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Politics

Wabun Tribal Council challenges agreement in court

Xavier Kataquapit  
Special to Wawatay News

The federal government is pushing through legislation regarding Metis recognition that will greatly affect First Nations without consultation and participation.

The Chiefs of Ontario met at their Annual Chiefs in Assembly in Thunder Bay, between June 13 and 15 where this issue was discussed. The consensus was made to urge all Chiefs, First Nation members and the public to contact their federal member of parliament about the Metis Government Recognition and Self Government Agreement, which is to be introduced June 19, 2023, to oppose passing the bill by unanimous consent. The Chiefs of Ontario represents 133 First Nations in Ontario.

Wabun Tribal Council is taking Canada to court to challenge the government's unilateral move to grant Metis recognition in northern Ontario. The tribal council is supported by many first nation organizations in their fight against the Metis Government Recognition and Self Government Implementation Agreement between the federal government and the Metis Nation of Ontario.

"It is unfortunate that it has to come to this but these questionable claims to lands and rights has to stop. This issue can not be politely stated any more because there comes a point when we have to say something because people are claiming our First Nation culture, our land and who we are as the original Indigenous inhabitants of this land. It has to stop," explained Jason Batise, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council.

The tribal council which represents six First Nations in northeastern Ontario is just one of many First Nation governments in Ontario that has argued that the government has not consulted with First Nations regarding this issue which will severely affect their treaty rights. The Tribal Council represents

the First Nations of Chapleau Ojibwe, Brunswick House, Beaverhouse, Flying Post, Matachewan and Mattagamie.

"The government is wanting to pass this legislation by rushing it through without consulting the First Nations that will be directly affected by these changes. Our view is that this will have serious and everlasting impacts on First Nation treaty rights. This is not just a decision that affects our Wabun territory, it will also have far reaching effects for First Nations across the province and the country," commented Batise.

He argues that the past colonial style means of dealing with Indigenous people without participation or consultation is history. Wabun Tribal Council has contended that the Metis Nation of Ontario's claim of recognizing new historic Metis communities in northeastern Ontario which are within the territories of the Wabun Tribal Council have been deeply flawed. The council prepared evidence to argue that these new communities did not meet established standards for recognition. This evidence was compiled in a paper developed in the fall of 2022 for the tribal council by Dr. Darryl Leroux, a visiting professor of sociology at the University of Ottawa and a leading scholar on the dynamics of racism and colonialism. Another report that supported this view was also published by Robinson Huron Waawindamaagewin in the spring of 2023.

"As Indigenous people we have had to deal with the horrific history of colonization that oppressed peoples, terrorized our children and families with the residential schools, did its best to destroy our culture and traditions and disenfranchised us on our own lands with systematic racism."

con't on next page

Thank You, Airlines!

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





# Politics

**from page 2**

“Now after fighting to have our treaties honoured we are faced with changes that we had no participation in and we were not consulted with to simply legislate an entirely new development in giving the Metis Nation of Ontario a claim to our lands. We have to stand together as Indigenous peoples across this country to fight back on this move by the government that smacks of colonial sentiment,” commented Chief Chad Boissoneau of Mattagami First Nation, a member of Wabun Tribal Council.

According to a fact sheet released by the Chiefs of Ontario, “First Nations have attempted on multiple occasions to raise concerns with Canada about its secretive process in creating and legitimizing the 2017 “historic Metis communities” in Ontario. Unlike *Roe v. Powley*, which occurred within the existing judicial system and was therefore subject to a transparent, rigorous process, Canada is now bulldozing forward.”

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 Chiefs in Assembly 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.

# Thunder Bay Police Chief speaks at town hall meetings

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

Former Oshki-Pimache-O-Win The Wenjack Education Institute executive director Rosie Mosquito appreciated the opportunity to speak with Thunder Bay Police Chief Darcy Fleury during the second of his town halls on May 24 and 25.

"I came out of curiosity, I really liked what I heard him say," says Mosquito, a Bearskin Lake citizen. "It seems very important for him to hear from the community. He says (he) gets these priorities by the governments but (he) wants to hear from you, (he) wants to hear from the community, so I liked that, so there was really good conversation."

Mosquito adds that it was important to encourage Fleury in his new role during the town hall, which was held in the West Thunder Community Centre.

“Sometimes it’s really good to kind of give a word of encouragement or a pat on the back, you know he’s off to a good start and this approach is a good start and I wish him well,” Mosquito says. “But I also wanted him to hear about the real fears that Indigenous people face. Systemic racism is

a real concern and our people have lived in fear, and I'm glad to hear that he is aware of it and he's not going to tolerate it and he's going to address it."

Fort William's Michele Solomon, who was elected as chief of Fort William a few days after the town halls, stressed how she appreciated the opportunity people had to speak to Fleury and give voice to how they are experiencing the issues in Thunder Bay when she spoke during the second town hall.

"I'm not a resident of Thunder Bay, I'm a resident of Fort William First Nation, however I have a strong interest in the relationship that exists between Fort William First Nation and Thunder Bay, particularly the relationship and how it has been evolving with police," Solomon says during her comments to Fleury. "The question in what I have to say is at what point you see yourself speaking on the Broken Trust Report and the report (Thunder Bay Police Service Board Final Report) that was brought forward by (Senator) Murray Sinclair and those recommendations."

**see POLICE page 5**

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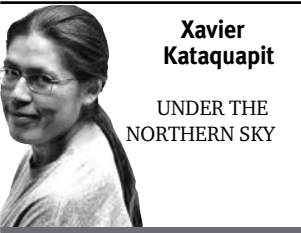
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# Commentary

## Happy Pride Day And Month



Xavier  
Kataquapit

UNDER THE  
NORTHERN SKY

Happy Pride Month to the LGBTQ+ and Two Spirited community. I was very happy to see that in Kirkland Lake recently the Mayor and Council celebrated Pride Day with a ceremony announcing a rainbow colour sidewalk in the downtown core. There are also many other celebrations of Pride Day and Pride Month being held in Northern Ontario which is a great thing to see.

Myself and my friends are either gay, bisexual, LGBTQ+, Two Spirited or supportive of these groups and that makes me feel safe and confident of who I am and where I am. Many Indigenous gay people refer to themselves as Two Spirited and Indigenous people, especially before colonization, have a long history of being open and tolerant of sexual identities. It is good to see that the world is moving to a more open, less hateful mindset when it comes to sexual preferences.

Many of my older friends talk about the 1950s, 60s, 70s and 80s and the struggle they had to go through being gay or being part of the LGBTQ+ community. Those were the days when racism, bigotry and homophobia were more or less normal. You also have to remember that homosexuality was decriminalized in Canada in 1969. Thank goodness things have changed to a great degree. However, there are still some fundamental religious groups that are being used by powerful interests to move our democracies and our beliefs in fascist, right wing directions and using homophobia as a tool works for them.

Most Christians I know are big believers in being open and loving and they do not have hate in their hearts. However, there is a core group of people who are being manipulated to the right with the use of hatred in terms of sexual preferences, race, environmental and conservation ideals as well as a democracy more interested in sharing the wealth. It is up to us to rise against all of this hate and including the idea that any kind of war and violence in this world. We all should realize by now that war is just about sacrificing our young people for the benefit of those who make money on conflict.

Congratulations to all those who support Pride Day and

Pride Month as they are standing up for people and being supportive with love and care rather than hate and intolerance. People have been killed, discredited and marginalized because they were gay and part of the LGBTQ+ identity. Finally there is hope that love and sanity will prevail and our world and it's people will become more loving and open. However, that is not a guarantee as things could change quickly with right wing governments getting elected and deciding on how things develop. That is why I am so excited about so many people standing up against hate and supporting Pride Day and Pride Month. We need to keep doing this and to make sure that those who preach hate and intolerance do not prevail.

