MMIWG walkers honoured in Thunder Bay

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

First Nation walkers Charity and Cameron West were honoured for their walk to raise awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People during a ceremony on June 23 at the Terry Fox Monument near Thunder Bay. The two B.C. walkers had also been introduced by Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum at the National Indigenous Peoples Day (NIPD) celebration on Anemki Wajiw (Mt. McKay) in Fort William.

"They are walking across Canada to raise awareness on Missing and Murdered Indigenous People," Achneepineskum says. "We think it's important, these types of initiatives, these types of events because it's been four years since the (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls) report with the recommendations was presented to Canada, and it's very disheartening that today, four years later, that we still have very few recommendations that have been implemented. So this is why we need to continue to take to the streets, it's disheartening and discouraging that we have to do this, but we are going to continue doing these kind of events until we are recognized that this is a national crisis."

Achneepineskum says they need to keep raising awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People.

"We believe that we have done well here in Thunder Bay, although we do have a missing person here in Thunder Bay," Achneepineskum says. "We have gotten the cooperation and the support

from the Thunder Bay Police for the family but there's still a lot of work that needs to be done."

Achneepineskum says there are a lot of cold cases involving First Nation citizens in Thunder Bay.

"We need to work together to address those, and also to prevent," Achneepineskum says. "So that is very important that we work together to do that and raising awareness is one of

Achneepineskum says she is grateful for the support that they were able to provide to Charity and Cameron West.

"We took them up to (Anemki Wajiw) on (NIPD) and at that time the people had an opportunity to contribute," Achneepineskum says. "This will help them with their fuel and the food they need, so they are very grateful for

Charity, a Kwadacha Nation citizen, says they were overwhelmed with the generosity of the people at NIPD who donated more than \$600 during the honour dance.

"We're just honoured to be here and to be recognized," Charity says, noting that they began the walk in Siksika Nation in Alberta. "We're walking for Murdered and Missing Indigenous People and we're planning on going straight to St. John's, Newfoundland for the first trek of our walk. Our second trek will be to honour our home province and we'll be walking from Prince Rupert, B.C. to Prince George, B.C. along the Highway of Tears."

Cameron, a Lake Babine Nation citizen, says there has been a lot of support from everywhere during their walk across the country.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Charity and Cameron West were honoured for their walk to raise awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People during a ceremony on June 23 at the Terry Fox Monument near Thunder Bay.

"Especially with local reserves, they all come out and show their support towards us," Cameron says. "Even non-Aboriginals, they've been coming out asking questions, and that's why we're out here, to get people out and to engage and have a conversation with us so they know what we are going through as a nation."

Charity adds that it is important for

others to get involved and engaged in the conversation as well to raise awareness about Missing and Murdered Indigenous People.

"We've had people approach us that have never spoken about their missing and murdered to anybody but extremely close family, and they've come and opened up and they had the courage to tell us their stories and I

understand what kind of trauma that lifts," Charity says. "We're honoured to be a safe space for them to share their

Information about the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls is posted online at: www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/.

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Indigenous Car Racing Couple Brianna Julien, of Matachewan First Nation and Morgan Meaniss, of Beaverhouse First Nation, are racing on the Northern Ontario event circuit. They are pictured here in front of Meaniss's 1977 Chevy Camaro Z28.



Lac Seul Tomahawks player Colin Carlson, 89, celebrates one of his

Casey Tait Memorial Klik Cup held at FWFN Arena

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

USA Olympian hockey player Abby Roque enjoyed participating in this year's Casey Tait Memorial Klik Cup, which featured hockey and broom ball tournaments from June 29-July 2 at Fort William First Nation

"It was awesome, I had a blast just getting to see a lot of people," says Roque, who won a silver medal at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games and two silver medals and a gold medal from 2021-2023 at the International Ice Hockey Federation Women's World Championships. "It's a blast every time just to compete and have fun. I have a feeling I'll be back now, it's great, it's awesome and it's so great to raise money for charity."

Roque played with Team USA, which featured mostly players from the U.S. but also some dual citizens, during the Klik Cup. Team USA lost 4-3 to the Lac Seul Tomahawks in

the hockey championship game on July 2.

"The tournament was just to have fun," Roque says. "Obviously it's for charity and we want to win, but the key is there was a lot of money raised for a good cause."

Titus Semple, president at the Casey Tait Memorial Klik Cup, says the tournament was excellent with about \$35,000 raised for dialysis care as of July 2.

"Everyone that comes here has one intention and that's just to have fun," Semple says. "There is competition on the ice, but nobody takes it too serious. That's the spirit and intent of the tournament, for us to come together as strangers and to leave as friends."

Semple says this year's hockey tournament had 18 teams, including Team USA, and about 300 hockey players. The players on each of the teams other than Team USA were selected during a draft.

"We also had a Team Canada versus Team USA on Saturday night (July 1)," Semple says, noting that Canadian Olympian hockey player Brigette Lacquette, who won a silver medal at the 2018 Winter Olympic Games, played for Team Canada. "Team USA won. They played a great game against us, we had a full arena for that game so I want to say thank you to the fans that came to show their support and to cheer us

Provincial NDP deputy leader and Kiiwetinoong MPP Sol Mamakwa, who participated in the Klik Cup on the Cat Lake Snipers team, says it was important to be involved because there is a lot of diabetes in the communities.

'When you have no dialysis units on reserve, when you have no clean drinking water on reserve, it has an impact on the people that have to be on dialysis," Mamakwa says. "They pretty much have to leave their families, their community forever. I've seen a lot of people give up their dialysis treatment



The Lac Seul Tomahawks and Team USA gathered for a photo after the Tomahawks won the Casey Tait Memorial Klik Cup hockey tournament.

- when they struggle financially, when they miss their families, they just give up and that leads to unnecessary suffering and needless deaths."

Ioshua Tait, one of the Lac Seul Tomahawks players and a cousin of Casey Tait, says it was awesome to win the hockey tournament.

"It was awesome, especially

playing against the USA," Tait says. "(Casey) loved hockey very much so I came here to show my support for this tournament. It was a pretty good tournament, the teams were pretty good, there were a lot of good hockey players from junior (hockey leagues)."

Carlena Petawanick, one of the North Caribou Lake players who won the broom ball tournament over the Slate Falls team on July 2, says it felt good to win the first Klik Cup broom ball tournament, which featured eight teams.

"We won the Klik Cup," Petawanick says. "I'm just glad to be here to be playing with my home community."

Thank You, Airlines!

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













Sports

Life in the fast lane for local Indigenous car racing couple

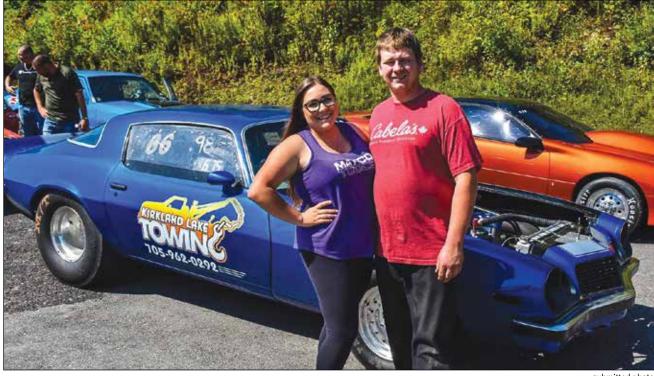
Xavier Kataquapit

Special to Wawatay News

An Indigenous car racing couple Morgan Meaniss and Brianna Julien are taking their love of ve-hicles on the road. Meaniss is a member of Reaverhouse First Nation and Julien is a member of Matach-ewan First Nation in Northern Ontario. The couple have been on the northern racing circuit for a few years as Meaniss entered his first car in 2016 and Julien in 2020. Recently they participated in the Kirk-land drag racing event June 23, 24 and 25. They are looking forward to attending this year's Kirkland Lake TNT drag racing event on August 18, 19 and 20 as well as the Bonfield Fall Classic Race event near North Bay in September.

"We like to race because we get to chase the adrenaline every time we go down the track. It is like meditation for us. In the race, you don't worry about anything else for those few seconds. For us, nothing matters during race weekends except for how our cars are performing and we enjoy being together with everyone who we consider our racing family," explained Julien.

The couple take part in a type of car competition known as drag racing which is also referred to as bracket racing. They regularly take part in racing events at the annual Kirkland Lake TNT drag races at the Kirkland Lake Airport. They also travel every year to events



Indigenous Car Racing Couple Brianna Julien, of Matachewan First Nation and Morgan Meaniss, of Beaverhouse First Nation, are racing on the Northern Ontario event circuit. They are pictured here in front of Meaniss's 1977 Chevy Camaro Z28.

at the Bonfield Event Park drag races near North Bay and Circuit au Bosquet drag races near Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec.

"The best part about being an Indigenous racing couple is in showing our communities and First Nations a sport that not a lot of people are aware of. It's exciting every time we see a familiar face in the crowd cheering us on. When you get to share your love for the sport with your best friend, there is no better feeling," said Meaniss.

The young couple met during middle school in Kirkland Lake and the annual Wabun Tribal Coun-cil Youth Gathering and they have been racing together for years. Both of their First Nations are part of the Wabun Tribal Council.

Meaniss, who works full time as a mechanic, maintains and services both their cars including his 1977 Chevy Camaro Z28 and her 1985 Chevy Camaro Z28. The 1985 car which Meaniss purchased when he was only 13 years of age, was rebuilt by him for Julien when she decided to race.

