form, with Nishnawbe Aski Legal

Services Corporation, please visit our website:

https://nanlegal.on.ca/federal-indian-day-school-class-

action/

Culture



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A men's traditional dancer dances his style during the Gathering of the People Powwow, held at Evergreen Park in Thunder Bay.

Gathering Of People Powwow back after two year hiatus

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum highlighted the importance of holding gatherings again after two years of the COVID-19 pandemic during the Gathering of the People Powwow in Thunder Bay

"It's always such a wonderful thing to see people gathering like this," Achneepineskum says. "Even when it's raining people will still come out but it's always much better when the weather is good. This is a great gathering ... and especially coming out of a pandemic, for people to gather like this, to have these opportunities it's a very good thing."

ties, it's a very good thing."
Achneepineskum says it was good to see all the vendors at the powwow, which was held at Evergreen Park with warmups on May 27 and grand entries and dancing on May 28-29 and a feast on May 28.

"There's more and more vendors that come out to these gatherings and I think we need to do our best to support them," Achneepineskum says.

Roberta Mattinas, one of the powwow organizers and a Constance Lake citizen, says they did a special on May 27 for the 215 potential burial sites discovered a year earlier at a former residential school in Kamloops, B C

"(The powwow) is going good so far despite the

weather," Mattinas says on May 28. "It's just to get the people to come together. Because of COVID-19, we need to get people to come out and dance and get together."

Randy White, one of the Whitefish Bay Singers, says the powwow was good, noting that the powwow was "a little bit rainy" on May 28.

"It's a lot drier today and a lot more people, for sure," White says on May 29.

White also noted the importance of the initiation ceremony that was held at the powwow for new dancers to begin their path on the powwow trail.

"We sang for them to come in," White says. "It's always important for people to come into the circle and be a part of the culture and be part of the powwow. It's a good time, it's good for them."

White says the Whitefish Bay Singers began in the late 1960s as a way for youth to hold onto their culture and traditions from the community.

"That was actually requested by the Elders back then to start bringing the young people to start drumming again as a way of holding onto our culture and songs, our language," White says. "So that was a big part of why the Whitefish Bay drum came to be, was to hold onto our traditions."

White also noted the importance of getting back on the powwow trail again after the nandemic

"A lot of our people really wanted to have that connection again with people, with the drum beat," White says. "It's so important for emotional and mental wellness to get back in touch with that."

Rebecca Sutherland, a Constance Lake citizen who helped gather donations for the powwow, says people were still attending the powwow despite the rainy weather on May 28.

"People are still coming out and enjoying the powwow," Sutherland says on May 28. "I see people are clapping and smiling and talking with one another, and I'm glad they're enjoying themselves."

Biigtigong Nishnaabeg Elder Diane Michano-Richmond says the powwow's location at Evergreen Park was "beautiful."

"It's nice to see all the people here dancing in this early powwow," Michano-Richmond says. "I'm looking forward to meeting all of our families with the powwows coming up."

Janine Desmoulin, emcee at the powwow and Biigtigong Nishnaabeg citizen, says the powwow looked "gorgeous" with the drier weather on May

"Our grand entry was beautifully attended," Desmoulin says. "It's looking gorgeous with our newfound weather today, it's beautiful happenings, there's over 100 people excluding our vendors and all those who are set up and our dancing is going beautifully."



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We proclaim July 3-9, 2022, Family Well-Being Week to honour families, celebrate all people and creation. Celebrating family is one way we can come together to strengthen family bonds and build healthy relationships creating harmony and healing to build a better future.



Booshoo Wacheya Aaniin,

Today I bring you greetings from our Nishnawbe Aski Nation offices and the Social Services Department.

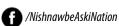
In May, we hosted the NAN Spring Chiefs Assembly. It was great to gather again and listen to leadership express their concerns. We will ensure to work effectively and advocate on behalf of our NAN citizens in the direction the Chiefs in Assembly provided.

I am also pleased to announce the National Assembly of Remote Communities (NARC) had its first Symposium. From May 31 to June 2, 2022, Allied leadership from remote communities gathered in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. NAN Co-hosted with the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) First Vice Chief David Pratt and his team.

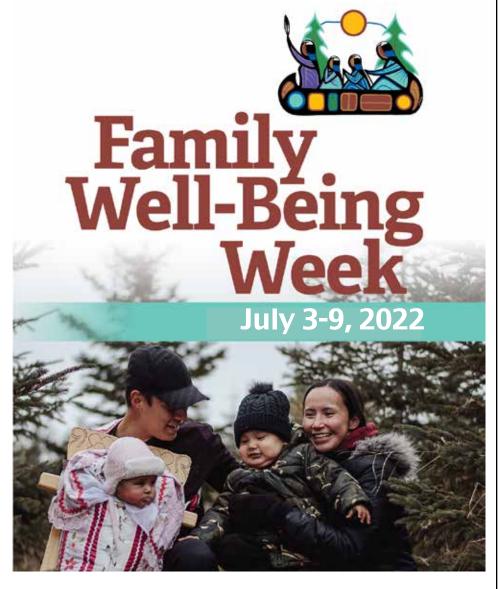
The Symposium provided an opportunity for the National Assembly of Remote Communities to launch its first Assembly formally. NAN Chiefs Committee on Children Youth and Families joined with counterparts from northern Indigenous communities across Canada to celebrate the creation of a collective voice – the National Assembly of Remote Communities. Leadership celebrated along with elders, leaders from women and youth councils, and representatives of Indigenous child welfare agencies and the Government of Canada. In the inaugural Symposium, attendees shared and discussed their journeys of living in a remote community and the costs of living in a remote community. Though we have completed much work, there is still much to do around remoteness, and we will continue to work with our NAN communities to ensure our remote issues and concerns are heard.

Wishing you all the best and continue to be safe and take care. Meegwetch.

Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse













Wachay from the Social Services Department,

The changing of the seasons helps to remind us that even in times of tremendous hardships and endings, there is growth, warmth and light. For over two years, we have all been challenged by the pandemic and each and every one of us has been impacted emotionally and physically. We are coming through this time forever changed in some manner. But we are coming through.

Our Department continues to support and advocate for our NAN communities and our dedicated staff work tirelessly to ensure needs can be met and voices are being heard. We are grateful not only for this, but for all of you, as you are our motivation and the driving force behind all of the work that we do.

In January 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found Canada guilty of racially discriminating against First Nations children by insufficiently funding child and family services located on reserve. Through intervenor status, NAN was instrumental in the negotiation and signing of the Agreement-In-Principle (AIP) on December 31, 2021. NAN is now involved in the current task of negotiating a Final Settlement Agreement, and this is to ensure the unique needs of our remote communities are addressed. This is expected to be concluded by November 20, 2022, and will be a binding agreement.

While negotiations continue, provisions of the AIP are being implemented: Capital Funding Process, First Nations Representative Service (formerly Band Representative Services), Post-Majority Care Services, Prevention Funding Allocation. As well, Choose Life funding will continue with a commitment to a "back to basics approach" and training/education at the government level.