If you are Indigenous, gay and part of the LGBTQ+ identity, you really understand what it is to be in a minority and oppressed. We certainly know what homophobia, racism and bigotry is all about having experienced it first hand. I urge all my brothers and sisters to stand up to the hate and promote love and peace as much as possible. You can do this by attending pro LGBTQ+ Two Spirited events and ceremonies, communicate your feelings and ideas to those in your circle at work, in your family and everywhere you live.

Do not let fear stop you because we have to remember the poetic writings of German Lutheran pastor Martin Niemöller recalling the growth of intolerant language and ideas in Germany during the war years when they persecuted Jewish people. "First they came for the Communists and I did not speak out. Because I was not a Communist; Then they came for the Socialists and I did not speak out. Because I was not a Socialist; Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out. Because I was not a trade unionist; Then they came for the Jews and I did not speak out. Because I was not a Jew; Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me."

The lesson in this quote is that wherever you see hate being promoted never go along with it and fight it as much as you can because if you do not, your own safety will be at risk in a world where fascist and right wing ideals prevail. If you do not push back on hate and antidemocratic ideas you and the generations to come will pay for it in a world that is dark and oppressive.

Happy Pride Month to everyone.

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## Anishinabek Chiefs-in-Assembly reject the Métis Self-Government Implementation Agreement



submitted photo

The Anishinabek Nation Chiefs-in-Assembly have unanimously passed a resolution on Day 2 of the Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Assembly on June 8, rejecting the Métis Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement between the Métis Nation of Ontario and Canada in its current form. The 39 Anishinabek First Nations continue to assert that they are the only holders of inherent rights and jurisdiction over their traditional and treaty territories. The Métis Nation of Ontario and the Governments of Ontario and Canada cannot rewrite history to create a narrative of nationhood for the Métis where one does not exist.

## From Flood to Smoke to Wildfire



Graham  
Saunders

WEATHER

Northern Ontario had an abundance of snow last winter and there was still snow on the ground in early May. How did most of this huge region get to a total ban on all outdoor burning by May 31?

### Some weather features combined

1. May was a very dry month, especially in the Northwest where many locations received less than 20% of their average monthly precipitation. Sioux Lookout, for example, had fewer rain days than normal and only one day with more than 5 millimetres of rain. This dry pattern continued into June. By June 18th, only one additional day with more than 5 millimetres of rain rainfall was reported.

2. May was warmer than average, especially in the Northwest, where monthly average temperatures were 2 to 4°C were warmer than average. The final week of May was exceptionally warm. High temperatures of 28°C and higher were common. An unusual feature of this warm spell was that the temperatures next to Hudson Bay and James Bay tended to be warmer than temperatures further south. Communities like Fort Severn, Peawanuck,

Attawapiskat and Moosonee all had maximum temperatures of 32°C and 33°C. Kapuskasing, with a maximum of 34°C, was the hotspot in May in the province of Ontario. Pronounced wind flow from Western Canada contributed to these record temperatures. These wind conditions also resulted in considerable smoke from forest fires in Alberta and British Columbia.

### Smoke conditions

Off and on, the sky over the region has been hazy or with a milky appearance since early May. The source region of the wildfire smoke has changed from fires in Northern Alberta, to fires in Quebec, to fires scattered over Northern Ontario. These conditions often change from hour to hour and with changeable wind conditions and directions. Occasional days have had intermixes of smoke from these three regions.

Often this wildfire smoke remained aloft. Meteorological conditions like cold fronts, wind direction change and even the time of day can cause subsidence – air that comes down to ground level. Sometimes in the morning, smoke and fog combine, and result in a pronounced smell of smoke and reduced visibility. (Note: the word “Smog” comes from Smoke and fog). Often this dissipates with daytime warming from the Sun.

The upcoming two weeks are likely to have a warm/dry pattern - during this spring and early summer. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources warns “The wildfire hazard remains high to extreme across the region”.

### Extreme fire behavior

People who deal with wildfires know and cope with this. In the fire season there are strong connections during dry forest conditions, high temperatures, low humidity and windy conditions. This combination can result in extreme, even catastrophic burning conditions. The frequency of wildfire events is increasing in many areas of the world and some of the largest increases are taking place in Canada (notably in Western Canada). These trends are consistent with other observed changes.

“Future fires are going to burn longer and more intensely” (from Observed increases in extreme fire weather driven by atmospheric humidity and temperature in the journal Nature Climate Change in 2021).

Researchers have been observing and warning of these changes for many decades. Since the late 1950s the number of large wildfires fires and lightning-caused fires have increased, especially in Western Canada and Northwestern Ontario. The area burned in Canada has tripled during the past six decades.

There is some good news. The number of human-caused fires is stable or has declined throughout the country.

There is other recent research connecting the world's 88 largest fossil fuel producers with trends to extreme fire behavior. The Union of Concerned Scientists directly links coal, oil,

and gas companies to “roughly half the increase in drought and fire-danger conditions across western North America”.

One might hope, I do anyway, verification of cause and effects predictions made decades ago would result in policy changes by governments and fossil fuel corporations. Credit where it is due, the present federal Liberal government began and continues to tax carbon. I do not think it is well explained, but the carbon tax rebate is relatively fair and favours those that reduce carbon use.

Alas, the Liberal government and provinces, including Doug Ford in Ontario, continue to funnel huge subsidies to fossil fuel companies.

As troubling in this time of multiple “climate emergencies” is the role of some media about climate change. For example, Terence Corcoran in the National Post (June 14, 2023) begins his diatribe with “Are we done with the Canadian wildfire smoke crisis?”

### Bad timing Terence!

The National Post, the Financial Post (owned by the National Post) and the Sun newspaper chain use the same articles or similar “news”.

I don't know where Doug Ford gets his news. Both he and Danielle Smith, the premier of Alberta, substantially reduced funding for flood adaptation and forest fire management early this year.

Bad timing by some politicians and other bad actors is dangerous and will become more so in the future.

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## 'Pee-Mah-Eh-Kan' - The Thing That Turns



**Xavier  
Kataquapit**

UNDER THE  
NORTHERN SKY

I spent the past few days inside my garage getting my old motorcycles ready for another season of riding. I enjoy working on these classic motorcycles including a 1998 BMW K1200RS a 1992 Yamaha FJ1200 and an even older 1978 Honda GL1000 Goldwing. I've had these bikes for years and as they age, they need more and more servicing to keep them running in good shape.

For some reason I am very much at home at work in my 1950s era garage which is filled with all sorts of tools and bits and parts I've collected over the years. There is something very comforting and nostalgic about the old wooden building as it reminds me of my dad Marius's garage years ago in my home community of Attawapiskat on the James Bay coast.

Dad's garage was a classic mechanics environment and it always seemed to be untidy and disorganized. It was forever stuffed with engine parts, scrap metal, rope, chains, plastic parts, tools, gears, bottles of oils and fluids and old boxes, containers and buckets filled with nails, screws, bolts and fasteners of every kind. The thing is my dad knew where everything was located in this confused environment. The place only got organized and tidied up when myself or my brothers would take the time to put everything

in an accessible way. This made dad really happy and it gave us a taste for appreciating that old garage and all the precious things it housed.

There were no small engine mechanics around so people like my dad had to learn to service motors and machinery on their own. As kids, my siblings and I grew up learning about 'Peema-hehkan' the thing that turns, our Cree word for wrench or screw driver. There was also the word 'Mahkooshcheegan' the thing that clamps, the Cree word for pliers.

Dad also collected old farm tractors as well as implements and attachments to make use of those old machines. At one point he bought an aging saw mill and a planing machine that could be powered with the 'power takeoff' (PTO) of a tractor. He rebuilt, serviced and maintained all these things on his own.

When his tractors broke down with a serious problem he sought the expertise and skill of his nephew Robert Kataquapit who was a self taught mechanic and capable of disassembling, fixing and rejuvenating old trucks and cars with nothing but a basic tool kit and a vehicle ramp made of logs. As kids, we often curiously went by his outdoor shop to watch him remove whole engines or transmissions.