They were both introduced to the world of automotive mechanics and car racing through Julien's stepfather the late Chris Lambert. He worked as an entrepreneur shop owner in the Kirkland Lake area for many years. At one point Meaniss was mentored by Lambert when he was still in high school.

"Chris was a wonderful father to our family and he was an excellent mentor to Morgan as he passed on so much knowledge and his love of automobiles to both of us. He gave us this passion for cars that we both enjoy on the racing circuit today," commented Julien.

Her car now includes a window decal in memory of her late stepfather. Meaniss receives spon-sorship from Kirkland Lake Towing and Julien's car is sponsored by FXR Racing.

Meaniss's grandfather, the legendary late Chief Roy Meaniss was a long time advocate and repre-sentative of their First Nation community of Beaverhouse FN. The First Nation struggled for over a cen-tury on their lands near Kirkland Lake as their people had First Nation heritage but no official First Na-tion status. They had been overlooked and ignored in the treaties that were created in this part of northern Ontario in the early 1900s. Chief Meaniss was instrumental in keeping his community represented and in working towards gaining official recognition for his people for many years. Although he was not able to see it, his tireless work and dedication to his community culminated with Beaverhouse FN gaining recognition from the government of Canada in April 2022 under Chief Wavne Wabie.

"I am so happy to know that my grandfather as Chief had done so much for our people and I know that he would be very proud of the path we are on with racing in our traditional territory today," commented Morgan Meaniss.

To follow their racing career, just search for their names on Facebook to see their latest racing events and photos



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Commentary

They Told Us The Fires Were Coming



Tell how about that? We have been through a deadly pandemic for more than 3 years that caused a lot of panic, much division, economic disaster, many people died and many more were affected by a runaway virus. We are still recovering from all of the pandemic reality and I have something called long Covid that has to do with inflammation resulting in all kinds of symptoms and the worst being arthritis. Covid is still around and killing people and making many sick. You would think that the experience with this pandemic would be enough for us to deal with yet here we are with our precious summer in northern Ontario hav-ing to stay inside our homes because of forest fire smoke. At one point the toxic smoke was blowing in from out of control forest fires burning in Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes and out west. What's next ... an all out nuclear war?

We have known for a long time that climate change was real and that all of the pollution we hu-mans have been creating for more than a hundred years was going to cause tragic results for Mother Earth. Many Elders I have talked to over the years have been warning about how we have lost respect for our Mother Earth and that we have been polluting lakes, rivers, oceans and the land for the sake of mak-ing money. Many of our scientists have been warning us that if we did not cut back on the use of fossil fuels and polluting our planet that we would be paying the consequences.

A decade ago I remember chatting with people who argued that the problem with our climate change had to do with how things happen in cycles and that it was natural that our world was heating up, that air and water was being polluted and that the world would recover from this. They pointed out that there were some scientists putting forth these ideas. However on closer scrutiny it became obvious that these scientists and experts were working for the big oil and fossil fuel corporations. They had even hired public relations companies to push back on climate change that had been utilized by the tobacco industry in the past to argue that cigarettes and tobacco did not cause cancer. I am still angry about that as I have had family pass away due

to illness brought on by smoking cigarettes.

The argument that this is a natural cycle of change and that the world will correct itself is also a misleading idea. Yes, the world will recover from all the pollution, poisons and contamination we have caused but what many advocates of this argument fail to leave out is that it will happen over the course of hundreds of thousands and millions of years. The more we pollute, the longer the world will take to heal itself and it will not happen any time soon.

How is it that we are so gullible to accept all the baloney big corporate interest and right wing governments push on us when it comes to our well being? Why is it that we accept without question the very wealthy billionaires and their government lap dogs who are willing to pollute our Mother Earth and turn our planet into a dangerous reality for future generations?

We are seeing in real time developing disasters in huge storms killing people and turning commu-nities into wastelands. We are witnessing terrible flooding in many parts of the world that are changing coast lines and destroying towns and cities. In our own country we are watching historic wildfires burn-ing huge tracts of our northern forests and endangering our lives with toxic smoke. The smoke this sum-mer has been the worst I have ever seen in my life and the Elders I talk to say they have never seen such huge fires and smoke.

What will it take for us to really make the changes we have to do to stop our polluting ways and give our Mother Earth the chance to recover from our abuse and disrespect? The fir have been right here at our doorstep, people have had to be evacuated from their homes and communities and our Elders and children are dealing with breathing toxic smoke this summer. We need to get serious about fighting climate change and we can only do that by getting together and pushing back on all those industries that make money with businesses that pollute our air, our waters and are threatening our Mother Earth. We need to get serious about electing parties that can push back on the very wealthy, the industry polluters, resource developers and war mongers.

Somehow the left wing and middle of the road parties in this world have moved steps to the right on a wave of hate and misinformation and we have to be smart enough not to fall for their distractions. Future generations are counting on us.

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Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief welcomes decision on First Nation policing



submitted photo

Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Reg Niganobe is relieved with the recent Federal Court ruling on a motion filed by First Nation Police Chiefs of Ontario regarding their funding agreements. The Federal Court has ordered funds to flow to the First Nation police services that were without funding since March 31, 2023, and were on the verge of ceasing operations.

A troublesome fire season reinforces the need for policy



ast month's Weather column was about how quickly we got from actual flood situations (with some evacuations) to high or even extreme fire danger across the region. This was only part of the story because air quality problems with long-range transport of smoke from wildfires in Alberta and British Columbia began in April.

Local and regional forest fires and resulting smoke in later May compounded the poor air quality problems from western fires across the Northern Ontario region. How many times can the word "compounded" be used in the same paragraph? More numerous and some very large fires in Quebec produced smoke that fed west into Ontario, as well as far into the United States and across the Atlantic Ocean to Europe.

There were several occasions in June that during a single day, the source of smoke in Northern Ontario would change from western Canada fires, to fires within this region and then from Quebec. Other days, with different wind directions the order of source areas for smoke were different.

Historically. as most readers know, wildfires in spring are

relatively common in Canada and, given certain weather conditions, can burn into the summer season. This year is an exceptional situation. The wildfire season began unusually early in Alberta and British Columbia. It is unprecedented to have wildfires burning in almost all provinces and territories simultaneously in June and July. The adjective "unprecedented" gets a lot of use these days to describe extreme weather events.

Average June temperatures were well above normal in Northern Ontario. This was most pronounced in the Northwest and near Hudson Bay and James Bay. All areas in the region had a very warm start that continued from the end of May and prevailed, generally throughout June.

From June 18 to 21 Northern Ontario was a special place on the planet. Temperatures were the most different from the normal or expected temperatures. Most of these four days featured 30°C and warmer across the entire region. Yes, there were a few exceptions – islands in Lake Nipigon and in Lake Superior and towns on Lake Superior's north shore – where afternoon maximum temperatures only reached 25°C to 28°C.

The most remarkable departure from normal was in Moosonee and other communities next to James Bay (in spite of proximity to water of 3°C). All of Moosonee's daily high temperatures were 30°C or more with the highest at 35°C. This is about 20°C warmer than

normal. Incidentally, the 35°C recorded in Moosonee qualified as the highest temperature recorded in Ontario in June.

Just to be clear there were warmer places on the planet in India for example but the warmth was not so drastically different from what was expected.

This heat wave was followed by near-normal temperatures in most areas until later June when warmer temperatures and higher humidity prompted heat warnings to be issued by Environment Canada. In early July, near-normal temperatures established across the region and persisted until mid-July.

The beginning of June was particularly dry with almost no precipitation across the entire region. Drought conditions were most pronounced in the Northwest and a zone from Thunder Bay to around Moosonee. A few locations received less than 10% of the normal monthly average rainfall. Rain in the third week in the Thunder Bay area alleviated drought conditions and reduced wildfire risk for a few days.

Some of the weather systems that brought rainfall to the Thunder Bay area became reinforced with moist air from the United States and delivered substantial rainfalls in a corridor from Sault Saint Marie to Sudbury and North Bay. Lesser amounts of rain took place in the Timmins area.

Outlook for July and early August

Temperatures are forecast to

be near-average in mid-July and then above-normal for much of the following weeks. Drier-thannormal conditions are expected for the Far North and north of Lake Superior.

A Climate Emergency?

There are many warnings that climate change is out of control. These range from record rainfalls, severe storms, persistent smoke in the air we breath and so on.

Recent news is that the average global temperature has been routinely exceeding 17°C since July 1. A new record was being set on a nearly daily basis. This happens to be much warmer the pre-industrial global temperature of 13.7°C, the average global temperature in the 1800s and until about 1920. In 2015, the global Paris Agreement goal was to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees above pre-industrial and to try to limit the increase to 1.5°C.

Crossing climate thresholds should flag the need for policy change. Another threshold also crossed in the last couple of weeks is the area burned in Canada from forest fires. The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre reports that nine million hectares (20.6 million acres) of forest have already burned, This is remarkable and scary, given that the season is only about half over. The previous record of 7.8 million hectares was set in 1989.

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Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Mattagami Elder Gerry Martin shares some of his knowledge about traditional medicines and plants during his July 12 presentation at Fort William Historical Park's Great Rendezvous Celebration.

Fort William Historical Park's Great Rendezvous Celebration

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Fort William Historical Park's Great Rendezvous Celebration featured presentations by Mattagami Elder Gerry Martin, Fort William Elder Sheila DeCorte and Grand Portage Anishinaabe Nation photographer Travis Novitsky on July 12.

Martin says he spoke about some of the different kinds of medicines that were used for tea, food or staining materials.