Another new development coming out of AIP negotiations is the remoteness challenges that are shared across Canada. This has resulted in the establishment of the National Assembly of Remote Communities (NARC). NARC will allow for a unified voice at the national level and will represent an advocacy voice across all sectors.

Taking into account the dynamics of the work involved, we are excited that our Department is growing!

If there is anything I can assist with, or if you have any questions, please reach out to me at **rquachegan@nan.ca** or to Aurora Smith, Social Services Policy Analyst at **asmith@nan.ca**.

Stay safe and be well.

Robin Quachegan

Director of Social Services

Boozhoo, Aaniin, Wacheya,

I would like to start by acknowledging and commending the Family Well-Being Program (FWBp) Community Coordinators for their dedication, passion, endless hours of ongoing support and resources they provide to families. Having to be extremely creative thinking of ways how to support families across Turtle Island during the pandemic. Coordinators have played a vital role providing essential COVID-19 resources, delivering food and supporting the wellbeing of all our relations.

Moving into another year of the pandemic has reduced our ability to gather in person that has been overwhelming and extremely challenging. Communities have shown their resilience by thinking of new ways of offering activities and programs such as radio shows, virtual events and, online activities. This shows the commitment and willingness to overcome these difficult times we are facing. Please contact your local Family Well-Being Program Coordinator to inquire about programs and activities during Family Well-Being Week.

Here are some activities the FWBp Community Coordinators have done to host Family Well-Being Week:

- Fishing Derby
- Baseball Tournament
- Volleyball Tournament
- Land-Based Camping for Families and Youth
- Picking & Harvesting Medicines
- Community Cookout
- Preparing & Cooking Traditional Food
- Gospel Jamboree
- Karaoke Contest
- Family Scavenger Hunt
- Social Media Games and Contests
- Family Radio Show
- Family Photo Contest
- Beach Day

As we move forward and continue to find new ways of supporting each other and start gathering again that we be mindful for the safety of ourselves and families. Continue to follow COVID-19 safety measures, community protocols and follow the direction of our leaders. The more we empower and encourage one another the more we become united and stronger together. We hope to be able to travel soon across Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) territory and see each other in person. May the Creator continue to watch over our families and communities.

Miigwech & God Bless!

Sheila Marcinyshyn Family Well-Being Program Manager

For more information please contact: Sheila Marcinyshyn, **smarcinyshyn@nan.ca** Direct Line: **807-625-4694** or 807-707-1840



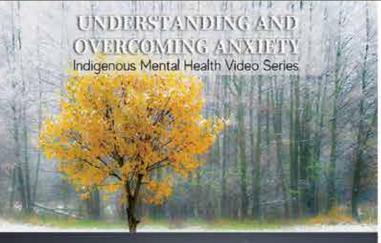


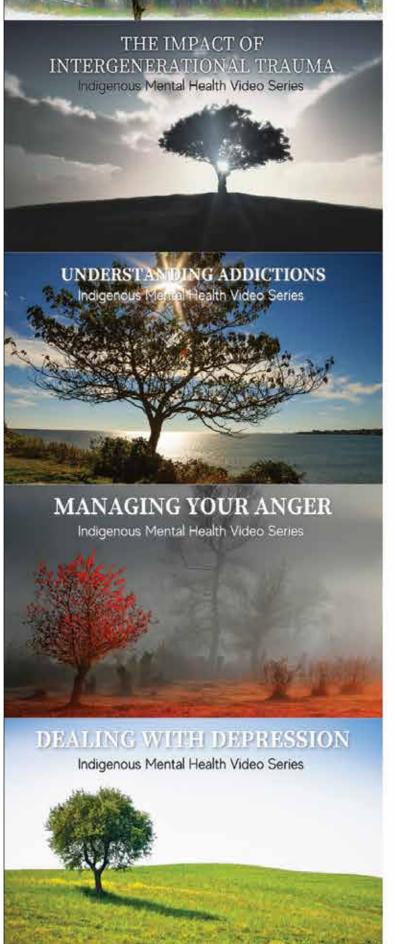


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Indigenous Mental Health Video Series

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About the Series

presented by Jasmine Peterson

The Indigenous Mental Health Video Series was designed to provide additional support for Indigenous people who have difficulty accessing mental health services due to pandemic-related travel restrictions, infrastructure limitations (i.e., poor telephone/internet connections), etc.

This video series discusses the impact of intergenerational trauma on Indigenous people and communities and how this has contributed to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, addictions, and anger. This series provides important education and practical coping strategies, presented in a friendly, conversational manner by Jasmine Peterson.

Jasmine Peterson is a mental health professional of Indigenous descent. She has worked extensively with Indigenous clients over the past seven years at our clinic and in remote Indigenous communities. Jasmine works with children, teens, and adults, providing psychological assessments and counselling/psychotherapy.





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SLFNHA opens new office in Thunder Bay

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) has opened a new satellite office in Thunder Bay to serve the expanding needs of the SLFNHA communities and its growing staff. The new office is located at 981 Balmoral St.. Suite 200, at the corner of Balmoral and William Sts. across from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

"We're still not fully operational on that — we're expecting about 48 staff to be there and we're up to about 32 now,' says James Morris, CEO and president at SLFNHA. "The reason we did that is we're running out of space in Sioux Lookout, and it also opens up the doors for us to have a bigger pool of employees to hire because it's really hard for some people to move to Sioux Lookout."

Morris says SLFNHA serves more than 40,000 people in 33 First Nations communities, both on and off-reserve, across northwestern Ontario.

"Many people from these communities find themselves needing medical services in urban settings like Thunder Bay," Morris says. "Having an office here in Thunder Bay will help with patient navigation, facilitate relationships with local stakeholders, and address the growing staffing needs of SLFNHA."

Morris says there are many citizens from SLFNHA commu-

nities who live in Thunder Bay. "And some of them have



James Morris, SLFNHA CEO and president, and Howard Meshake, acting SLFNHA board chair, presented Fort William Chief Peter Collins with a framed gift during the opening of SLFNHA's new satellite office in Thunder Bay as Jeannie Carpenter looks on.

already asked me now that we have an office here can they work for us and I said sure, Morris says. "So that was a good sign for me."

SLFNHA community citizens have made about 5,100 visits to Thunder Bay since April 2021, including about 800 this past

The SLFNHA board was advised in a 2021 report by former public health physician Dr. John Guilfoyle, who has since retired, that a presence in Thunder Bay would address the growing needs of SLFNHA community citizens in urban

SLFNHA currently employs about 500 staff, and its current offices in Sioux Lookout are still fully functional.

SLFNHA was established in March 1990 for health service delivery and client advocacy after Nishnawbe Aski Nation

(NAN) endorsed the implementation of the appointment of a First Nations health authority that would develop health policy for the Sioux Lookout region and control and administer health services centrally.