One summer dad hired Robert to work on his old John Deere farm tractor to repair the transmission. Myself and my younger siblings watched from the sidelines as dad, Robert, my older brothers and several Elders dissected the old green tractor. It was like watching a play set on the stage of characters and machinery. The group used blocks, logs, chains, ropes

and brute force to move the heavy metal pieces around. All dad had in terms of documentation was a couple of pages someone had given him with diagrams of the inner workings of the metal parts. Tools lay scattered around everywhere and no one kept track of the nuts, bolts and screws that came off. Yet, somehow magically these fasteners and bits came back together as the show moved on. The cast of characters all provided their tidbits of knowledge so that the old tractor slowly rose from the dead and was resurrected. Much of the progress was through trial and error and featured much excitement, verbal collaboration and a lot of laughter.

The play was often stopped as new challenges arose and frustration ebbed and flowed as either something went wrong, things got lost or a part just didn't fit. Cree mechanics share one thing in common with all mechanics in that they vent with a lot of creative Indigenous swearing in our Cree language.

These past few nights in my rustic garage I felt like I was reliving those days back in Attawapiskat that starred Robert, my dad, some Elders and my siblings in the quest of bringing some machine back to life. Still, I owe any skill I have to all those Cree mechanics, my father Marius and my cousin Robert who taught me that you have to be willing to learn from your mistakes, ready to take a risk and always have an enthusiasm and the self confidence to want to maintain all your own machines yourself.

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# Sports

# Tournament Of Hope featured keynote speakers Reggie Leach and Brigitte Lacquette



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Former NHL player Reggie Leach shared one of his Philadelphia Flyers jerseys with Tournament of Hope organizer Titus Semple during the Tournament of Hope gala on May 20 at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay.

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

The Tournament of Hope featured the addiction story of former hockey player Brady Leavold as well as keynote speeches by former hockey players Reggie Leach and Brigitte Lacquette. Held May 15-20 with a focus on mental health and youth suicide awareness, the tournament included hockey and broomball tournaments at the Fort William First Nation Arena and workshops and a gala at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay.

“Our intention with this event was for it to not only be a hockey and broomball tournament — we wanted an event that was going to provide opportunity and access to resources for the youth participating in the event,” says Titus Semple, president of the group that organized the tournament. “Our objective for the Tournament of Hope is to give hope to our youth that are participating in it. Last summer we were approached by some grassroots leaders to see if there was something that we could do to combat the increase in suicides

within the northern communities.”

Sampele says they had a range of workshops for the youth during the tournament, including workshops on painting, birch-bark, healthy relationships, bullying and addictions.

(Leavold) is a former hockey player within the Tampa Bay Lightning organization and he dealt with addictions,” Semple says. “He ended up on the streets of Vancouver pushing a shopping cart around due to his struggles with addiction, so he had a strong message for our youth and he was able to connect with a number of them. At the end of his presentation, he went outside for some air here at the hotel and a number of youth approached him and opened up to him and told him about their experiences. So this event has really provided the opportunity to open up the conversation to talk about those tough issues so our kids aren’t internalizing them and resorting to addictions and depression and suicide.”

Jonathan McKay, a co-organizer of the tournament, says the tournament went "very well" with about 28 teams

participating in two divisions of hockey and one division of broomball.

“The responses have been pretty positive — we’ve had a certain amount of kids that have come to us, have shaken our hand and told us that this is a tournament that is needed,” McKay says. “The gist of the event that we wanted to do was suicide prevention and mental health and awareness, and I think that’s very important especially in this day and age. Everybody was able to participate in sports, but also we held the workshops, which I think was the most important.”

Leavold, founder of Puck Support, which has a mission of igniting change in mental health and substance misuse by setting the hockey world in motion, says hockey saved his life after he was sexually abused when he was five-years-old during his May 16 presentation at the Victoria Inn.

"I spent as much time as I possibly could with a stick in my hand because it felt so good," Leavold says. "I had all this pain and I didn't understand it, like it hurt. I always tell people hockey was my first drug, I loved it, I didn't have to worry about being sexually abused, I didn't have to worry about where my mom was."

Leavold says he began drinking alcohol while with the Swift Current Broncos in the Western Hockey League and was introduced to drugs at a music festival after returning home to Port Coquitlam, B.C.

"I ended up signing with the Tampa Bay Lightning (in 2009)," Leavold says, noting that instead of training and getting ready for his first year of pro hockey, he was drinking and doing as much cocaine as he could that summer. "All I could feel was the pain I was feeling inside."

Leavold says he ended up in the American Hockey League that season, suffered an injury to his knee and was prescribed OxyContin for the pain by a

doctor.

"Now we fast forward the story, I'm addicted to Oxys, I'm 22-years-old, I lost my career as a pro hockey player overnight like that, I had young kids at the time, they're older now, I lost my family, I lost my kids who I still don't see to this day as I stand up here," Leavold says. "And pretty soon that doctor has cut me off the pills, I wasn't playing hockey any

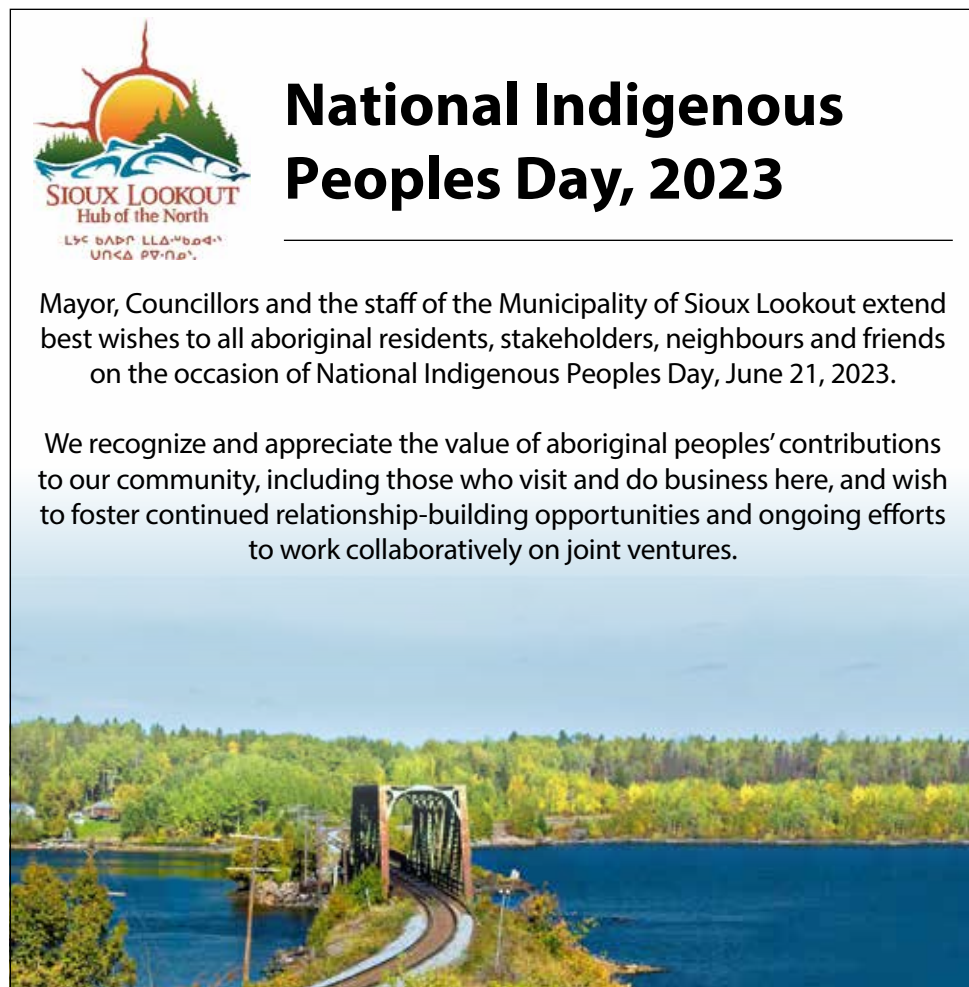
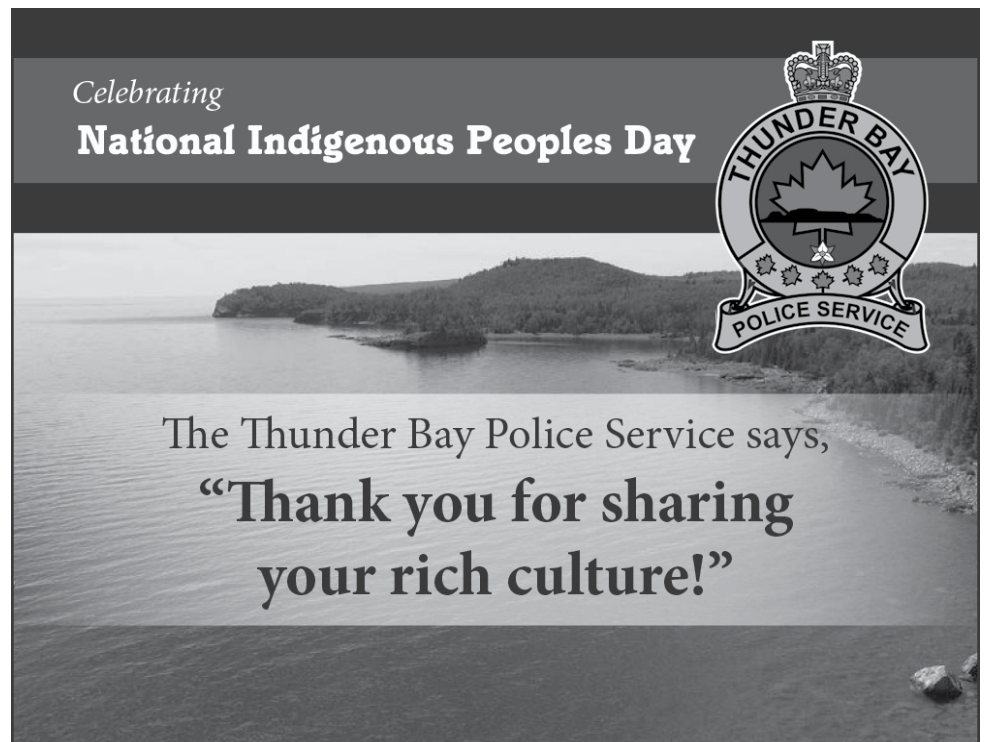
more.”