"But mostly about food and how to preserve it, make teas," Martin says, noting that people enjoyed smelling the sweetgrass he had picked earlier that morning. "That's aromatherapy and I try to teach it's not just physical medicines, but there's spiritual medicines — aromatherapy helps with that and makes you feel good. It can snap you out of your funk ... when you smell that sweetgrass. It changes your mindset very quickly."

Martin says he continues to gather and teach about the traditional medicines to keep the knowledge current and fresh in the minds of people.

"If they had to go out there and get themselves (some medicine) and make a tea for a headache, acetylsalicylic acid, they wouldn't know where to start," Martin says. "Well, try the willow (or) birch tree."

Martin says he finds that the tourists are very curious about the traditional medicines.

"I think a lot of them are glad the knowledge is still out here, embedded in some of us," Martin says. "There's still some of us who know some of it, not all of it. Forts like this, they were the place you could come and bring your stuff and trade for European goods, clothing, blankets. The metals were good, but they were heavy, if you tipped your canoe you'd lose it unless you tied it to something. And if a part broke off you'd have to bring it to the fort, which might be a long ways away to get a part."

Martin says he shared some of his traditional knowledge with Indigenous staff at Fort William Historical Park about 20 years ago.

"They didn't have this in the fort, and then they started," Martin says. "I was really pleased that they did their own research, and they made bags of herb tea that they sell up at the

gift shop, which is nice."

DeCorte spoke about some of her teachings about water and the For the Love of the Rivers Water Walks she does along four rivers in Thunder Bay during her Keepers of the Water presentation.

"(I was) talking a little bit about the importance of protecting and care for the water and water ceremonies, and what they can do, even if they're not a Water Walker, to bring healing to the water," DeCorte says. "So I shared tips on what they can do and that is just talking to the water. Any time they are near a body of water, they could just speak to the water, tell the water that they love her and respect her and give thanks."

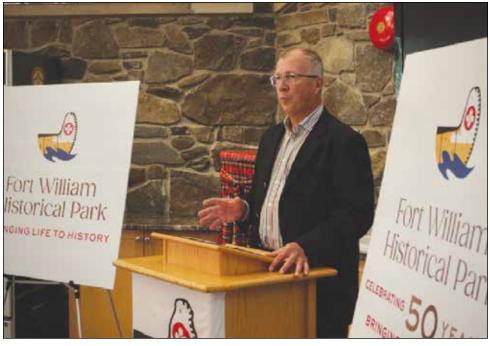
DeCorte plans to do a twoday Water Walk along the Kaministiquia River, which flows past Fort William Historical Park, on July 29 and 30 after doing Water Walks along McVicar Creek on May 7, McIntyre River on June 4 and Neebing River on July 2.

Novitsky, who delivered a presentation on night sky photography, says he began doing photography in high school after seeing his father taking images of lightning, the Northern Lights and the Milky Way with his film camera.

"I would tag along with him even when I was eight, nine years old," Novitsky says. "I think just going with him and sitting out there and waiting for him and getting at a young age this appreciation of just sitting there for a while and looking at the stars is what did it."

Novitsky, who usually uses a full frame digital camera with a 14 mm lens for his night sky photography, says the personal fulfilment from creating images of the night sky is what keeps him going.

"It's become the number one thing that I like to do that kind of takes the stress of everything else away," Novitsky says. "And this too, sharing it with people, and especially since doing the (PBS documentary Northern Nights, Starry Skies) and working with Carl (Gowboy), getting to know more of the Indigenous (star knowledge). He's in his 80s now and doesn't travel a whole lot but he and I have done a couple of programs together."



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Fort William Historical Park (FWHP) general manager Patrick Morash highlighted free admission for Indigenous people during the launch of FWHP's Great Rendezvous Celebration and new branding featuring a birch bark canoe on June 29.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A group of Fort William Historical Park (FWHP) staff participated in the launch of FWHP's Great Rendezvous Celebration and new branding featuring a birch bark canoe on June 29.

FWHP offers free admission to Indigenous people

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Fort William Historical Park (FWHP) general manager Patrick Morash announced free admission for Indigenous people during the launch of FWHP's Great Rendezvous Celebration and new branding featuring a birch bark canoe on June 29.

"In recognition of the significant contribution of Indigenous culture and heritage to the work we do here, admission throughout the year will be free to Indigenous people, not only to Rendezvous but to the fort throughout the year," Morash says. "Also to encourage return visits this year, because we want to see people coming back not just for one day at Rendezvous but two or three or four or five days or all nine days, we're offering a \$50 individual pass for people so they come back throughout the year, not just for Rendezvous but throughout the year at the fort, and a \$90 (annual) family pass. We wanted to make it affordable for people from Thunder Bay and the region to come and experience the fort if they haven't seen it for a while."

More than 200 re-enactors from across North America were scheduled to recreate the annual summer gathering held at Fort William over 200 years ago when it was the inland headquarters of the North West Company during the Great Rendezvous Re-enactment from

July 13-16.

"We are delighted to present the Great Rendezvous as part of our 50th anniversary," Morash says. "We are grateful to the numerous partners, alumni and volunteers, who are helping to support this amazing event. We look forward to seeing the community enjoy this great opportunity to learn more about fur trade history and the many different cultures represented at Fort William."

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, was also scheduled to present the James Bartleman Indigenous Youth Creative Writing Awards, on July 15 during the Rendezvous.

"She will spend the day with us for Rendezvous," Morash says. "We will have more than 200 re-enactors camped around the site portraying what life was like during the heyday of Rendezvous at Fort William."

Morash says the birch bark canoe featured in FWHP's new branding and logo is central to everything about the fur trade.

"The birch bark canoe was the central vehicle to the fur trade, without the canoe the fur trade really couldn't exist," Morash says. "The canoe is an Indigenous creation, the support of Indigenous people throughout the fur trade was absolutely critical whether it was transportation in the way of the canoe or shelter in the way of wigwams or food in the way of bannock and dried fruits and meat, the support and partner-

ship with Indigenous people was really important. The other thing we like with the canoe and water is it implies a sense of action and motion and adventure, and those are things that are really important historically but they're also important today."

Morash says FWHP will also be hosting Anishinaabe Keeshigun on Aug. 19-20.

"Keeshigun is for us a celebration of First Nation culture and heritage," Morash says. "The (Anishinabe) were absolutely critical to the fur trade at the time, they're critical to us today and we feel that it is important to have a weekend that focuses on First Nation culture and heritage, and that will include a powwow, it will

include dancing, drumming, no shortage of food, lots of colour, lots of regalia. It's an opportunity for us to emphasize just how important First Nations culture is to the park today and historically."

The Lieutenant Governor was also scheduled to participate in the Great Rendezvous Celebration's Grand Arrival on July 15 and to unveil a plaque gifted to FWHP by the National History Committee of the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering recognizing David Thompson's surveying and mapping of northwestern North America (1790-1814).



A group of Indigenous Action Council members, Sheridan College furniture students and Thunder Bay Public Library staff celebrated the new custom made shelves and tables during the unveiling ceremony in the Waverley Library's Indigenous Knowledge Centre.



Perry Perreault, a member of the Indigenous Action Council, speaks about how the collaborative design process for the new custom made shelves and tables in the Waverley Library's Indigenous Knowledge Centre inspired him to enrol into a carpentry program during the unveiling ceremony.



Beverly Sabourin, a member of the Indigenous Action Council, speaks about how she sees herself in every little part of the new custom made shelves and tables during their unveiling ceremony in the Waverley Library's Indigenous Knowledge Centre.

Waverley Library upgrades Indigenous Knowledge Centre

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Thunder Bay Public Library's recently unveiled custom made shelves and tables in the Waverley Library's Indigenous Knowledge Centre were created through a collaborative process between the library's Indigenous Action Council and a group of Sheridan College furniture students.

"Lots of people have to work together to make things like this happen, but the real magic starts when everybody gets out of the way of the students and the community members and lets them do their thing," says Connie Chisholm, a furniture maker, teacher at Sheridan College and leader at Codesign. "And that's at the heart of community co-design projects is bringing students and community together and letting them share, letting them listen, letting them learn, and the work that comes out of that you can't get it any other way, it's the most amazing work."

Perry Perreault, a member of the Indigenous Action Council, says the students incorporated some of the important aspects developed during the collaborative process to complete the

"I'm an artist myself, I've just got into a carpentry program, thank you very much for inspiring me," Perreault says. "The creative aspects with the book shelves in the back were unique, they would only fit here, that street kind of cut off the building so it wasn't entirely rectangular anymore — it was a unique kind of angle and it had to be custom built.

Perreault says the tables had some of the design aspects he suggested incorporated in them.

"I mentioned the Smithsonian, the (National Museum of the American Indian) in Washington, D.C., how things are gradual curves and not everything is rectangular any more," Perreault says. "All the curvature lines, the split circle (tables) in the back, the children's table, the inlays are beautiful. We talked about the history about people who were metallur-

gists, they used to mine copper here hundreds of years ago, the (Anishinabe) people, and they would lay (the copper) in their pipes and they would adorn them in jewellery and other things."

Fort William Elder Sheila DeCorte, a member of the Indigenous Action Council who did the opening ceremony for the unveiling, says it was an honour to be part of the project and to work with the students and share knowledge and teachings as they went out on the land to get ideas.

"They heard the teachings that were shared and they incorporated it into this beautiful furniture," DeCorte says. "I'm honoured that they listened,

they heard and they put it to

DeCorte says the students were so interested in learning about the Indigenous culture during the project.