Scott-McKay-Bain The Health Panel - From Here to

There: Steps Along the Way report, which was presented to the NAN general assembly in March 1989, recommended a move towards Native self-government with the full participation of First Nations communities for the ongoing responsibility of health care.



Donna Galbreath, senior medical director of Quality Assurance, Southcentral Foundation in Alaska, speaks about the Nuka System of Care during her presentation on the first day of the Sioux Lookout First



Lana Ray, associate professor and research chair in Decolonial Futures, Indigenous Learning at Lakehead University, speaks about treating the underlying issues related to her autoimmune disorder during her

VHA Health Summit focuses on changing the landscape of First Nations health care

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The importance of changing the focus of First Nations health care was highlighted on the first day of the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) Health Summit -Kanawenimitisoowin: Looking after ourselves in our own way. The Health Summit was held June 7-9 at the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay.

"On May 12, 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I brought my wife (Jeannie Carpenter) home at the advice of the medical professionals that she would be safer at home," savs Howard Meshake, acting SLFNHA board chair, "At that time she was very broken, mentally, physically and spiritually. If nurses and doctors come up

to her today and see her, they'll say how beautiful she looks, how vibrant she looks and how healthy she looks since I brought her home. That goes to show how bringing our people home makes a difference. which plays into health transformation — we as First Nations people for years have been telling the medical profession we want our loved ones home."

Lana Ray, associate professor and research chair in Decolonial Futures, Indigenous Learning at Lakehead University, says she has been dealing with some of the underlying issues related to her autoimmune disorder after discontinuing the medication she had been taking for the disorder.

"Instead of dealing with what I understood to now be the symptom, which that medication was doing for the past 15 years, I started to deal with some of the underlying issues of that and learned more about what those underlying issues were from my new healthcare team," Ray says, noting that took different medicines to clean her blood and went on an anti-inflammatory diet that included eating wild meat. "I had work that I have to do for myself that I am still doing related to childhood grief and trauma — I was told that was a big part of my condition as

Ray says she also began working on the advice of a traditional healer around meditation and rethinking her lifestyle in terms of the pace she worked

"I was given directions in terms of reparations for the land as well," Ray says. "My health transformation process is ongoing but I've seen some improvements within my health. I've had a significant weight loss as well and just am trying to live mino-bimaadiziwin as well."

Donna Galbreath, senior medical director of Quality Assurance, Southcentral Foundation in Alaska, says the Nuka System of Care, a relationship-based, customerowned approach to transforming health care, improving outcomes and reducing costs, is owned and operated by Native people in Alaska.

"We changed the entire health care system so that it was based on Alaska Native and American Indian culture and values," Galbreath says, noting that they only serve Alaska Native American Indian people. "We took the best of other things — the medical system has lots of things that are good in health care, but how health care is delivered, we changed that. Because of that we were able to improve the health outcomes for the people that we serve. We call the people we serve customer-owners because we believe they are customers and we believe that they own their health care system because we paid for our health care system through land and resources so it belongs to us."

Galbreath says the health care system is based on what people told them they wanted in their health care system.

'We continue to ask individuals in the community how we can improve, what needs to change, if anything needs

to change, what we are doing well," Galbreath says. "So it's constant input, it's constant back-and-forth as we tweak the system. The general form is there — people said they wanted to see their provider when they wanted to see their provider, so if they wanted to see somebody today, they can see their provider today, not any provider but their provider."

Galbreath says they created a system based on cultural values with underpinnings of relation-

ship.
"We want to make certain that each individual knows who their provider is and their provider knows them," Galbreath savs. "If you have a relationship, then you have trust and if you have trust, then the individual can be involved in their own

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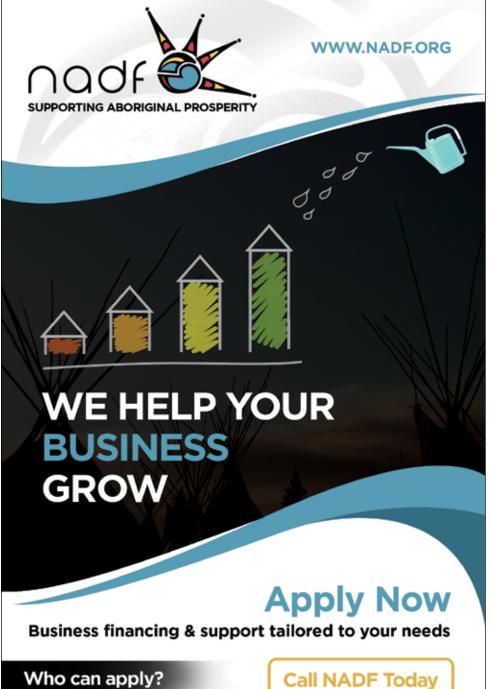
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Rick Garrick/Wawatav News

Kiiwetinoong MPP Sol Mamakwa speaks about the need for change in health care on the second day of Nishnawbe Aski Nation Health Transformation lead Alvin Fiddler speaks about the Health Transformation the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority Health Summit, held June 7-9 at the Valhalla Inn in Thun-



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

MPP Mamakwa advocates for change at SLFNHA Health Summit

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Kiiwetinoong MPP Sol Mamakwa and Health Transformation lead Alvin Fiddler emphasized the need for change on the second day of the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) Health Summit - Kanawenimitisoowin: Looking after ourselves in our own way. The Health Summit was held June 7-9 at the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay.

'Two weeks ago I got talking to this young mother ... and she started showing me pictures of her son, two to three-years-old," Mamakwa says. "His body was just covered in scabs.'

Mamakwa says the mother told him that her son's skin condition improved when she was using bottled water to bathe him.

"She told me she can't afford any more bottled water to bathe him," Mamakwa says, noting that her community does not have clean drinking water. "When we talk about social determinants of health, that's the way the system treats people, that's the way the system is designed. The system is not broken, the system is working exactly the way it is designed to, which is to take away the rights of our people to the lands and resources that we have up

Mamakwa says an older man also spoke to him about missing his grandchildren and family while undergoing dialysis away from home.

"You know what he did, he just (gave up) his treatment and went home, and he died," Mamakwa says. "That's how oppression works, that's how colonialism works.'

Mamakwa says there are 14 boil water advisories in the Kiiwetinoong riding, noting that Neskantaga will reach its 10,000th day on a boil water advisory later this month.

"There is no way that would be allowed in Thunder Bay, there is no way that would be allowed in Toronto," Mamakwa says. "So that's how oppression works."

Mamakwa says there are some opportunities to make change, such as focusing on specific areas such as youth

and adolescent mental health to address the suicide issue and eliminating chronic diseases such as diabetes

"That's health transformation," Mamakwa says. "So it's really important that we work together on these issues."

Fiddler says Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) has been looking at how it could do the Health Transformation process better in light of changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We've talked about the approaches that we can take in light of some of the changes we have seen over the course of the last two-and-a-half years," Fiddler says. "We've sort of arrived at a three pathway approach, one is immediate needs. There is no question that we cannot just do away with the day-today challenges that we need to address when our families are in emergency right now. We need to commit ourselves to working with those individuals and those families and communities to address whatever needs they may have."