Leavold, who was an IV drug user from 2013-2020 and was sent to jail for about three years, says he started up Puck Support after changing his life around.

"It was about two-and-a-half years ago, I just had the idea that I wanted to start a charity or a non-profit organization to help support, back then especially, hockey players with mental health and substance abuse

related issues,” Leavold says.

Leach, a Berens River citizen and the first First Nations player to win the Stanley Cup, and Lacquette, a Cote citizen and the first First Nations player on Canada's National Women's Hockey Team, spoke about making choices, having a voice, struggling with anxiety and mental health and reaching out for help during the gala on May 20.





# Sports



A group of Sandy Lake runners pose for a photo after completing the Fire Fighters Ten Mile Road Race on May 22 in Thunder Bay.

# Sandy Lake runners participate in Fire Fighters Road Race

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

Sandy Lake recently had three groups of runners participating in the Fire Fighters Ten Mile Road Race on May 22 in Thunder Bay, including a group of boys aged 15-18 and two mixed groups of senior and junior runners.

"They did fantastic, they all finished," says Ralph Bekintis, principal at Thomas Fiddler Memorial Elementary School in Sandy Lake. "(The race) was nice, perfect weather."

Bekintis says the youth in the Sandy Lake Running Club ran three times per week to prepare for the race, noting that one of the runners from Sandy Lake, Tyson Mamakeesic, will be participating in the North American Indigenous Games in Nova Scotia in July.

"It feels good," Mamakeesic says. "I've just been going for runs and working on my legs and my cardio."

Mamakeesic enjoyed participating in Indigenous Sport and Wellness Ontario's Team Ontario tryouts earlier this year.

"It was fun, I got lots of experience with the competitiveness," Mamakeesic says.

Jerome Tuesday, a runner from Fort Frances, says the race was "really good."

"I was a little late this morning, I forgot my headphones, but I caught up to the pack about half way through," Tuesday says, noting that he has

been running for the last 15 years and this was the third time he ran the race. "Just for the

feel of the community, I think that's what is the best thing about getting to these events and this is the first race since COVID-19 so I feel like all the runners have been eager to get out to do something like this, especially in this area."

June Trout, a runner from Sioux Lookout, says the race was tough.

“Because I had COVID-19 in March, it was hard for me to train,” Trout says. “But I’m trying, I’m not giving up. I heard somebody way over there at Mile 6 saying whatever you do, don’t give up. It’s a good accomplishment.”

Trout says it was very inspir-

ing to be running in the race with so many other runners, noting that she has been running for about 10 years.

"I first started in the Winnipeg Police (Service) Half Marathon," Trout says. "I try to run Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and then Saturday and Sunday. I follow a training program when I'm training for a half marathon."

Eunice Keno, a runner from Sandy Lake, says this was her second race.

This is a positive thing  
to be a part of for our  
community...

– Eunice Keno

"It's really great, all the people that are along the road encouraging everybody helps with keeping going on," Keno says, noting that she is part of the Sandy Lake Running Club and runs about three-to-four times per week. "I started running because of the influence of my partner. He was a runner and I thought I can do that so I started running with him and eventually discovered the Sandy Lake Running Club, so I started joining and helping out. This is a positive thing to be a part of for our community just to have our kids running and looking forward to something."

Danielle Beardy, a runner from Sandy Lake, says this was her first race.