"It really demonstrated to me that you are serious about reconciliation," DeCorte says. "You demonstrated that by coming and listening and following through on what we were asking you to create."

Simon Ford, acting head of the furniture studio at Sheridan College's Craft and Design program, says the project enabled the students to develop their collaboration skills.

"And it enables them to consider design that serves others and asks them to put aside the

ego that usually comes along with working in the design industry," Ford says. "It also asks them to critically question issues of social injustices, that's a really valuable thing for students to do in the third year of the program."

Beverly Sabourin, a member of the Indigenous Action Council, says they all did an amazing job on the project.

"When I walk in here now, I see me in every little part of those furniture and I think all of us see ourselves in the furniture and I think the Indigenous community who come into this library will also see themselves in the library," Sabourin says.



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The Roots Community Food Centre launches new dining room

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Roots Community Food Centre in Thunder Bay held its monthly traditional meal featuring moose meat loaf the day after the grand opening of its dining room on June 29. The traditional meal, which is served from 11-12:30 on the last Friday of the month, also included lentil loaf, roasted butternut squash, mashed potatoes and wild rice fruit salad.

"I brought my mom who is 93-years-old," says Beverly Sabourin, a Pic Mobert citizen. "I knew they were serving moose meat today and I thought she would really enjoy that, and they also gave away free berries today, which was really nice."

Sabourin says she and her husband have been volunteering on Wednesdays at the Roots Community Food Centre for about three-to-four months. The Roots Community Food Centre provides Senior + Elder Community Meals on Wednesdays from 5-6:30 p.m. and Fridays from 11-12:30.

"My mom, we bring her every Wednesday as well," Sabourin says. "It's a really amazing place, they make this place so welcoming to everyone, all people over 60. We're both retired and we feel like it is something we would like to contribute by helping in the community doing something that is meaningful to people. It provides nutritious meals and it provides a little market where they have vegetables that are at a really



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Thunder Bay-Superior North MP Patty Hajdu and Erin Beagle, executive director at Roots Community Food Centre, celebrated the grand opening of the Roots Community Food Centre dining room on June 29.

decent price."

Erin Beagle, executive director at Roots Community Food Centre, says they worked hard to purchase, fund and renovate the dining room so they could provide free community meals for seniors and Elders twice a week.

"We're kind of looking at the 60-plus crowd," Beagle says. "The meals are totally free, they're made from scratch, it's like restaurant service. People come in and they sit down and we give them water and their cutlery and bring the food to them so there's not a food lineup. At the same time we also open our community food market. Our community food market is a low cost fruit and vegetable market that anybody is

allowed to shop for, they don't have to be a senior or an Elder to shop there."

Beagle says they focus on using fresh and quality ingredients in their meals.

"So lots of vegetables, proteins, there's always a vegetarian option if people are not eating meat," Beagle says. "And some variety in them too, as an example last night (June 28) was a Lebanese vegetable soup with a baba ghanoush and pita dip and there's always a dessert. The last Friday of every month is a traditional food meal. Sometimes the food is like really comfort food, just like meat and potatoes, and other times it kind of pushes the boundaries, like maybe it might be Mexican inspired or things



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A wild rice fruit salad was served during the Roots Community Food Centre's traditional meal featuring moose meat loaf on June 30.

Thunder Bay-Superior North MP Patty Hajdu, minister of Indigenous Services Canada and minister responsible for FedNor, also announced a federal investment of \$735,360 to renovate and retrofit the Roots Community Food Centre at the grand opening of the dining room. The investment will enable the Roots Community Food Centre to install new doors and upgraded windows with solar shading to minimize heat loss in the winter and keep the building naturally cool in the summer. It will also enable them to install a new boiler that uses locally sourced wood pellets and to create a rain garden with plants and natural materials found locally to capture rainwater and mitigate runoff.

"Every day, Roots Com-

munity Food Centre makes sure people get food, connections and community," Hajdu says. "They offer programs that nourish the soul and make sure that no one goes hungry amongst us. They work to welcome people to a place where they belong, and can learn new skills and meet new people. The government of Canada will continue to invest in organizations and community infrastructure that are taking climate action and building more resilient and inclusive communities across Canada."

Beagle says the federal investment is essential in ensuring that Roots Community Food Centre can operate from a building that is able to weather the changing climate pressures, reduce their carbon footprint and maintain a space that is accessible and welcoming to all.

"We're excited to make changes that allow us to adapt and showcase how green building innovations can be included in community spaces and we're thankful to the government of Canada for their investment in this space that provides dignified food access and community connection for so many people in Thunder Bay," Beagle says.

Beagle says their SHOW Urban Agriculture program for 18 to 30-year-old participants began on the May long weekend on the south side of Thunder Bay and their Urban Youth Farm Program for 16 to 18-year-old Lakehead District School Board students began in mid-July on the north side of Thunder Bay.



Pikangikum mourns another loss due to a house fire

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Pikangikum lost another citizen to a house fire on July 4 after three citizens were lost in a house fire on Feb. 22 in the community of about 2,300. One adult was confirmed deceased and 11 others, including children, were safe after the July 4 house fire

July 4 house fire.
"This is another tragedy the fast-action response from all of those involved saved many lives, but sadly, we have lost another community (citizen)," says Pikangikum Chief Shirley Lynne Keeper. "This continues to affect us greatly, impacting every one of us. We appreciate the support of IFNA (Independent First Nations Alliance) who has arrived in community and been working with government agencies to pursue sustainable funding for our community responders and to ensure supports are in place so we can prevent experiencing such loss.'

The July 4 house fire was reported to police at about 7:30 a.m. and Ontario Provincial Police were on the scene within minutes. They used fire extinguishers from the exterior to buy time for the fire response, with the Pikangikum Peace-keepers and firefighters arriving

and containing the fire within 30 minutes with the structure remaining fully intact. The house fire was extinguished by 9:30 a.m.

"Since the last fatal house fire, we have continued to work in partnership with the community, Indigenous Services Canada, the Ontario Office of the Fire Marshal, the Indigenous Fire Marshal Service and the OPP to improve fire safety and response including ongoing smoke alarm installations," says Nick Rhone, IFNA integrated emergency services director and regional fire rescue chief.

The investigation into the July 4 house fire was ongoing as of press time, with more information to be released as it becomes available.

Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum had previously called for action from the federal and provincial governments after the three citizens died in the Feb. 22 house fire.

"It is outrageous that we must plead with our treaty partners every time an innocent life is lost," Achneepineskum said after the Feb. 22 house fire. "Nice words are said, but very little is done. We do not need condolences or sympathy from the governments of Ontario and Canada. We need action. Imme-

diately. Before any more lives are lost."

Pikangikum previously lost a family of nine in a house fire in March 2016.

"Our community is devastated to have yet another loss due to a horrific house fire," Keeper said after the Feb. 22 house fire. "It was almost seven years ago that we lost a family to a fire in our community. We should not be experiencing this again. We have never felt so hopeless. Our ability to fight structural fires has not improved since 2016. Our fire trucks were frozen because we don't have an adequate building to keep them warm."

Achneepineskum said after the Feb. 22 house fire that the number of individuals who have perished in house fires across Nishnawbe Aski Nation in the last decade is "very disturbing." A total of 11 children and seven adults have lost their lives in house fires in Pikangikum in 2016, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug in 2019, Sandy Lake in 2022 and Peawanuck in 2023.

"Many of them are children — it's time now that we assess the services or the lack of fire prevention and also fire responses that we have within our First Nations," Achneep-



screenshot

Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum, pictured at a Chiefs Special Assembly in 2021, called for action from the provincial and federal governments following the loss of three Pikangikum citizens in a house fire on Feb. 22.

ineskum said after the Feb. 22 house fire. "We're lacking the resources and infrastructure to

protect ourselves from house fires and also to fight a fire when it does occur."

Achneepineskum said after the Feb. 22 house fire that the government needs to work with First Nations to ensure they have a fire truck and a fire station that is up to standard.



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- 3. Organizations, Schools, Program, Tribal Council, or Community event are strongly encouraged to request PLE Services.

ple@nanlegal.on.ca - or - csuggashie@nanlegal.on.ca

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
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Tikinagan celebrates Honouring Our Children Day

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Tikinagan Child and Family Services is celebrating Honouring Our Children Day by holding celebrations in each of its 30 First Nations and two art contests for children from the 30 communities.

"So far it's been going exceptionally well," says Jason Willms, service manager at Tikinagan. "We look at June 24 as the start of Honouring Our Children Day and it goes through for the whole summer as we have 30 communities that are trying to organize it. It's an opportunity for our communities to show our children just how important they are to the community. We look at it and say these children are the future of our communities and we want to celebrate the day today for the future."

Tikinagan first celebrated Honouring Our Children Day in 2009 to celebrate the accomplishments of the children and youth.

"It's an annual (celebration) that we want to do and the intention is to celebrate our children in care and really all different types of children because we want to acknowledge their strength, their bravery and of course their resiliency," Willms says. "It's just a way for us as adults and people in their life to kind of show them, hey, we really do care, this is about you. We know that adults are very influential figures in children's lives so when they see them interacting and engaging with us as well, the children



Tikinagan Child and Family Services executive director Thelma Morris speaks about the importance of Honouring Our Children Day in a video on Tikinagan's Facebook page.

really have a great time."

Honouring Our Children Day also honours children in Tikinagan's care and acknowledges the strength, bravery and resilience shown by these children and youth in the face of difficult times.

"It's not easy growing up away from family and being separated, especially when you lose your language," says Ty Strang, member of Tikinagan's Youth Know Team. "It gets tough at times. Most days I've had people supporting me and they kept pushing until I finally let them. I'm glad they did because it showed me that people cared and that there are good people out there."