Fiddler says the second part is transforming the health care system.

"This is where we all need to come together and work together," Fiddler says. "NAN will not do all the work. The work that you are doing whether it's at the SLFNHA level, at the community level or the tribal council level and the work that we are doing at NAN, they need to be part of one big sort of comprehensive

effort working towards a common goal of truly transforming health care for our communi-

Fiddler says the Elders' teachings and guidance has been important during the Health Transformation process.

They are the ones that remind us of what Health Transformation really is, which is reclaiming our own systems that were there before," Fiddler says "That is who we were and that's what we need to go back to. So that's sort of the pathways we are looking at moving forward that would help guide our work day-to-day."



Health Summit highlights need for hospitals without borders

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) CEO and president James Morris highlighted the need for hospitals without borders on the final day of the SLFNHA Health Summit - Kanawenimitisoowin: Looking after ourselves in our own way. The Health Summit was held June 7-9 at the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay.

'When we say hospitals without borders we're not talking about building a hospital in one of the communities up north with four walls," Morris says. "It took us 20 years to build that new hospital in Sioux Lookout. If we wanted to build more hospitals we'd be doing that for the next 100 years and then there'd be maybe four or five hospitals up north. We need something now — one concept is to figuratively take a hospital apart that exists here, take the parts that we can use in our communities and take them there.

Morris says his 89-year-old mother had to travel from Sioux Lookout to Thunder Bay occasionally to get her pacemaker checked out, a procedure that took about 10 minutes the time he went with her for her appointment at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences

"What my mother came all the way here (Thunder Bay) to do is called diagnostics," Morris says. "That can be done, that takes buying the equipment which probably doesn't cost that much and then training somebody in our communities to do that."

Morris says they can also train more people to help people with alcohol and drug abuse.

"Right now some communities only have one NNADAP (National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program) worker," Morris says. "We can get more of those (NNADAP workers) to work with our own people so they don't end up getting flown to Thunder Bay to go to detox."

Morris says they had a session this past February to see how community health directors and other community people would like to see hospital services in the communities.

"That's when we began the concept of looking at whether something like that would be possible," Morris says. "It's all about dealing with new ways of doing things. Mii Nwah Chi Keh Win — we need to change and take new approaches. So once again we are talking about change and we have to remind people not to be afraid of change. You're not going to lose what you have now, not until something new has proven itself that it's going to work."

Morris says they need to change the mindset of the people they serve so they look at

given to you," Morris says. "Let's

Morris says they also need to do something about nurses in the communities.

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority CEO and president James Morris, posing with former grand chief Alvin Fiddler and Kiiwetinoong MPP Sol Mamakwa, spoke about the need for hospitals without borders in the communities on the final day of the SLFNHA Health Summit, held June 7-9 in Thunder Bay. "Our lifeline of always depending on outsiders to come and be our nurses is going to get threatened," Morris says. "COVID-19 threatened that

"Don't just accept what's

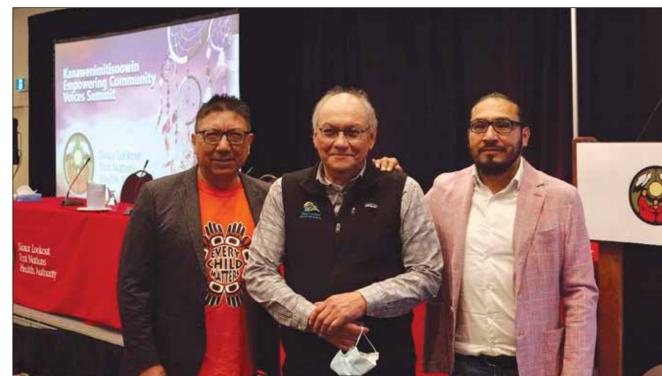
things differently. lifeline, same with doctors. We have to start getting our own nurses and our own docfind out how we can do better." tors, not just talk about it but actually do it. Let's start finding young people in our communities, in our schools, boys

and girls who love mathematics, who love science, who love any kind of earth-based studies and start moving them towards studying to be doctors and

Morris says he was pleased with the way the summit turned out, noting that they were able to explain to the participants what SLFNHA needs to do to move forward to begin the process of taking over their own health services designed by Native people.

'People have been talking about that for a long time about taking control of our health services but instead of talking now we need to start taking action and actually taking over these services and running them the way we want to based on what our people need," Mor-

ris says. "We're not going to build hospitals up north, we're just going to develop hospitaltype services that we can use in the communities. Instead of sending people hundreds of miles away every time they need something, we want to try to (provide) it closer to home. Let's do it there rather than sending people to Thunder Bay or Winnipeg.'



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McIntyre water walk held in Thunder Bay

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The For Love of the Rivers 2.0 Water Walk 2022 2nd Water Walk Ceremony was held from 280 Hazelwood Dr. along the McIntyre River to Lake Superior on June 12 in Thunder Bay.

"It's a ceremony for the water to bring healing to the water," says Sheila DeCorte, a water walker from Fort William. "It's something that was started many years ago by the late (Water Walker) Josephine Mandamin and it's a commitment that we made to her as walkers to continue her work that she started."

DeCorte says this was the second of four water walks planned for this year, with the first held along the McVicar Creek in May, the third planned along the Neebing River in July and the fourth planned along the Kaministiquia River for two days in August.

"After joining the late Nokomis Josephine Mandamin in her last water walk from Spirit Mountain to Matane, Quebec in the spring of 2017, I was inspired when I came back to do something for the rivers here in Thunder Bay," DeCorte says. "I really felt the rivers were hurting because of all the losses with our First Nations youth coming from remote communities to go to high school here over a period of years. So I had that little whisper, I needed to do something for the rivers, and then I had the vision to

bring water down from Loch Lomond."

DeCorte says they originally began the For Love of the Rivers Water Walk in 2018 by bringing water down from Loch Lomond and adding it to the rivers through the ceremony of water walks.

"Over the four-year period we did the four directions, so we did Loch Lomond the first year which was from the south," DeCorte says. "Then we went to the west and picked up water from Kakabeka, and then in the north from Current River. Last year we completed that water commitment by picking up water in the McKenzie River."

DeCorte says this year's four water walks is the first of a fouryear commitment to do those water walks for four years.

"We have to continue doing this so that we can have safe drinking water for not only our generation but future generations to come," DeCorte says.

DeCorte says the McIntyre River water walk was very beautiful and very powerful.

"You've got not only the birds singing, but you've got the river singing to you and talking to you as we walk and pray," DeCorte says. "Every step is a prayer when we're carrying the water."

Sharon Manitowabi, a water walker from Thunder Bay, says the water walk is a relationship with the water, understanding that water is life.

"It's a living being, it has feel-



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Fort William's Sheila DeCorte and another water walker walk along the McIntyre River next to the Thunder Centre during the For Love of the Rivers 2.0 Water Walk 2022 2nd Water Walk Ceremony on June 12 in Thunder Bay.