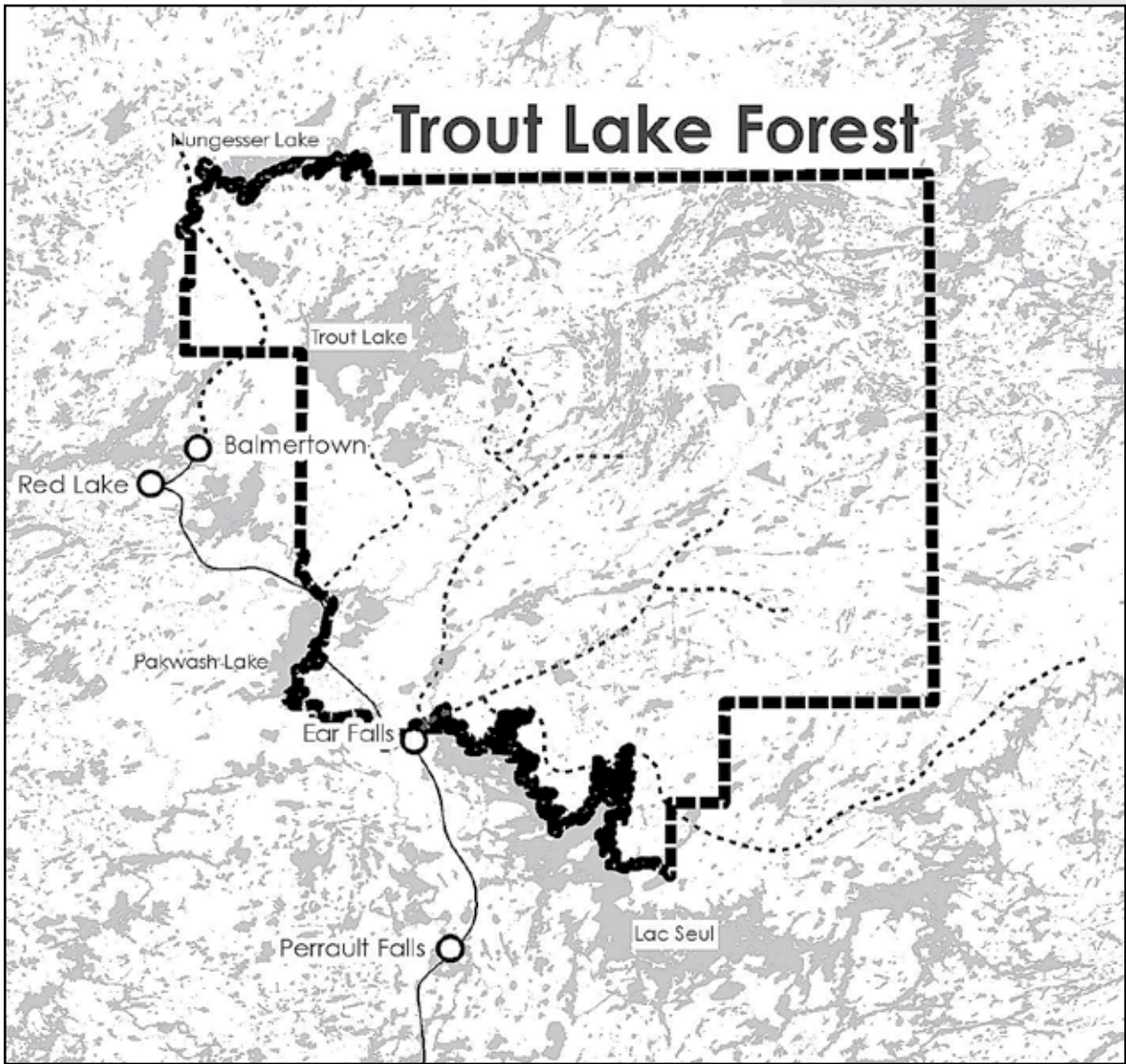
"It was hard," says Beardy, who has been a firefighter in her community for about 15 years. "This year I'm hoping to retire from firefighting so I decided I might as well do a run. There were times when I almost gave up and the people along the side cheer you on, they don't allow you to give up, they encourage you and it's really good."

The Fire Fighters Ten Mile Road Race, which was established in 1918, begins near the corner of Donald and Simpson streets, follows along Simpson St., Fort William Rd. and Water St. to Marina Park and then returns to the start.

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**2023.**

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# Education



**Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute's graduating students celebrated with a tossing of their hats**



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

**Katrina Fossum, a graduate of the Social Service Worker - Indigenous Specialization Program, was recognized with the Governing Council Award of Excellence during Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute's graduation ceremony on June 8 at the DaVinci Centre in Thunder Bay.**

# Oshki graduates over 70 students

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

**Oshki-Pimache-O-Win:** The Wenjack Education Institute celebrated the successes of about 70 students during their graduation ceremony on June 8 at the DaVinci Centre in Thunder Bay.

"It's our 21st graduation, we had 70 students who graduated this year from nine programs," says Lorrie Deschamps, president at Oshki-Wenjack. "So we're very happy and excited that we were able to celebrate in person this year. Our numbers are getting higher, we have more programs coming out and a lot of students are completing the programs, and I think it has to do with our blended delivery model — they're allowed to stay in their home communities while they study at Oshki-Wenjack."

Deschamps says the students attend classes on campus for 14 days twice per semester, and complete the rest of their studies from their home communities.

"That's the thing about our students, they work full-time, so give them lots of credit for working and getting their studies done," Deschamps says.

Deschamps says they recently started a Bachelor of Social Work program in May with 25 students enrolled in the program.

"We're also working towards our accreditation," Deschamps says. "And there's a lot of health programs that we would like to start offering."

Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse says the graduation ceremony was a celebration of the graduates' achievements.

"It's also an opportunity for them to gather with their families and acknowledge all their support systems as well, whether it be their teachers, their families, their guidance counsellors, Elders, everybody who's been a contributing factor to their success today," Narcisse says. "Many of them have overcome many challenges to be here, it took a lot of courage to pursue their education (and for) a lot of them to go back and further their education as well, so it's a testament to their resilience that they are there to overcome many of the challenges that are

being thrown at them.”

Narcisse adds that Oshki-Wenjack's blended delivery model is beneficial for students from across Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

“Oshki offers a very flexible and community-based education system that is reflective of the emerging needs of our students,” Narcisse says. “That’s what Oshki is all about, is continuing to develop (programs for) all those areas where we need a qualified and specialized workforce, whether it be in social services, police foundations and the trades. Oshki is answering that call to ensure that our citizens have those opportunities to further their education.”

Katrina Fossum, a graduate of the Social Service Worker - Indigenous Specialization Program who was originally from Thunder Bay but now lives in Toronto, was honoured to receive the Governing Council Award of Excellence during the graduation ceremony.

"I was speechless to be honest, I wasn't expecting that at all but I honestly couldn't have done it without everybody, my family, my friends, my fiancé, my son, my class," Fossum says. "Oshki was so helpful just getting through, especially with tough times, they helped me a lot to get through all of that. Oshki made me realize a lot of my Indigenous background, so I kind of want to bring that more to the community."

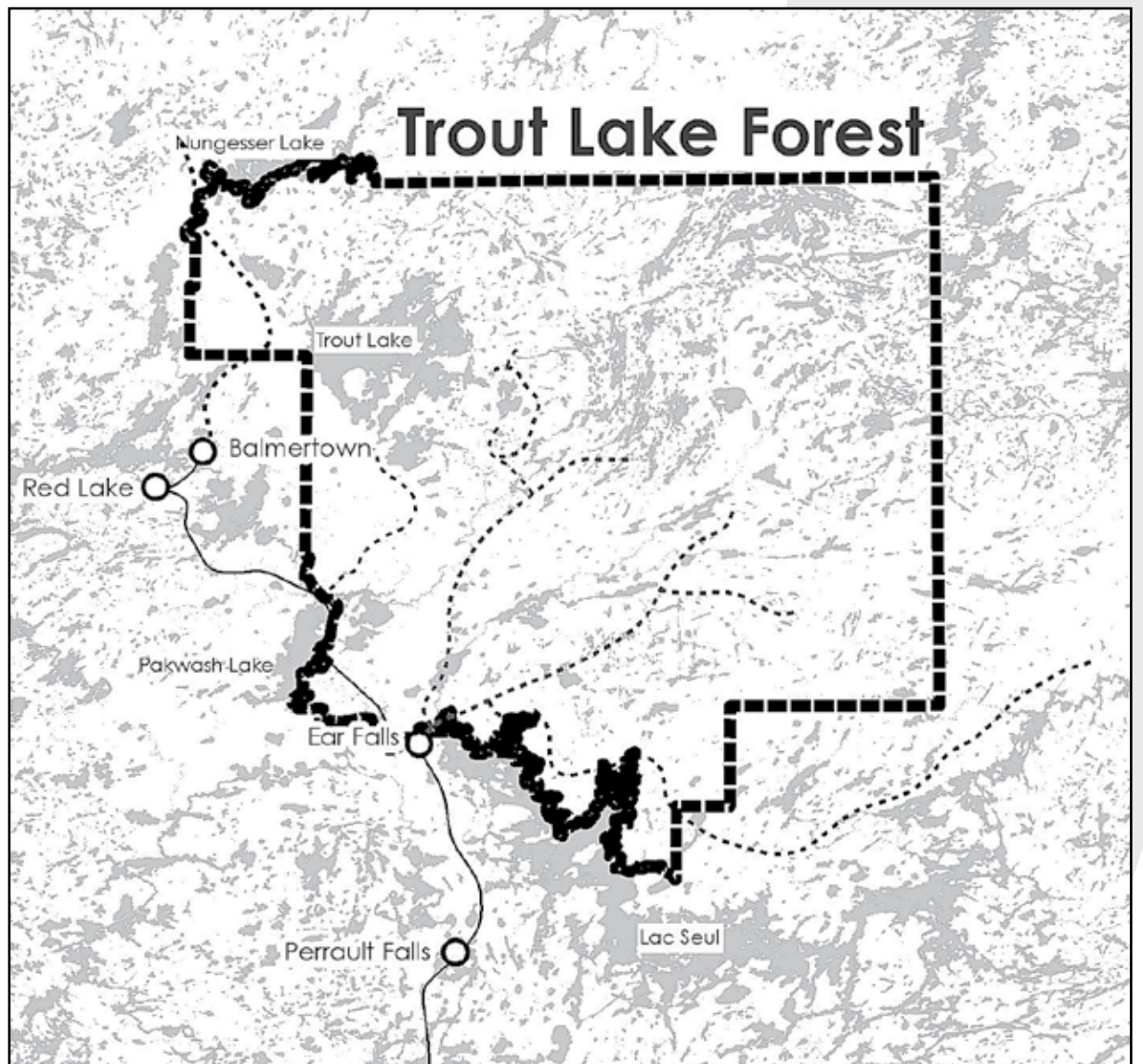
The Goyce Kakegamic Memorial Bursary of \$1,500 each was also presented by Lucy Kakegamic and AnnaFern Kakegamic to Waylon Muckuck, a Personal Support Worker graduate from Mishkeegogmang, and Dori Gray, a Business graduate from Cat Lake.