The Youth Know Team, Tiki-

nagan's youth advisory team that was formed with youth from the organization's 30 First Nations, supports Tikinagan by providing input about youth culture, social media, living in their communities and even about Tikinagan.

"Children should be as respected as Elders," the Youth Know Team says in a statement.

"They're the next generation, after our Elders have passed."

Thelma Morris, executive director at Tikinagan, says Tikinagan was created about 40 years ago to provide culturally-specific child and family services that emphasize an Indigenous approach to child welfare in an online Honouring Our Children Day video.

"Our agency was founded on two basic principles as handed down by the chiefs and guided by our Elders, first that no more children be lost from our communities, second that a child and family service agency be created that would work with the people for the people while respecting culture, heritage and the concepts of the extended family," Morris says. "Today we are still guided by our nine values, respect, trust, honesty, language, Elders, culture, accountability, customary care and spirituality, and the unyielding belief that the answers lie within the community."

Morris says every child deserves love, safety and the opportunity to thrive within their own culture, community and their own family context.

"Together we embody the spirit of Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin and through our work we can strengthen and support our First Nations with their dedication and compassion for the children and families we serve," Morris says. "We celebrate (Honouring) Our Children Day, which is a time to celebrate our children and remind them that they are special and supported by the community. Much like National Indigenous Peoples Day, the intention of Honouring Our Children Day is to acknowledge their strength, bravery and resilience. Honouring Our Children Day is an opportunity for your community to come together to show our children how special they are."



Nishnawbe Aski Nation Social Services Department Programs

Boozhoo, Aaniin, Wacheya,

As we approach the middle of summer, we hope you get the opportunity to reconnect with loved ones and friends to share stories, create new memories, laugh, and enjoy fellowship with one another. Time to enjoy the land and take in all the beauty around us. Counting our Blessings and being grateful for the little things putting a smile on our face and bringing us joy.

Over the summer months communities will be gathering to celebrate FAMILY WELL-BEING WEEK **to honour babies**, **children**, **youth**, **elders**, **families**, **women**, **and men**. FWB program Coordinators will be organizing activities, events, and programs to strengthen family bonds, celebrate our culture, language, land, spiritual beliefs, life, and all of creation.







FWB Week in Kasabonika Lake

NAN acknowledges and commends the FWBp Community Coordinators for their dedication, passion, endless hours of ongoing support and resources they provide for families. Coordinators play a vital role in supporting wellbeing approaches, bringing people together and working towards healthy communities.

Contact your local Family Well-Being Program Coordinator to find out about programs and activities during Family Well-Being Week in your community.

The more we empower and encourage one another the more we become united and stronger together. Continue to be mindful of the safety of others, follow community protocols and the direction from our leaders. We look forward to travelling across the NAN territory, visiting with one another and participate in community events. May the Creator continue to watch over our families and communities and make a better place for everyone.

Miigwech & God Bless!

Your NAN Family Well-Being Team,

Cindy Mckay, Administrative Coordinator - cgmckay@nan.ca
Margaret Wesley, Training Coordinator - mwesley@nan.ca
Douglas Magiskan, Project Officer, Western Region - dmagiskan@nan.ca
Nicole Baxter, Project Officer, Central Region - nbaxter@nan.ca
Micheal Belmore, Project Officer, Eastern Region - mbelmore@nan.ca
Sheila Marcinyshyn, Program Manager - smarcinyshyn@nan.ca



The FWBp Team and Elders attending strategic planning.



ENDING DISCRIMINATION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN NISHNAWBE ASKI NATION TERRITORY

Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse and his team are working hard to ensure a Final Settlement Agreement for the long-term reform of First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) and Jordan's Principle is reached in a timely manner.

Ending the discrimination identified by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal through funding and policy reform is a critical step forward in providing NAN children with the same opportunity to reach their full potential as other children in this country.

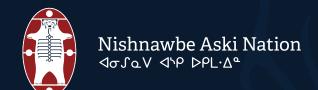
While the negotiations continue, there are measures currently in place to alleviate the discrimination that First Nations and FNCFS Agencies can access.

These include:

- Funding at actual cost post-majority care to First Nation youth ageing out of care and young adults who were formerly in care up to and including the age of 25.
- Funding at actual cost First Nations Representative Services to provide a range of support and advocacy services to families at risk of or involved with child welfare.
- Increased prevention funding for First Nations and FNCFS Agencies.
- Funding at actuals for capital projects related to the delivery of child and family services and Jordan's Principle programs.



For more information please contact: **Joanne MacMillan** jmacmillan@nan.ca



We are well into the new fiscal year and we hope that everyone has been able to spend some time participating in activities that feed your mind, spirit and soul all of the things that make you smile.

We would like to share for those who may not be aware, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Choose Life Program began in April 2017. Choose Life is intended for youth, 18 and under, at risk of suicide by providing funding to access mental health professionals or services, as well as address well-being through land-based programing and cultural activities. The funding streams from Indigenous Services Canada (FNIHB) through the Jordan's Principle Child First Initiative.

NAN annually submits a Choose Life Application for funding with ISC to carry out the necessary tasks to support NAN communities and organizations with their Choose Life funding requests, to navigate the choose life specialized processes and to promote mental health training and networking opportunities for Choose Life workers and youth. The Annual Report for this funding is due 120 days after March 31st.

Choose Life responds to the Seven Youth Inquest Jury Recommendations #36 (suicide prevention) and #81 (harm reduction) directed at improving accountability, safety, and education outcomes for all NAN students.



Community Visit for Application and Reporting Support in Sachigo Lake

Two evaluations have been completed to review the program and its affects on NAN youth. Copies of these evaluations were distributed in 2021 and can be found on the NAN webpage: nan.ca/resources/choose-life/. Findings suggest that there is an ongoing support and need for Choose Life programing to continue.

Choose Life is also a part of the AIP with the Government of Canada on compensation and long-term reform of First Nation Child and Family services. These discussions have led to include a provision for the long-term sustainability of the Choose Life program. A Terms of Reference had been developed and were officially signed at the first Annual General Meeting in Ottawa on September 30, 2022. The terms of reference are to prepare and guide the important and necessary work to continue to address unmet mental health needs of children and youth in First Nation communities.

Over the past year, the Choose Life Program was thankful to be able to return to supporting Community Choose Life Coordinators in person with training on ISC's expectations that involve Community specific annual reporting and the application of funding requests from individual Communities within our 49 NAN Territories. The team is prepared and willing to return once again to traveling into Communities to deliver this support upon request.

We are looking forward to hosting our 2nd Annual General Meeting on August 29-31st 2023. The NAN Choose Life Team will be hosting the AGM at the Best Western Nor'Wester Hotel and Conference Centre. We are looking forward to coming together with our NAN Choose Life Community Coordinators along with our youth and special guests. We are excited to share space during this time to acknowledge and empower the youth, celebrate Community successes, bring confidence, and provide tools and tips for the Youth to take with them as we come to a close on August 31.

Please stay tuned for our SAVE THE DATE that will be sent to our Community Choose Life Coordinators and their youth guest.

I would like to recognize the Choose Life Program Team that works so hard to ensure that the NAN Community Children, Youth and Families are receiving the supports they are requiring to continue to have this essential program available and accessible for youth at risk in each Community.

Our Choose Life Program here at NAN holds monthly Networking calls on a virtual platform. These meetings have been very well attended and we welcome all Choose Life Coordinators to join. Each call is specific to a theme and all are welcome to provide updates, share successes, challenges or to say hello to peers and friendships that have been made through our Choose Life Coordinator's contact information to be included in these calls is Bibianne Charles: bcharles@nan.ca.

Our NAN Choose Life team is available, through meetings in Thunder Bay and community visits, to provide training for the Choose Life application and reporting process and offer support for backlogged reporting. If this is something that your Community Coordinators would benefit from support with, please contact our Choose Life Allan Turtle: aturtle@nan.ca.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy summer season! We look forward to continuing to build our relationships with Community Members, providing support and visiting in person.

Please reach out to me at anytime. Take care and Miigwetch,

Marla Murray

Choose Life Program Manager mmurray@nan.ca



JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

Jordan River Anderson was a member of Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba and was born with complex medical needs.

Jordan was able to leave the hospital when he was 2. However, the federal and provincial governments could not agree on who should pay for his home-based care.

Jordan stayed in the hospital until he passed at the age of 5.

The House of Commons passed Jordan's Principle in his memory and it is now a legal obligation so First Nations children living in Canada can access the products, services and supports they need, when they need them. Funding can help with a wide range of health, social and educational needs, including the unique needs that First Nations children and youth have.

Eligibility is under 18 years of age and one of the following;

- The child is registered or eligible to be registered under the Indian Act, as amended from time to time,
- The child has one parent/guardian who is registered or eligible to be registered under the Indian Act;
- 3 The child is recognized by their Nation for the purposes of Jordan's Principle; or
- The child is ordinarily a resident on reserve.

How to Apply

FILL in Application and email to sac.jordansprincipleon-principedejordan.isc@canada.ca
CALL 1-855-JP-CHILD (1-855-572-4453), open 24hrs a day, 7 days a week.

VISIT canada.ca/jordans-principle .

NEED HELP? Contact your Community Worker or Tribal Council Coordinator for assistance or call the number above.