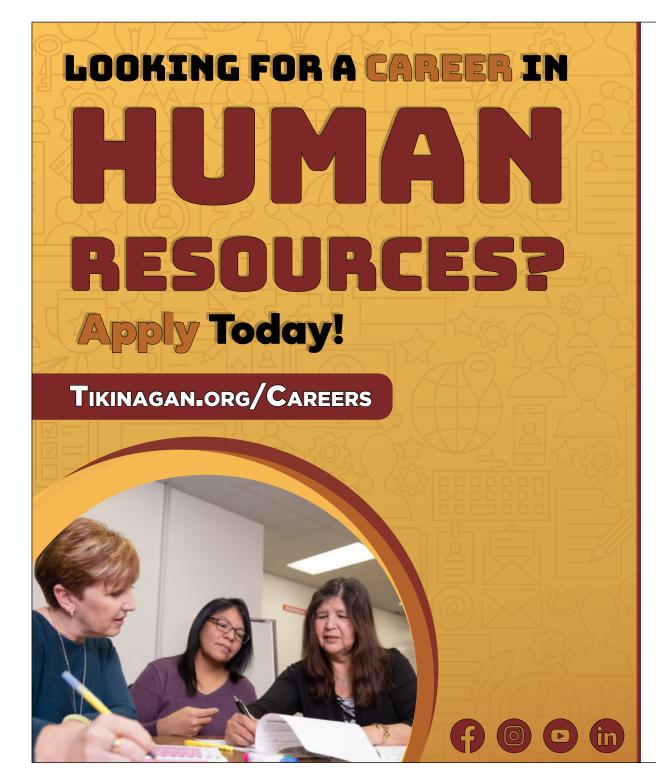
ings, it acknowledges us and the work that we do with it," Manitowabi says. "As Anishinabe women we have a responsibility to look after the water."

Manitowabi says the walkers cannot stop with the pail of water during the water walk because the water keeps moving.

"The McVicar Creek was a good walk — the water was very high at that time and the fish were spawning, so it was a nice treat to be at the mouth and watch those fish," Manitowabi says. "It felt to me that the water was excited and glad that we were acknowledging it."

Manitowabi says the water walkers use a relay to carry the water

"Each individual is not responsible for carrying the water the whole distance," Manitowabi says. "We share that responsibility and hand the water off and the staff off to the next group of walkers. We encourage other women to come out and join us. This is a four-year commitment so the walks will go on for another three years after this, and we'd really like to get the women out to learn about their responsibilities of the water."





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Treaty #3 Youth Council doubles its numbers

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Grand Council Treaty #3's Oshkiniigiig Youth Executive Council (YEC) was expanded from four to eight youth this past November to better represent youth voices across Treaty #3's 26 communities and about 25,000 citizens.

'The Treaty #3 Youth Executive Council has been around for a few years now," says Winter Lipscombe, a YEC youth representative from Wauzhushk Onigum whose term runs from September 2019-September 2023. "Every three-to-four years there is a traditional selection process that is held within a community in Treaty #3 where the youth will gather and select four new (youth representatives) to represent them. We also selected four junior proxies in November 2021, and that was because there was an increased demand for youth involvement in engagement sessions and in advocacy efforts."

Kayla Morrison, a YEC youth representative from Onigaming whose term runs from September 2019-September 2023, says the youth proxies fill in for the youth representatives when they are not able to attend a meeting or event.

"It's been going good," Morrison says. "We just had one proxy host a webinar this past week. They've been pretty active and busy.'

Lipscombe says the YEC participates in events and meet-



Oshkiniigiig Youth Executive Council youth representatives Kayla Morrison, Winter Lipscombe and Ernie Cobiness Jr. and youth proxy Liam George met with Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh and Treaty #3 staff.

ings at Grand Council Treaty #3 but they are also invited to attend regional and national events through the Ontario First Nations Young Peoples Council and the Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council.

"I think it's a rollercoaster some days," Lipscombe says. "There are days where you feel like you're making progress and you're seeing good changes happen but then there's other days where it's a challenge and you feel like your voice isn't being heard. Over the last three years though I've seen the incremental changes we've been able to make."

Lipscombe says the YEC focused on their own internal governance processes, including creating the terms of reference, creating a youth co-chair position within the Treaty #3 national assembly and being able to put forward their own resolutions, and making a point of being accountable to the

"There have been times where we've had to really think about where we want to concentrate our efforts and where we want to make a difference, realizing we only have a fouryear term and we're not able to make all the changes we want to but knowing that by strengthening our own internal governance processes we're able to leave the (YEC) in a better spot than when we found it," Lipscombe says.

Morrison says her goal at the YEC is to inspire change within the youth and the communities.

'We're surrounded by a lot of physical things that steer us in directions like alcoholism, drugs, lateral violence, nepotism," Morrison says. "There's a lot of youth that struggle that want those safe spaces and



The Oshkiniigiig Youth Executive Council met with Treaty #3 staff and Elder Terry Skead through a Zoom meeting.

that's what encouraged me to kind of jump in there and identify those issues."

Morrison says the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the YEC's ability to connect with the youth in person, noting that they had wanted to visit the youth in the Treaty #3 commu-

"Just in general, that's how Anishinabe people communicate is verbally," Morrison says. "So I felt like that was a setback for us, that we had to take it virtual, which is relatively new and a lot of the communities didn't have at the time highspeed Internet."

Morrison says the YEC has also been making toolkits for youth in transition and youth at risk through a \$249,600 Youth Innovations Stream grant over three years from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Morrison savs her experience with the YEC has been reward-

"I feel like I'll carry this experience throughout my journey," Morrison says. "On a community level, I'm able to bring this experience back and share it with my youth."





Rick Garrick/Wawatay News Fort Albany's Brent Edwards leads the Cycle for Our Forgotten Indigenous Children cyclists along Hodder Ave.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News
The Cycle for Our Forgotten Indigenous Children cyclists ride past the
Current River during their bike ride to raise awareness of hundreds of
unmarked graves across the country on June 4 in Thunder Bay.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News
The Cycle for Our Forgotten Indigenous Children cyclists pose for a
photo after completing of their bike ride.

Bike ride aims to raise awareness to unmarked grave sites

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Cycle for Our Forgotten Indigenous Children was a success with about 20 cyclists participating in the ride across Thunder Bay on June 4. The bike ride was held to raise awareness of the hundreds of unmarked grave sites across the country.

"It was amazing — I have to say kudos to everybody that came out," says Brent Edwards, one of the organizers and a Fort Albany citizen. "We're raising awareness for forgotten kids, and today they're not forgotten and we will continue to remember them each and every day."

Edwards says their route was from the Skaffs parking lot at Hodder Ave. and Strathcona Ave., along Hodder Ave., Water St., Fort William Rd., Simpson St. and Arthur St., to the Walmart parking lot on Arthur St.