“My father was an instrumental supporter of Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute and he really believed in the purpose for an educational institution like this,” AnnaFern says. “He really believed in education for all First Nations people from our region and it was reflected in what he did. He was an artist, he was an educator and he also did his role in politics at Nishnawbe Aski Nation as a deputy grand chief.”

# INSPECTION

## Inspection of Herbicide Project for Trout Lake Forest

The Ontario **Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR)** invites you to inspect the planned herbicide project for the 2023-2024 season. As part of our ongoing efforts to regenerate and protect Ontario's forests, selected stands on the **Trout Lake Forest** (see map) will be sprayed with herbicide to control competing vegetation, starting on or about: **August 1, 2023.**



The project description and project plan for the herbicide project is available electronically for public inspection by contacting Domtar Inc. during normal business hours and on the Natural Resources Information Portal at <https://nrip.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online> beginning **July 2, 2023 until March 31, 2024** when the Annual Work Schedule expires.

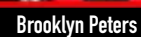
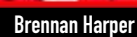
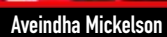
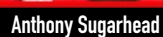
First Nation and Métis communities and interested and affected persons and organizations can arrange a remote meeting with MNRF staff to discuss the herbicide project. For more information, please contact:

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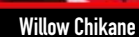
**Amy Doudiet**  
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**The staff of Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School are proud to recognize the achievements of this year's graduating class. Congratulations to the Class of 2023! We wish you all the best in your future endeavours.**

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# Family Well-Being Week

## July 3-9, 2023

We proclaim July 3-9, 2023 Family Well-Being Week to honour families, celebrate all people and creation. Celebrating family is one way we can come together to strengthen family bonds and build healthy relationships creating harmony and healing to build a better future.

*Booshoo, Wacheya, Aaniin*

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

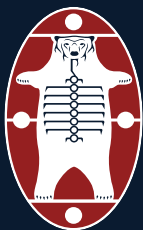
As warmer weather is upon us, I would like to recognize this important time of year a time for celebration of the Family Well-Being Program. With gratitude we acknowledge the dedication and the commitment of the community coordinators and families in their efforts to build healthy and strong community and family bonds.

As the former Director of Social Services, I have had the opportunity firsthand to watch the Family Well-Being Program grow and flourish over the years into what it is today. FWBP brings unique programming, resources and supports to community members of all age's.

As Deputy Grand Chief of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, I am honored to hold the Social Services portfolio I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to advocate for equitable and sustainable funding to support many of our unique programs and mandates set out by our NAN Leadership for our First Nation people in NAN territory.

In closing, as you gather in celebration July 3-9, 2023 for Family Well-Being Week, I wish you all the best today, tomorrow and every day to follow. Please continue to be safe, take time for self-care and remember YOU are important.

Miigwetch,  
Bobby Narcisse  
Deputy Grand Chief





**Wachay from the Social  
Services Department,**

Here we are, one year later and as I reflect on the days that have passed, I come to even more of a realization of the depth and importance of the work that we do. We are blessed with the teams that make up our department as they demonstrate such a selfless commitment to the betterment of our NAN communities.

Over the course of this year, we have found ourselves in a changing landscape. However, change is not to be feared as it can be our humble teacher. When we embrace change, we allow for new perspectives, new progress, and new opportunities. We are a resilient nation, and we will adapt and prosper.

A major undertaking of our Social Services department continues to be our active participation as a party to the Final Settlement Agreement negotiations with Canada. This agreement not only impacts all facets of the work that we do but more importantly it provides justice for our children, families and communities who have been harmed because of Canada's discrimination. Our voice at the table is an echo of your voice and allows us to continue to fight the injustice and participate in the transformation of First Nations child and family services. NAN also plays a special role in these negotiations as we are bringing forward the unique needs our remote communities.

Family Well-Being week allows us to celebrate the strength of our families – our Kookums and Mooshums, our mothers and fathers, aunties and uncles, cousins, those that are not our blood relations but are pivotal members and, the most important of all, our beautiful children who are our future. Families define our identities, they are our link to our ancestors, our kinship and our culture.

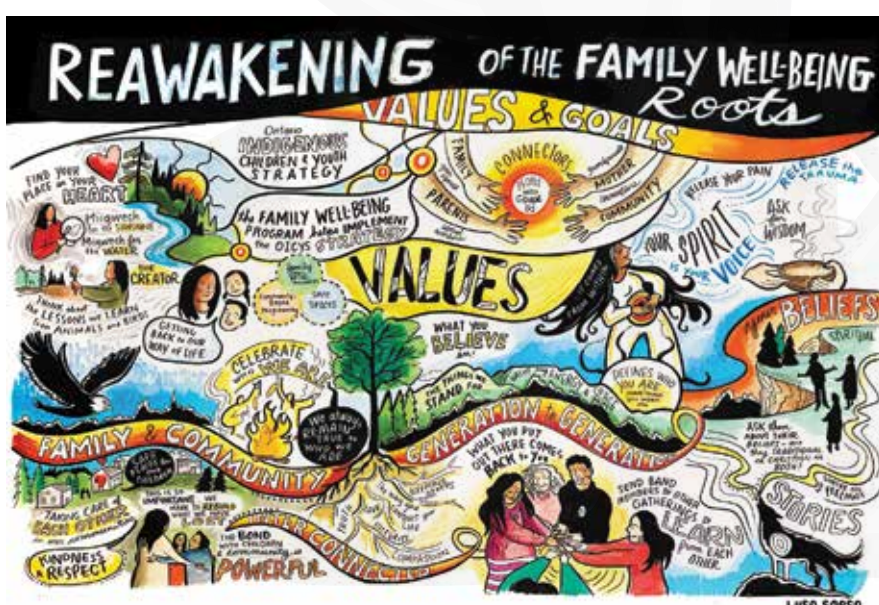
We use this week to celebrate but please always take moments throughout the year to remember your value and to see how much of who you are not only benefits your family, but your community and our NAN nation. You are important.

If there is anything I can assist with, or if you have any questions, please reach out to me at [rquachegan@nan.ca](mailto:rquachegan@nan.ca)

Meegwetch,

## Robin Quachegan

Director of Social Services Support and Implementation



## Boozhoo, Aaniin, Wacheya,

Summertime brings another year celebrating Family Well-Being Week to honour families, all people and creation within the NAN territory. As we gather, we can reconnect with one another, share stories, visit with family and friends and create new memories.