NAN has a contact list and can assist communities and Tribal Councils to apply for their own workers. Email jordansprinciple@nan.ca











Education

RMYC research project holds youth conference in Mishkeegogamang

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

A group of Regional Multicultural Youth Council (RMYC) youth recently met with youth in Mishkeegogamang during a youth conference in early July as part of their Voices of Youth research project.

"We mostly interacted with the students such as participating in games, events (and Moffat Mukato, youth advisor and summer programs coordinator at RMYC and executive director at Multicultural Association of Northwestern Ontario) did a little workshop too with the youth to see where they were academic wise and what challenges they face," says Summer Spade, a leader with the Voices of Youth project at RMYC. "Kids need role models in their lives, especially older youth as us just so they know they can be like us at some point. They don't have to be adults to do this, they can be young teenagers, they can be older teenagers or people just starting in their early 20s.

Lucas Sinoway, who is involved with the Voices of Youth project at RMYC, says the trip to Mishkeegogamang was an opportunity to give the youth a voice.

"And to show them you don't need alcohol and drugs in order to cope with residential schools and (issues) like that," Sinoway says. "There are healthy ways to cope such as going out in nature and moving your body."



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A group of Regional Multicultural Youth Council youth, pictured on Anemki Wajiw in Fort William, are working on a Voices of Youth research project.

Julian Beardy, who is involved with the Voices of Youth project at RMYC, highlighted the importance of being involved with RMYC, noting that he also enjoyed the trip to Mishkeegogamang.

"It's important training for

our future learning how to do this, how to show kids that they're not alone and have role models to look up to," Beardy says.

Karlee Meekis, a leader with the Voice of Youth project at RMYC, says youth need role models in their lives. "Especially older youth as us just so they know they can be like us at some point, they don't have to be adults to do this, they can be young teenagers, they can be older teenagers or people just starting in their early 20s," Meekis says, noting

that she is planning to study Business Accounting at Centennial College in Toronto this fall. "So Moffat usually tells us as we're involved in this program to kind of share our story and be role models for the younger students." Spade says the Voices of Youth project, which is being done in partnership with Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), is aimed at reengaging students affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to get back into their education and helping them succeed in their endeavours.

"There was a drastic raise in dropout rates because students suffered with social anxiety with the drastic change in environment and we want to reconnect them with their education," Spade says, noting that they also asked questions about the issue to youth during a trip to Neskantaga and to some youth from Deer Lake. "They think that helping them reengage and stay in school is to reinforce more specialized therapists and school nurses they can meet daily just for check ins ... and they also had ideas for more recreational activities."

Meekis says they travelled with NAN staff for the trip to Neskantaga.

"We helped plan community events along with them like a breakfast and games for them," Meekis says.

Spade says they also asked questions about the issue to youth in Thunder Bay.

"It's pretty easy to connect with the youth, especially with our RMYC," Spade says. "We were also talking with Matawa students here. Most of the students brought up recreational things such as more things would interest them like beading, art (and) that kind of thing instead of just sports."



Tikinagan's Annual Honouring Our Children Day is all about honouring the children in care throughout the 30 Northwestern Ontario First Nations that the agency serves. Honouring Our Children Day is an opportunity to demonstrate Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin - "Everybody working together to raise our children" - and show our children and families they are important.

Be part of a community that holds our children up and carries them forward.

Celebrate in your community this summer!





LEARN MORE AT TIKINAGAN.ORG/HOCDAY

Education

Lakehead University holds C2UExpo

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Lakehead University's C2UExpo featured a Kinooamaadawad Megwaa Doodamawad stream focused on Indigenous health determination and research, including a presentation by Lakehead University's Denise Baxter and Anita Vaillancourt on June 6. Baxter, vice provost of Indigenous Initiatives at Lakehead University and Marten Falls citizen, and Vaillancourt, assistant professor in the School of Social Work at Lakehead University and Wahnapitae citizen, delivered a presentation on Navigating Colonial Spaces to Engage Indigenous Knowledges in the Advancement Social Work Edu-

"The focus here is our experience in developing the Speaker Series — the major intent of the Speaker Series was a collaboration between Indigenous Initiatives, where Denise is the vice provost, and the School of Social Work," Vaillancourt says. "This really came about for a very specific purpose of extending the learning in our institution to the community, so beyond the classroom. I feel we're very silent and quite exclusionary in our education and people who can afford to be here get to be here."

Vaillancourt says one of the first exercises she teaches her students is to have a look around the classroom to see who is there and who is missing.

"And we start to really interrogate who's missing from that room and ... lead into the conversation about how colonialism has created this situation where we see 90 per cent of (non-Native) learners and very low representation of Indigenous people and people of colour in that group and what that means for practice and what that means for healing of our society and people," Vaillancourt says. "There are a number of implications associated with this, so it's really recognizing the important role of the Indigenous community in terms of advancing social work education and postsecondary education as a whole, and the aim is to provide postsecondary education on terms that foster greater understanding of Indigenous culture and wellness."

Vaillancourt says there are now more Indigenous children in care than at the height of the residential school era.

"So we are failing in our practice and I speak that very clearly and with a lot of power behind my words and emotion because we have to fix this," Vaillancourt says.

Vaillancourt says part of the focus with the Speaker Series is the recognition of the role and ongoing presence of colonization and Euro-centrism within the education system and the importance of establishing



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Lakehead University's Denise Baxter speaks during her and assistant professor Anita Vaillancourt's presentation on Navigating Colonial Spaces to Engage Indigenous Knowledges in the Advancement Social Work Education at the university's C2UExpo, held June 5-8 with about 350 participants from around the world at the Thunder Bay campus.

authentic partnerships.

"We are really wanting something deeper, so the community-campus partnership with four Indigenous women," Vaillancourt says. "In social work we are a very female-dominated profession, a very caring-oriented profession as well, so I felt it was really important to centre Indigenous women."

Baxter says they approached four Indigenous women who ran Indigenous communitybased human service organizations in southern Ontario to participate in sharing Indigenous knowledges within and beyond a social work classroom.

"A big part of it is the students that we were training, these social workers, are the very people that they're going to be hiring," Baxter says. "So this is a really great opportunity for them to address some big thinking to the students to sort of plant those seeds with the students before they actually graduate and go into the work-

force."

Baxter says she missed both sessions in person with the four women due to changes in the schedule, but was able to watch the sessions over the Zoom platform.

"We did have students taking active roles recording the event, students did introductions, students had to do some pre-work ahead of time about the organizations and do some presentations in their classroom," Baxter says. "So they were quite

involved in the learning up to and then debriefing after."

The C2UExpo, held June 5-8 at the Thunder Bay campus, was attended by about 350 participants from around the world, including Maui Hudson, associate professor at the University of Waikato, who delivered the opening Morning Keynote Plenary: Responsible Research and Innovation: The Challenge of Generating Impact with Indigenous Communities on June 6.

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Culture



photo submitted by Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Centre Facebook page
The Algonquin Avenue Public School Grade 8 class's birch bark canoe was recently delivered to the Kay-

ick Garrick/Wawatay New

The Algonquin Avenue Public School Grade 8 class's birch bark canoe was still under construction during the Lakehead University's C2UExpo 2023 tour of the school on June 5.

Algonquin Avenue students donate birch bark canoe

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Centre, owned and operated by Rainy River First Nations in Treaty #3, recently received a birch bark canoe built by students at Algonquin Avenue Public School in Thunder Bay.

Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Centre.

"About a year ago we reached out to Lakehead University and Algonquin Avenue Public School, and we were looking to get one of our canoes refurbished but we came to the idea that we should see if they were able to just build us a whole new one," says Jessie Richard, manager at Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Centre. "So Algonquin Avenue Public School with the support of Lakehead University and some

of their professors and resources used this canoe project through the entire school year. Throughout the entire year this (Grade 8) class worked on building the canoe and while they were working on it they were working on other projects around self love and acceptance and cultural connection."

Richard says the canoe is "absolutely gorgeous" with two little sturgeon designs on each side of the canoe.

"They wanted to add sturgeons because sturgeons are so significant in this area so we've got two little sturgeons on each side of the canoe facing each other," Richard says. "They are gorgeous."

Richard says the canoe will replace an older canoe, which will now be used as a decorative display. "This canoe from Algonquin Avenue Public School is going to be displayed in our front entrance area," Richard says. "It will be elevated off the ground and people can look underneath it and see all the detailing as

Richard says the Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung Historical Centre, also known as Manitou Mounds, is a national historic site

"We have the largest collection of traditional burial mounds in all of North America," Richard says. "There's 900 acres of property here and we have trails for hiking and biking and golf cart tours. We have a historical museum inside of the building as well as our Hungry Hall restaurant."

Darren Lentz, principal at Algonquin Avenue Public School, says the students began building the canoe this past September.

"And we've done a lot of different learning along with it over the year, including some canoeing with the Lakehead University Outdoor Rec department so the students got an understanding of the canoe and what it means and to feel it on the water and to feel the power it has when it's on the water," Lentz says. "They also got a chance to go picking some of the resources with knowledge keeper and basketmaker Helen Pelletier. We went picking roots with her and gathering and then she came and did a little lesson on sgraffito art with the stu-

Lentz says a first-year class of Lakehead University Indigenous Learning students also participated in the canoe building project.