"We're going to try to shoot roughly for the two hours and 15 minute mark again," Edwards says at the beginning of the bike ride. "This year has been huge with all of the support. It's just been amazing. We'll do (this bike ride) every year and we'll remember them every day."

Lucie Edwards, another organizer and Fort Albany citizen, says she and Brent initially rode their bikes across Thunder Bay last year to raise awareness of the unmarked grave sites.

"It's just to continue to raise awareness for the children who never made it home," Lucie says. "We're doing this in honour of their memory." Lucie says this year's bike ride was better because they had police escorts in front and behind the group of cyclists.

"But what happened to me just on that last stretch here, maybe 500 metres, I lost my peddle," Lucie says. "It came off so I had to walk my bike here."

Lucie says there was a good turnout for the bike ride.

"It was great to see the orange shirts, it was great to see the support, the people that were honking, the people on the side of the roads," Lucie says. "It was really great to see that because we really need thie."

Lucie says one of the cyclists who participated in the bike ride had not heard about residential schools until he heard a news report about the bike ride.

"When he heard the news

yesterday that we were talking about it, he came out and supported us," Lucie says. "So that was really great to hear that. We want to raise that awareness, this is real, it happened and it's something a lot of our people are still living through."

Margaret Edwards, one of the cyclists and a Fort Albany citizen, says the bike ride was

"I felt a lot of emotions riding through (the city) and thinking about our Indigenous people of Canada," Margaret says. "I had an awesome time (riding) with them, sometimes it was hard but I pulled through."

Jason Chapais, one of the cyclists and a Ginoogaming citizen, also enjoyed the bike ride.

"I'm just looking forward to next year and hopefully it keeps growing," Chapais says. "(Edwards) asked us to bring two people (next year) and we'll just tidal wave from there on out hopefully with more riders."

Chapais says he participated in the bike ride as a second generation survivor, as his father attended residential school and his mother attended day school.

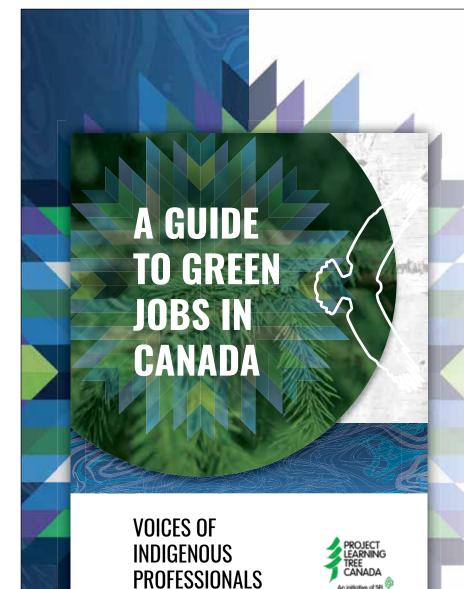
"With that I have no understanding of my Native language because she didn't want her kids to go through that trauma they went through, so she never taught us," Chapais says. "I want to ride in honour of my granny."

Chapais plans to do a Great Cycle Challenge fundraiser bike ride for children's cancer research in the Rocky Mountains in B.C. in August. People can support him through the donate button on the Great Cycle Challenge Canada web-

"For the past six years I've been doing that, fundraising and challenging myself to ride so many kilometres in one month," Chapais says. "Last year I raised \$3,000 and I rode 400 kilometres for the kids in the month of August."

Ken Shields, one of the cyclists from Thunder Bay who participated with some of his friends, says the bike ride was fantastic.

"Everybody made it, one made it on foot with a broken bicycle," Shields says. "The spirit, the people supporting as we were coming along, was fantastic. And like Brent says, bring two friends next year."



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Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Matawa First Nations Management CEO David Paul Achneepineskum recently highlighted the benefits of Matawa's Phase Two of the Rapid Lynx long-haul fibre-optic network project for Matawa's road access communities.

Matawa receives funding for new fibre infrastructure

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Matawa communities are looking forward to improved Internet connections through \$62.7 million in federal and provincial funding for Phase Two of the Rapid Lynx long-haul fibre-optic network

project.
"It's going to benefit all the road-access communities like Constance Lake, Ginoogaming, Aroland and Long Lake #58, so it's going to be great," says David Paul Achneepineskum, CEO at Matawa First Nations Management. "With this second phase we are going to be connecting Nibinamik to Wunnumin Lake. We're going to have kind of a redundancy loop. That's about 60 kilometres from Nibinamik to Wunnumin Lake, so it's going to be quite a lot of work that's going to be done (because) there's no winter road going up there. It's going to be a lot of work to clear the (route)."

The Nibinamik to Wunnumin Lake route will allow for a second connection to the Internet for redundancy and path diversity to increase network reliability and resiliency along the Rapid Lynx route.

"The significance of this project for the road access communities in Matawa cannot be overstated as they currently continue to struggle with connectivity issues," Achneepineskum says. "Matawa First Nations Management and the Matawa First Nations have worked together since 2014 to obtain support for broadband infrastructure in northern

Ontario. When completed, the Rapid Lynx network will be 100 per cent owned, governed and operated by the Matawa First Nations, allowing the First Nations to control our own digital future and provide affordable, reliable and secure high-speed connectivity for the first time to areas that only had the limited capability of shared satellite service before. Rapid Lynx will transform education, healthcare, economic development, job creation and security in the Matawa First Nations and increase prosperity and quality of life for our residents.'

Phase Two includes the deployment of 289 kilometres of fibre and optical equipment connecting Aroland and the remote First Nations to the road access First Nations communities of Ginoogaming, Long Lake 58 and Constance Lake and the provision of broadband Internet access to about 500 more First Nations premises.

Matawa began working with Magellan, a leader in providing turnkey services for building fibre and broadband networks, on Phase One of the project in 2020

"Magellan is proud to continue growing our partnership with Matawa First Nations Management," says John Honker, CEO at Magellan. "Since 2014 we have worked with (Matawa) to develop and manage their next-generation broadband infrastructure planning, and have now secured over \$130 million in total funding to bring the Rapid Lynx project to fruition. We look forward to continued success with (Matawa) on this very impor-

tant initiative."

The \$62.7 million in funding was provided by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure.

"People's lives are moving more and more online," says Thunder Bay-Superior North MP Patty Hajdu, minister of Indigenous Services and minister responsible for the Federal **Economic Development Agency** for Northern Ontario. "This is a challenge for communities in Ontario that are without access to high-speed Internet. These investments made by our government will allow for increased access to education. health care, business opportunities and social connections. Communities will have the tools to more fully participate in social programs and economic opportunities, improving the health and well-being of the region."

Kinga Surma, provincial minister of Infrastructure, says the provincial government is ensuring every community across the province has access to reliable high-speed Internet by the end of 2025

"By working together with our federal partners and Internet service providers, we are increasing access to high-speed Internet and building a stronger foundation for Ontario's economic growth and prosperity," Surma says. "We are ensuring that the agriculture sector and all families, workers and businesses have a better and brighter future. No one will be left behind."