Our program works toward empowering families and individuals to build quality of life, empower, and strengthen family bonds. The Family Well-Being program is grounded in a sense of love and compassion for individuals and families who are on a healing journey. Raising children who are loved and grounded in their culture, language, spiritual beliefs, and family values. Creating a sense of belonging, encouraging healthy relationships, and harmony within communities.

The land is our strength where natural laws teach us balance, connecting with our ancestors, identity, and way of life. Elders play an important role in family healing as they teach youth and families their history, traditions, and culture.

NAN acknowledges and commends the FWBp Community Coordinators for their dedication, passion, endless hours of ongoing support and resources they provide to families. They 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.

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

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

We proclaim July 3-9, 2023 Family Well-Being Week to honour families, celebrate all people and creation. Celebrating family is one way we can come together to strengthen family bonds and build healthy relationships creating harmony and healing to build a better future.

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.

**Sheila Marcinyshyn**

Family Well-Being Program Manager

For more information please contact: Sheila Marcinyshyn  
smarcinyshyn@nan.ca

Direct Line 807-625-4694 or 807-707-1840







# Matawa hosts youth mental health summit

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

Matawa Health Cooperative's Youth Mental Health Summit 2023 featured presentations by former NHL player Jordin Tootoo, Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum, Corey Wesley and Meghan Jourdain on June 7-8 in Thunder Bay. The summit, held at the Best Western Plus Norwester Hotel and Conference Centre, also featured breakout sessions on Challenges, Successes, Areas of Need and Safety and Belonging.

“When I was 14-years-old, I had an opportunity to come down south and pursue my dreams of being a hockey player,” Tootoo says during his June 7 keynote address. “That was a major culture shock for me, I grew up in a community where I knew everybody, I knew what to expect on a daily basis. But I had one thing going for me, and that was the land. For us Indigenous people, the land is where we are connected with our ancestors, it is a place of hope, it is a place of opportunity. For us Indigenous people, the land is a safe place for us, it is where we become whole as individuals.”

Achneepineskum, who delivered opening remarks on June 8, says it is an honour to live.

"We must respect life and all that is given to us," Achneepineskum says. "As a small child, this was one of the teachings that was taught to me and

throughout the years, life got hard at times just as life has gotten hard for you at certain times in your life.”

Achneepineskum asked the participants to think about what their purpose in life is during the gathering.

“For some of us it takes a little bit longer — it wasn’t until my late 40s that it finally came to me as to what my purpose was,” Achneepineskum says. “It came to me in a vision, it came in a dream. I dreamt that I was inside a teepee and I was in there with a lot of young people. And then I dreamt there was a fire all around the teepee and the smoke started coming in. The young people started panicking and crying and they had this look in their eyes like what are we going to do. In my dream I told them calm down, we are going to be able to survive.”

Achneepineskum says she encouraged the young people to walk out of the teepee and to follow her along a path of little white candles on the ground.

“For the longest time I wondered what does this dream mean,” Achneepineskum says, noting that the Elders told her that she must keep that meaning of the dream. “So in my 40s I started being a youth advocate, I would go and speak at chiefs’ assemblies and other places. I started raising awareness about the lack of resources for our children and our youth and I also started talking about missing and murdered women

A woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark blazer over a purple top, stands at a black podium. She is holding a small green object in her hands. To her right is a tall, vertical banner. The top section of the banner is white and features a circular logo with a stylized figure and the text "IMPROVING HEALTH TO IMPROVE LIFE". The bottom section is purple and features a circular logo with a globe and the text "HOSPITAL HEALTH SERVICES". Below the logo, the text "COP SUPPORT UNIT" is visible, followed by a list of services and contact information.

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum spoke about the importance of thinking about one's purpose in life during her opening remarks.

and how many of our women and girls were targeted for crime and violence.”

Wesley, who delivered opening remarks on June 7, says he spoke about overcoming adversity, working on mental health and how to overcome challenges in life during his presentation.

“I had to rebuild myself and choose a new direction and start from scratch and build my life

up in helping other people,” Wesley says, noting that he focused on culture and physical fitness to rebuild his life. “And then through time in helping myself, people were attracted to me and they wanted my help to help them as a personal trainer, so I helped a lot of young people on their way and that’s the most rewarding part of my life, being able to help other people.”

Jourdain, who delivered a

A man with short dark hair and a goatee, wearing a dark grey blazer over a black t-shirt, stands at a black podium. He is speaking into a microphone and has his hands resting on the podium. The background is dark with a vertical light source on the left.

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Former NHL player Jordin Tootoo spoke about the importance of the land for Indigenous people during his June 7 keynote address at the Matawa Health Cooperative's Youth Mental Health Summit 2023.

Wellness Warrior presentation on June 7, says she spoke about intergenerational trauma and her own personal journey during her presentation.

"I just tried to extend my motivations towards the youth so that they can believe in themselves — I think they need to hear from one of their own that you can come from awful places and still build a life," Jourdain says. "I had to go through a

heroin journey before I started to make positive changes in my life, but the hard part was finding out I had a lot of things to heal. Facing that was probably the most difficult thing, but once you do face your troubles and your traumas, you start to heal in beautiful ways and you start achieving things. I've just been progressing so well in the last six years that I'm just so grateful for this life."

**Tikinagan**  
Child & Family Services

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# HONOURING OUR CHILDREN

## JUNE 24<sup>TH</sup> DAY

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](https://www.tikinagan.org/hocday)**





**MOOSONEE CAMPUS**  
**Graduation Awards** Spring 2023  
**Congratulations!**

**The Indigenous Elder Award**  
Elissa Cheechoo

**Northern College James Bay Region Exemplary Graduate Award**  
Nova Gull  
Nicole Quachegan  
Keira Kooseses

**Northern College Commitment to Success Bursary**  
Megan Paul  
Lynore Rickard  
Donna Echum

**Northern College Distinguished Alumni Association Award**  
Elissa Cheechoo

**Alumni Community Development Bursary**  
Nicole Quachegan

**Robert Gervais Bursary**  
Bradley Moore

**THANK YOU, DONORS.**

Through the toughest of times, you continue to reach deep and give, and we thank you for it.  
Congratulations to all Northern College graduates and to those  
who have received Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards.

**We're proud of you and your achievements!**







**Ontario Native Women's Association CEO Cora McGuire-Cyrette and Debra Vermette, president at Ontario Native Women's Association.**



**Ontario Native Women's Association youth directors Shanayah Echum and Alana Robert.**



A group of Ontario Native Women's Association leadership recently attended the 22nd Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to continue to amplify the voices of Indigenous women internationally.

# Youth join ONWA's CEO at the United Nations

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

A group of Indigenous youth joined Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) CEO Cora McGuire-Cyrette and other leaders for the 22nd Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. ONWA attended the forum, held April 17-28 in New York, to continue to amplify the voices of Indigenous women internationally.

"ONWA invited me down to attend the conference — it's going great," says Shanayah Echum, youth board member at ONWA and Constance Lake citizen. "I thought it would be just First Nations but there's Indigenous people from all over

the world here and it's so amazing to be here to hear all their similar (issues) that we're going through as First Nations."

Echum says there were more than 2,500 Indigenous people from around the world at the 22nd Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

"We are advocating for the right to safety for Indigenous women and girls who engage in the protection of the land and work to uphold Indigenous women's rights," Echum says.

Echum adds that she also went to the National Museum of the American Indian while she was in New York.

"I felt kind of sad for all the items that are there though but it was nice to see all the items

and all the (Native peoples) being honoured there," Echum says.

McGuire-Cyrette says it was important for the youth to attend the 22nd Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in order to continue the advocacy for future generations.