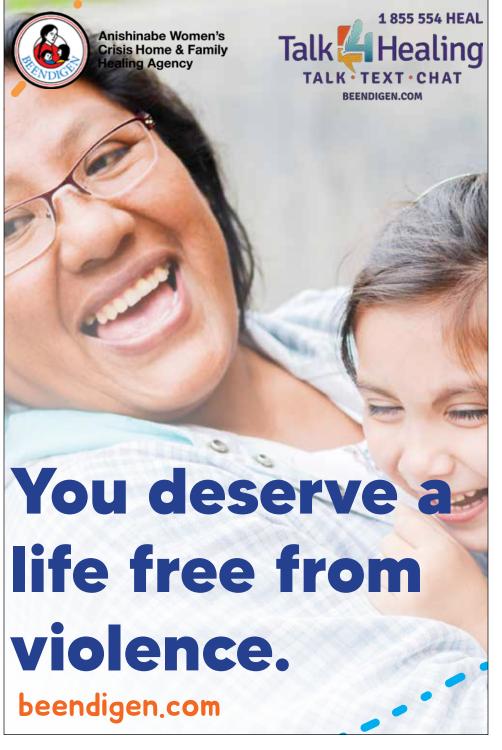
"They came here about four-to-five times and helped with spruce root gathering, helped with lashings and helped with different parts of it," Lentz says. "Our Grade 8s were the main builders, they worked on it throughout the year but then they also got a chance to educate the other students in the school about birch bark canoe making by sharing their experience."

Lentz also highlighted the birch bark canoe project during a tour by visiting university professors and researchers from around the world during Lakehead University's C2UExpo 2023 in early June.

"On the 22 of June this canoe is travelling down to Manitou Mounds, the national

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historic site in Rainy River First Nations, and it's going in that historic site," Lentz says during the C2UExpo 2023 visit. "So they're giving the canoe back to the Mounds in a ceremony. They spent the whole year making it and then they're giving back that knowledge. It's been a year-long project of them learning and they've acquired the culture, the language, they've realized and explored their strengths from their hands-on experiences to their reading and writing about it and all the other things that go into canoe building. They're giving that back now to this community so they can celebrate this knowledge. The community needed a canoe so we said we would build one for them."





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REVIEW

Review of Proposed Operations Whiskey Jack 2024 - 2034 Forest Management Plan

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), Miisun Integrated Resource Management Company (Miisun) and the Kenora Local Citizens' Committee (LCC) invite you to participate in the review of proposed operations. This review is being held as part of the detailed planning of operations for the ten-year period of the 2024 – 2034 Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the Whiskey Jack Forest.

The Planning Process

The FMP takes approximately three years to complete. During this time, five formal opportunities for public consultation and First Nation and Métis community involvement and consultation are provided. The second opportunity (Stage Two) for this FMP occurred on June 15, to June 30, 2023 when the public was invited to review and comment on the proposed Long-Term Management Direction (LTMD). This 'Stage Three' notice is:

- To invite you to review and comment on
- the planned areas for harvest, renewal and tending operations for the 10-year period of the plan;
- the proposed corridors for new primary and branch roads for the 10-year period of the plan;
- the proposed operational road boundaries for the 10-year period of the plan: and
- To request contributions to the background information to be used in planning.

How to Get Involved

To assist in your review, an information forum will be held at the following time and location:

Super 8 by Wyndham July 25, 2023 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Kenora 240 Lakeview Dr,

Kenora, ON P9N 0H2

Whiskey Jack Restaurant August 15, 2023

Hwy 105 General Delivery, Perrault Falls, ON PoV 2K

5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

The following information can be obtained at the information forum and on the Natural Resources Information Portal at https://nrip.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online:

- a summary of the MNRF regional director preliminary endorsed LTMD; and
- · a portrayal of:
- the planned areas for harvest, renewal and tending operations for the 10-year period of the plan; and
- the proposed corridors for new primary and branch roads which are required for the 10-year period of the plan;

In addition to the most current version of the information which was available at Stage Two of public consultation, the information available as described in the 2020 Forest Management Planning Manual (FMPM) (Part A, Section 2.3.3.3) https://files.ontario.ca/mnrf-forest-management-planning-manualen-2021-04-09.pdf will be available at the information forum and on the Natural Resources Information Portal at https://nrip.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online.

The information at the information forum can be made available for review and comment by contacting the Miisun office and/or MNRF Kenora Office contact listed below, during normal office hours for a period of 30 days July 25, 2023 to August 24, 2023. Comments on the proposed operations for the Whiskey Jack Forest must be received by Mitchell Legros of the planning team at the MNRF, Thunder Bay Office, by August 24, 2023.

Virtual or in-person meetings with representatives of the planning team and the LCC can be also requested at any time during the planning process. Reasonable opportunities to meet planning team members during nonbusiness hours will be provided upon request. If you require more information or wish to discuss your interests with a planning team member, please contact one of the individuals listed below:

Kurt Pochailo, R.P.F.

510 Ninth Street

tel: 807-467-3351

Miisun Integrated Resource

e-mail: kurt.pochailo@miisun.ca

Management Company

Kenora, ON P9N 2S8

Mitchell Legros, R.P.F.

Planning Forester Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry 435 James Street South Thunder Bay, ON P7E 6S7 tel: 807-620-0478 e-mail: mitchell.legros@ontario.ca

Dave Canfield

c/o MNRF, Kenora District Office 808 Robertson Street, P.O. Box 5080 Kenora, ON P9N 3X9

During the planning process there is an opportunity to make a written request to seek resolution of issues with the MNRF District Manager or the Regional Director using a process described in the 2020 FMPM (Part A, Section 2.4.1).

40 20 Lac Seul Bay No. 39 dent FN Indepo ake No. Northwest 40 FN Angle No. 33 FN Sioux Narro Northwest Anishinabe FN Anishinaabeg of Naongashii Ojibways of Onegaming Whiskey Jack Forest Kenora Forest

Stay Involved

Further information on how to get involved in forest management planning and to better understand the stages of public consultation please visit:

https://ontario.ca/forestmanagement

The tentative scheduled date for submission of the draft FMP is November 2023. There will be two more formal opportunities for you to be involved. These stages are listed and tentatively scheduled as follows:

Stage Four - Review of Draft FMP November 30, 2023 to January 29, 2024

Stage Five - Inspection of the MNRF-Approved FMP April 18, 2024

If you would like to be added to a mailing list to be notified of public involvement opportunities, please contact Mitchell Legros at 807-620-0478 or mitchell.legros@ontario.ca.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) is collecting your personal information and co under the authority provided by the Forest Management Planning Manual, 2020 approved by regulation under Section 68 of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994. Any personal information you provide (home and/or email address, name, telephone number, etc.) may be used and shared between MNRF and Miisun Integrated Resource Management Company to contact you regarding comments submitted. Your comments will become part of the public consultation process and may be shared with the general public. Your personal information may also be used by the MNRF to send you further information related to this forest management planning exercise. If you have questions about the use of your personal information, please contact Michelle Romeo, Regional Outreach Specialist, MNRF, at 807-707-1976 or michelle.romeo@ontario.ca.

Renseignements en français : Mitchell Legros au courriel: mitchell.legros@ontario.ca.



Culture

Lyons Dance Troupe honoured at FWFN Powwow

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Lyons Dance Troupe was honoured with a special ceremony on July 1 at the Fort William First Nation Annual Summer Powwow 2023, held June 30-July 2 on Anemki Wajiw (Mt. McKay).

"The special was to honour all the people that participated in the Lyons Dance Troupe,' says Kathy Lyons, one of the dancers with the Lyons Dance Troupe and daughter of the late Elder Richard Lyons. "Many of them are here, many of them have passed on to the spirit world but they've influenced a lot of people who got into dancing and cultural ways."

Lyons says the special ceremony, which was held on the evening of July 1, included the different categories of dancers.

"We wanted to include everybody, all categories, just to recognize all the different styles," Lyons says.

Lyons says the Lyons Dance Troupe included her brother and nieces and nephews as well as people from the surrounding

"They would gather a group of dancers, take them to the schools and do demonstrations and teachings and activities with the children," Lyons says. "It was part of cross-cultural education and promoting more understanding about First Nations and culture. It's really gratifying to see so many dancers and so many drums nowa-



Emcee James Mishquart speaks during the special ceremony to honour the Lyons Dance Troupe.

days because when I was a kid when we started going around with the Dance Troupe there was really nothing happening in this area. Now there's that resurgence that's going on and that resurgence just keeps getting stronger and stronger as the years go along."

Dave Simard, one of the

dancers with the Lyons Dance Troupe, says he was fortunate that culture was part of his education when he was growing up.

"It was really easy for me to put that together with my education with dancing, singing," Simard says. "That's how I learned to become a singer and a dancer and a storyteller.

Simard says many of the schools and organizations the Lyons Dance Troupe visited were not familiar with First Nations culture or stories.

"When we walked into a lot of these places they'd never heard of a drum group before, they'd never seen dancers before," Simard says. "So for a lot of them this was a very first experience and it was a really great moment to be involved with a dance group like that. What we were doing was showcasing the best of the dancers,



The Lyons Dance Troupe was honoured with a special ceremony on July 1 at the Fort William First Nation Annual Summer Pow Wow 2023 on Anemki Wajiw (Mt. McKay).

demonstrating how to be a good role model, how to be a good person. I'm always grateful for the opportunity to teach, I'm always grateful for the opportunity to learn and that's exactly what the Lyons Dance Troupe did for many of the First Nations throughout the country.

James Mishquart, emcee at the Fort William First Nation Annual Summer Pow Wow 2023, says he is the last remaining member of the original Thunder Bay Singers.

"I was just a young man at the time and I met so many wonderful people in my travels and expanded my knowledge in terms of powwow protocol and traditions," Mishquart says, noting that he began emceeing powwows after an emcee did not show up at a powwow. "Because I had some experience, I started announcing about 40 years ago. It's been quite the journey."