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Rainy River First Nations and the BMI Group celebrated their Aazhogan Limited Partnership's recent acquisition the landmark toll bridge between Fort Frances and International Falls, Minnesota.

Rainy River international bridge purchased by Aazhogan Partnership

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Aazhogan Limited Partnership between Rainy River First Nations and the BMI Group celebrated their acquisition of full ownership of the landmark toll bridge between Fort Frances and International Falls, Minnesota. The acquisition of the International Bridge includes the recent purchase of the Canadian bridge assets and the purchase of the United States bridge assets in 2021.

"It's symbolic in the fact that it's reconnecting us to our former (citizens) that came from these communities that were amalgamated," says Rainy River Chief Rob McGinnis, noting that Rainy River First Nations includes seven communities that were amalgamated by the federal government in 1914. "And also it's going to be a sole source of revenue for us once the traffic gets back to normal going across the border."

McGinnis says the communities lived, fished, traded and gathered medicines from along the Rainy River for generations before there was a border, and some citizens moved south after the communities were amalgamated and now live in Minnesota.

"Now we own the bridge that crosses it on this imaginary line that is the border between Canada and the United States," McGinnis says. "People are very proud of owning that International Bridge."

McGinnis says some of the community's share of revenue from the International Bridge will help with initiatives such as the community's addictions program.

"We've definitely enhanced our addictions program and other programs as well with some of that sole source revenue," McGinnis says. "So it does help in that aspect.'

The International Bridge, which is the busiest border crossing in northwestern Ontario and a vital socio-economic linkage between Canada and the United States for visitors and commercial trade, is comprised of two side-by-side bridges, one of steel and the other of concrete, that were constructed in 1908 and 1979.

We are thrilled to be partners with Rainy River First Nations on the purchase of the bridge," says Paul Veldman, president of the BMI Group. "Like the communities, we want to ensure the bridge remains open for tourism and trade. It is one of the key components for a sustainable economy and will form part of a welcoming experience for everyone who crosses the bridge into Fort Frances and International Falls."

McGinnis says the BMI Group, which owns the former Resolute paper mill in Fort Frances, is reclaiming land from

the mill site.

"There's a demolition process and there's going to be a bunch of land there that is ideal for a number of ventures that could possibly happen," McGinnis says.

McGinnis says his community is also planning to enhance their programming at the Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Centre at the Manitou Mounds, which there with Lakehead," McGin-

was located at the centre of a continent-wide trading network and was designated as a National Historic Site of Canada in 1969.

"We've partnered with Lakehead University to develop programming there and possibly some key learning aspects that we could be doing virtually on

McGinnis says the area is also known for its fishing and hunt-

ing tourism opportunities.
"On the day of the ribbon cutting ceremony there was a four-hour lineup at the bridge crossing — there were a bunch of Americans trying to get over with their boats," McGinnis says, noting that the Interna-

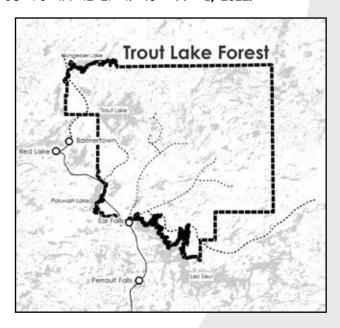
tional Bridge is one of only two privately-owned international bridges between Canada and the United States. "It is a very unique asset."

McGinnis says the Rainy River First Nations leadership team is committed to successfully executing their community's vision of self-sufficiency and self-government.

"This partnership and bridge acquisition is an exemplary model of the types of business transactions we are actively working on for 2022 and beyond," McGinnis says. "There are no limitations to what we can achieve together. I want to express my gratitude to everyone who has supported us on this journey so far."

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Renseignements en français : Derek Johnson, aménagiste forestier au DNMRNF, 807 220-4273, ou Derek.Johnson@ontario.ca.



Canadian Rangers from northern Ontario celebrate 75th anniversary



photo submitted by Master Corporal Christopher Vernon, Canadian Rangers Junior Canadian Rangers Nadia Shoomin, left, and Daniel McKay from Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug flew with the Rangers from Northern Ontario to observe the 75th anniversary in Victoria.

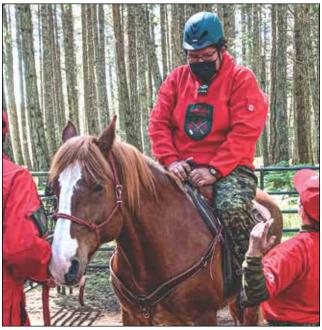


photo submitted by Warrant Officer Terry Afflick Master Corporal Leo Oskineegish of Nibinamik mounts a horse for the first time during training.

photo submitted by Lt. Conrad Olea-Ortega Ranger Conrad Kamenawatamin of Bearskin Lake learned from training with Rangers from other provinces.

Peter Moon

Special to Wawatay News

A group of seven Canadian Rangers from five First Nations from across Northern Ontario have participated in a national celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Rangers in 1947.

The four-day event attracted almost 50 Rangers, who are part-time army reservists, from across the Canadian North to Victoria to meet and train together. They practiced marine search and rescue, the use of a helicopter in loading and unloading patients and cargo, the safe use of all-terrain vehicles, and introduced them to the use of horses.

"I was excited about the horses," said Ranger Conrad Kamenawatamin of Bearskin Lake First Nation, a small and remote Oji-Cree community in Northern Ontario. "I've never been close to one before."

Like all the Ontario Rangers Master Corporal Leo Oskineegish of Nibinamik First Nation was thrilled by the horses. "It was mission accomplished," he said. "I finally got on a horse for the first time. We don't have them up North. I'd only ever seen a horse in a movie before."

The Rangers in British Columbia train with horses to help them negotiate the province's rugged terrain.

The celebratory event was held to honour the formal establishment of the Rangers 75 years ago, to commemorate their history, and pay tribute to their continued service to Canada. There are more than 5,000 Rangers in more than 200 small and remote communities across the Canadian North. Most are Indigenous and they operate in 26 Indigenous languages.

"The Rangers in Ontario are not 75 years old," said Lieutenant-Colonel Shane McArthur, the Canadian Army officer who commands 700 Rangers

in 29 First Nations across the Far North of Ontario. "Our first patrol opened in Moose Factory in 1994. But we share the history, the heritage, and the recognition awarded Rangers because no matter where they are, they all wear the same red hoodie and red ball cap and perform the same types of missions and tasks.

"Our Rangers in Ontario have held their own and have performed above and beyond, particularly during the past couple of years of Covid."

"Coming and meeting Rangers from all over Canada made me proud to wear my red Ranger sweater," Master Corporal Oskineegish said.

For most of the Rangers from Ontario the visit to British Columbia was their first.

"I'm really enjoying myself," Ranger Kamenawatamin said. "It's really beautiful out here. The mountains are nice, the views are nice, the flowers are nice. I just got off a helicopter flying around an island. I got to see some seals. I've met Rangers from other parts of Canada. I've seen how they handle tasks. I'm learning a lot."

The Rangers who represented Northern Ontario at the 75th celebration were Master Corporals Tyson Duncan of Wapekeka, Jean Rabit-Waboose of Eabametoong, and Leo Oskineegish of Nibinamik; Corporals Harriet Cutfeet from Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug and Yolanda Winter from Wapekeka; and Rangers Charlie Jacob from Webequie and Conrad Kamenawatamin from Bearskin Lake.

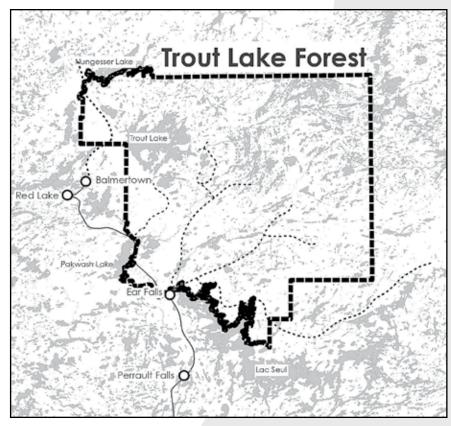
Daniel McKay and Nadia Shooman, two Junior Canadian Rangers from Kitchenuhmaykoosib, went on the trip with the Rangers.

(Sergeant Peter Moon is a Ranger with the 3rd Canadian Ranger Patrol Group at Canadian Forces Base Borden.)

INSPECTION

Inspection of Approved Aerial Herbicide Project for Trout Lake Forest

The Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF) invites you to inspect the NDMNRF-approved aerial herbicide project. As part of our ongoing efforts to regenerate and protect Ontario's forests, selected stands on the **Trout Lake Forest** (see map) will be sprayed with herbicide to control competing vegetation, starting on or about: **August 1, 2022**.



The approved project description and project plan for the aerial herbicide project is available electronically for public inspection by contacting Domtar Inc. respectively, during normal business hours and on the Natural Resources Information Portal at https://nrip.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online beginning July 2, 2022 until March 31, 2023 when the Annual Work Schedule expires.

Interested and affected persons and organizations can arrange a remote meeting with NDMNRF staff to discuss the aerial herbicide project. For more information, please contact:

Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry Red Lake District Office 227 Howey Street, P.O. Box 5003 Red Lake, ON PoV 2Mo

TROUT LAKE FOREST: Jennifer Smikalow, District Supervisor NDMNRF tel: 807-727-1327 e-mail: jennifer.smikalow@ontario.ca

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Junior Canadian Rangers' Camp Loon is back for the summer

Peter Moon

Special to Wawatay News

After being cancelled for each of the last two summers because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Camp Loon, the popular Junior Canadian Ranger camp that provides a week of advanced leadership training, will be held again this summer.

"Camp Loon is a go," said Lieutenant-Colonel Shane McArthur, the Canadian Army officer who runs the Canadian Ranger program in Northern Ontario. "We are looking at having 75 to 100 Junior Rangers at the camp with training from 18 to 22 July. We're excited it is going to happen again this summer. We are looking forward to it."

The Junior Rangers is a Canadian Army program for boys and girls aged 12 to 18 in remote and isolated communities across the Canadian North. There are more than 700 Junior Rangers in 29 First Nations across the Far North of Ontario.

The camp is held in the bush on Springwater Lake, 50 kilometers north of Geraldton. The first Camp Loon was held in 2000 at Constance Lake First Nation and later at several other First Nations before being held for the last several years near Geraldton.

This year's camp will be more austere or simple than past camps, Lt.-Col. McArthur said, and the number of Junior Rangers attending it will be less than usual. "But we're going to make sure the Junior Rangers have a great time, enjoy themselves, and learn some valuable life

skills. And, more importantly, they'll be happy that they came to the camp."

The camp provides selected Junior Rangers with a range of activities that are not normally available to them in their small communities. They include specialized instruction with air rifles, boating, mountain biking, driving all-terrain vehicles, first aid, and traditional arts and crafts. The camp emphasizes the importance of safety on the land and water and in personal lifestyles.

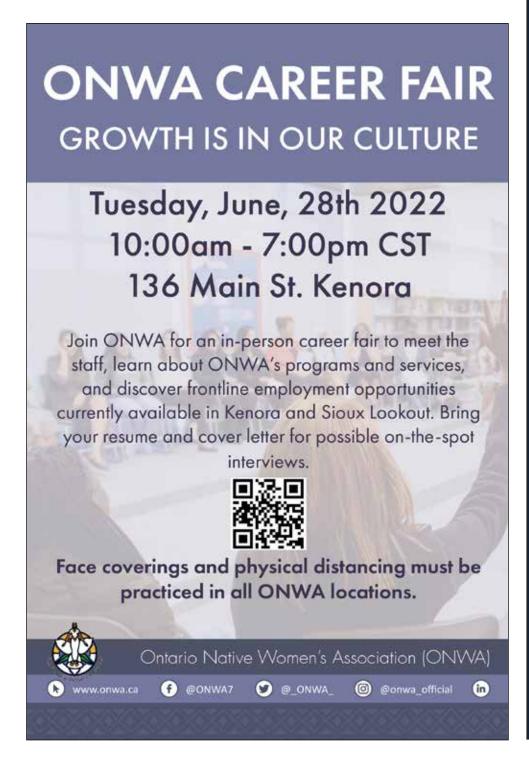
COVID forced the army to suspend Junior Ranger training in the First Nations. It recently restarted in Northern Ontario. "We are not exactly back to normal but we are trying to get back to normal training," said Lt.-Col. McArthur. "We have a huge amount of support from the chiefs. They're happy we have restarted training in their communities and that we are holding Camp Loon again this summer."

The tent camp will be run by a staff of more than 60, made up of Canadian Rangers, who are part-time army reservists, other full- and part-time military personnel, and civilian volunteers. Meals will be provided by a mobile military field kitchen.

(Sergeant Peter Moon is a Ranger with the 3rd Canadian Ranger Patrol Group at Canadian Forces Base Borden.)



Photo submitted by Sergeant Peter Moon, Canadian Rangers Junior Canadian Rangers jump into a lake to cool off on a hot day at Camp Loon in 2019.





Cartoons



could we engage in a liftle role reversal exercise before we get started. you know, to get the oljustice wheels turning









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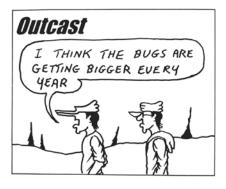
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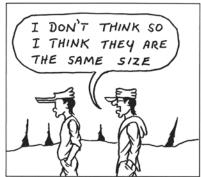
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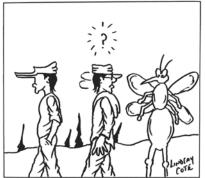




















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The staff of Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School are proud to recognize the achievements of this year's graduating class. Congratulations to the Class of 2022!

We wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

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