Mishquart says a lot of the singers he grew up with have passed on to the spirit world.

"It was a different crowd, things were a little bit different, there weren't too many bustle dancers up here at the time, there were a lot of floral and velvet beadwork outfits, jingle dresses, a lot of traditional drums," Mishquart says.
"At the time there was only the one eagle staff, there weren't many people blowing whistles at the time, if anybody was it was usually older men and they were veterans. It's been quite the journey but a good one it's nice to see it alive and that was the vision Richard Lyons had. It has flourished along the North Shore (of Lake Superior) and it's even gone inland to the northern remote communities.'



Arts & Entertainment

Artists discuss their inspirations at NAN conference



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Ginoogaming's Peter Wesley displays one of his artworks at a recent Nishnawbe Aski Nation conference in Thunder Bay.

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

First Nation artists Peter Wesley and Joseph Lane recently spoke about their artwork at their artist tables during a Nishnawbe Aski Nation conference in Thunder Bay.

Wesley, a Ginoogaming citizen who creates artwork for his parents' business, Wolf Tracks, says he started doing his own artwork on sweaters and t-shirts in late 2022.

"It's just basically animals and powwow dancers and flowers," Wesley says, noting that he usually sketches his designs for the sweaters and t-shirts. "I've been doing art all my life but basically just started putting them on sweaters late last year. I was doing what (my parents) wanted me to do and I just decided to do the stuff I wanted to do."

Wesley says his parents, who are artists as well, were role models for him.

"I just started doing art when I saw them doing it," Wesley says. "I started as a little kid and just did it basically all my life."

Wesley says his own line of artwork is "picking up pretty fast"

"I'm always coming up with new designs, trying out new different things," Wesley says. "We're going to have maybe 40 or 50 different designs. We do



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

"It was really through

Couchiching's Joseph Lane displays one of his artworks.

a design that will fit the sweater first and just go from there, figure out the colours and all that."

Wesley says he sells his artwork from his parents business as well as at conferences and powwows.

"It's going pretty good," Wesley says. "They're pretty encouraging so that's also a plus."

Lane, a Couchiching citizen, says he does prints of his artwork as well as t-shirts.

"My art is inspired by Woodland but has a more modern twist on it," Lane says. "I was never traditionally taught because I was an urban youth, so as I went on my art journey I started looking at other peoples work, like Darryl Big George, Norval Morrisseau — I just took a lot of inspiration from their work."

Lane says he started doing his artwork about a year ago.

both the positive and negative emotions that I was having and put it into my artwork and make something beautiful out of it instead of holding it in," Lane says.

Lane says he uses a com-

for me to bring out a lot of

Lane says he uses a computer program to create his artwork and then he uses a Cricut machine to print his artwork on the t-shirts.

"I love it, it's very user friendly," Lane says. "I can use it from my iPad so I don't have to get another computer. It's kind of difficult to get used to using it but once you do a couple of them they're pretty fast."

Lane says his current goal is to pursue postsecondary studies to be a teacher, noting that he would love to be an art teacher in the future.

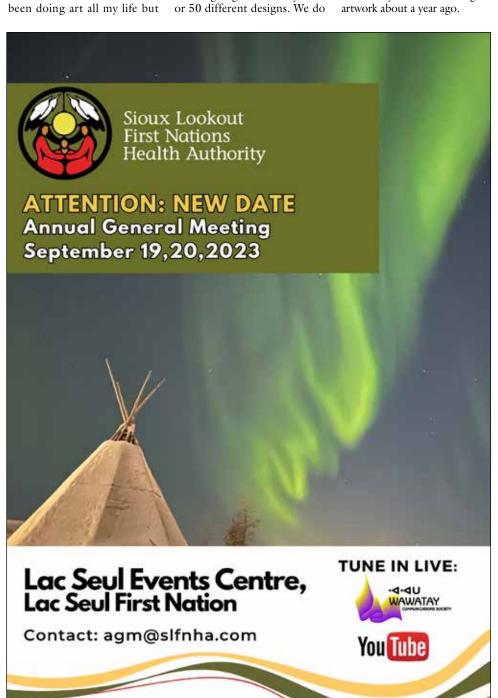
"I've always doodled throughout childhood," Lane says. "I went to school for art as well (at) the Visual College of Art (and Design) in Vancouver. I majored in Rigging for 3D (Modelling) Animation — it is very different than the art style I do now but it gave me a lot of the knowledge to jump straight into digital work."

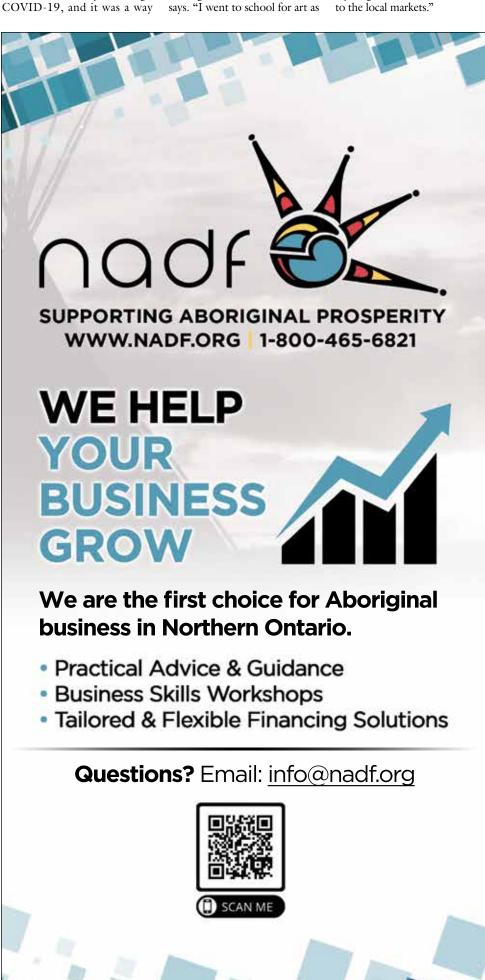
Lane says his equipment allows him to change his artwork.

"So if somebody likes one of my pieces like the moose there and I need to change the colour, I can go back in and easily change the colour without changing the image," Lane says.

Lane says he currently sells his artwork on his Sabe Studios Facebook page, but he is doing an art program where he's learning how to make his own website.

"So hopefully by the end of the month I'll have my own website up," Lane says. "And I try to get out as much as I can to the local markets."





<u>Commentary</u>



t is always difficult to figure out what is happening with major issues in government, politics and how people are affected. A recent issue I have been watching develop really makes me wonder how bright our leaders in government are. The federal government, which has actually been doing a fairly good job in dealing with Indigenous people in this country, really went off the rails when they decided it was a good idea to push through legislation

regarding the Metis Government Recognition and Self Government Agreement.

The only thing the government did with this move was to create division and conflict between people. More importantly the government also made this move without any consultation or participation of Indigenous leaders, organizations and peoples. The Chiefs of Wabun Tribal Council dealt with this negative effort by the government by taking them to court as their only means to stop this questionable and non inclusive legislation.

The tribal council is supported in their arguments with other First Nations and Tribal Councils including Robinson-Huron Waawiindamaagewin, Grand Council Treaty #3, Temagami First Nation, Nishnawbe Aski Nation and the Association of Manitoba Chiefs. During their recent ChiefsinAssembly session, the Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Assembly which represents 39 First Nations in the Ontario Great Lakes region passed a resolution that also rejected the Metis Self Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement between the Metis Nation of Ontario and Canada in its current form.

What on earth is the federal government thinking? After all the terror of colonization, residential schools, the Sixties scoop and keeping my people marginalized and poverty stricken for hundreds of years, the government decides to pass legislation that affects Indigenous treaties without any consultation with us and without our participa-

It seems that perhaps saner heads might be prevailing as this issue of this draconian legislation is brewing but as far as I know there has not been a meeting of minds in terms yet of pausing legislation and satisfying First Nation leaders, Chiefs, Councils and peoples so that their voice is heard and concerns met.

As I have pointed out, this government has in my experience done well on many levels in dealing with Indigenous peoples, treaties and our rights although there are sill many issues that must be dealt with in terms of treaty negotiations and righting the wrongs of a few hundred years of colonization. This is not a conservative government that has stomped on our rights and created con-

flict. We also have the benefit of a minority government on the federal level which helps in making sure that the Indigenous friendly New Democratic Party can hold the federal government to task.

On a more positive view point it has been announced that a ten billion dollar settlement agreed to by the federal and Ontario provincial government is planned to meet the claim by the Chiefs of the Robinson Huron Treaty Litigation Fund. This is to meet the claims of 21 Robinson Huron First Nations concerning unpaid annuities for using Indigenous lands historically.

For more than a hundred years as set out in an historical treaty with Robinson Huron First Nations, their members were paid annual amounts per

person of only four dollars. Incredibly that amount has not increased in so many years although governments, resource extraction corporations and other business have seen billions in wealth attained though initiatives on Indigenous lands. Here is an example of a fair meeting of minds and meaningful compensation to right past wrongs. I and many more Indigenous people across the country salute the federal and provincial government for settling this injustice in a good way.

The last thing we need in this country is more division and more conflict. On the other hand consulting with Indigenous leadership and peoples will create an environment of trust and lead to financial growth.

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I WISH I WAS MORE

Outcast

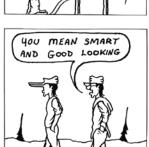
Outcast















walk on it! I am trying. But It keeps bucking me off



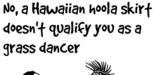
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ok already, I'll



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