"We as leaders need to mentor and support our youth in these forums," McGuire-Cyrette says, noting that Alana Robert, youth board member at ONWA, spoke at the forum about the need for including Indigenous women's voices and rights because Indigenous women are looking at the rights of land defenders in Canada and around the world. "The highlight so far has been hearing

the Indigenous youth standing up to speak about the importance of the Indigenous rights to land, culture and health and safety and the interconnectedness — to get a standing ovation when youth are speaking in these forums, that ... was very powerful. I've been able to watch the youth picking up their responsibilities, being brave, being bold and being leaders."

McGuire-Cyrette says it was disheartening that Indigenous peoples from across the world are facing similar issues.

“Hearing from the women from the Amazon forest and hearing their issues and being able to have conversations with them as well as women from New Zealand and from Spain

and Indigenous people from other countries around the world, it's kind of disheartening at the same time that there's very similar issues around the world to what we're facing in Canada," McGuire-Cyrette says.

But McGuire-Cyrette adds that Indigenous people around the world have “very similar resilience.”

"When you think about what colonization did to us and how we're unpacking colonization and focusing on healing and focusing on our future generations and taking up our leadership role's responsibility regardless of everything that we are facing as Indigenous people worldwide, yet we are still here," McGuire-Cyrette says. "There's empowerment in that, to con-

tinue to fight.”

The theme of the 22nd Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was Indigenous peoples, human health, planetary and territorial health, and climate change: a rights-based approach.

“The voices of Indigenous women must inform and lead the conversations and decisions on planetary and territorial health, climate change and environmental justice,” McGuire-Cyrette says. “We must advocate and work collectively for legislation and policies that uphold matriarchal Indigenous women’s rights, knowledge and responsibilities in relation to their culture, safety, children, communities and Mother Earth.”

# SLFNHA opens new hostel for First Nations clients in Sioux Lookout

## Wawatay News

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) is excited to announce the opening of a third hostel for First Nations clients traveling to Sioux Lookout for medical care. The new hostel is an answer to the ongoing issue of overflow clients being displaced for accommodations. Since the beginning of 2023 SLFNHA has been unable to accommodate an average of 1,222 clients a month - forcing the organization to rely on hotel accommodation locally and in nearby towns. The new hostel will allow for additional secure and reliable accommodation in Sioux Lookout.

SLFNHA now provides accommodation at three locations in Sioux Lookout: Jeremiah McKay Kabayshewekamik (JMK), Jeremiah McKay Kabayshewekamik 2 (JMK 2), and the newly opened hostel soon to be named. Clients traveling from their homes need reliable accommodation and SLFNHA continues to ensure this service is meeting the needs of the communities we serve.

While SLFNHA expands to meet client needs locally the organization remains committed to bringing services closer to communities. Recently the organization has opened two health hubs, one in Keewaywin First Nation and the other in Muskrat Dam First Nation - a priority laid out in SLFNHA's strategic plan. Additionally, SLFNHA will see two more health hubs in Webequie and Cat Lake First Nation in the coming months. The organization will continue to develop these Health Hubs across Kiiwetinoong.

The new hostel is located at the former Sioux Inn and Suites and will open its doors to clients June 2023.

“SLFNHA accommodations has come a long way over the past seventeen years when the old Zone’s 39-bed hostel was

shut down in 2006. SLFNHA's state of the art 100-bed facility, Jeremiah Mckay Kabayshewekamik, first opened its doors to clients in February 2011. The second hostel, a 120-bed facility, opened its doors to clients in 2019. Now in 2023, we

are pleased to announce that we are opening a third hostel for an additional 89-beds, to accommodate the vastly growing number of clients coming through Sioux Lookout to access medical services. Taking clients outside of Sioux Look-

out, sometimes as far as Ignace, ON for accommodations was not ideal, and with the opening of a third hostel we look forward to all clients being able to get the rest that they require, whether it be following medical appointments, procedures or

after a long day of travel," said James Morris,

CEO and President of Sioux  
Lookout First Nations Health  
Authority.

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Community



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

The A Ride to Remember Cycle For Our Forgotten Indigenous Children Through Thunder Bay stopped at the St. Joseph's Indian residential school memorial site on Arthur St. during their ride across Thunder Bay on June 3.

Matawa holds third annual bike ride

Rick Garrick  
Wawatay News

The third annual A Ride to Remember Cycle For Our Forgotten Indigenous Children Through Thunder Bay was held on June 3 with more than 25 riders and support from Matawa Education and Matawa Health Cooperative. The ride began at the Skaf's parking lot on Hodder Ave. at 12 noon and ended at the Walmart parking lot on Arthur St. just past the Valhalla Inn.

"I'm just glad that everybody came around and I liked all the support," says Brent Edwards, part of the team that organized A Ride to Remember. "Every-

body is in total support and they want the awareness to be more out there."

Edwards says the ride was held to raise awareness about the potential unmarked graves that were discovered at the former residential school site in Kamloops, B.C. in 2021 and other former residential school sites since then.

"A lot of people just don't know what is happening," Edwards says. "We need to put this out there, the kids need to know and people need to know. I feel sorry for these (children in the potential unmarked graves) because they never had a chance to play, and the least we could do is recognize them

and acknowledge them — they will never be forgotten. A lot of our Indigenous family (members) went to school and some of them never returned, never came back home."

Edwards says the former St. Anne's residential school site in Fort Albany is going to be searched for potential graves this summer.

"Right now I'm scared to know the number it's going to be," Edwards says.

Kyra Visitor, one of the cyclists and a Sioux Mountain Public School student, says she did the ride for a "very special reason."

see BIKES page 20



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# Community



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News  
A water monitoring workshop highlighted how benthic invertebrates are gathered during Matawa First Nations Management Four Rivers Environmental Services Group's Water and Environment Gathering on June 13-15 at Fort William Historical Park in Thunder Bay.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News  
The National Tree Seed Centre held workshops on how seeds can be collected, processed and stored.

## Matawa holds water and environment gathering

Rick Garrick  
Wawatay News

Matawa First Nations Management's Four Rivers Environmental Services Group hosted a group of Mushkegowuk citizens at its Water and Environment Gathering on June 13-15 at Fort William Historical Park in Thunder Bay.

"We had about 175 participants here, most of them are from our communities," says David Paul Achneepineskum, CEO at Matawa. "We also had people from Mushkegowuk First Nations here, so I believe it's a way to go for the future for us in terms of lands protection, environment, rivers, lakes."

Achneepineskum says the drones on display at the gathering are used for mapping and other uses in the Matawa communities.

"I'm glad that our (citizens) are interested in this technology because it's going to help them with their First Nation territories," Achneepineskum says. "It really helps out when we go in our territories (with) mapping out our resources, minerals, rivers, waters and also lands and forests, so it's going to be great for building our future."

Sarah Cockerton, manager at Four Rivers, says they had a lot of engaging sessions and workshops for participants at the gathering.

"All of them are aiming to showcase some successes or some cool things that are being done by different Indigenous groups all around the country, and we even had some visitors from New Zealand as well," Cockerton says. "They are intended to inspire, so what are the neat things we do to steward lands, to do guardianship and what are some of the other really great lessons learned elsewhere."

Cockerton says the water monitoring workshop shows how the collection of water bugs is one of the ways to understand how healthy a body of water is.

"So the bugs, what bugs, how many of them and what types, tell you how healthy it is," Cockerton says. "Certain kinds of bugs would only do well in perfect really pristine water while other ones will appear if it's not so good. A very common way of water monitoring is to do that collection and kind of monitor the changes in those populations over time."

Cockerton says the National Tree Seed Centre was also holding workshops at the gathering.

"They're doing walks around the site to talk to people and

share how seeds can be collected and processed and stored long term," Cockerton says.

Aroland Councillor Mark Bell says the gathering was very informative.

"It's a great chance to educate people on the different projects and stuff that are going on in the traditional lands of First Nations all across Canada and building our capacity to be able to do our own projects and be able to achieve success in protecting our traditional lands," Bell says.

Lawrence Martin, manager of the Marine Region project at Mushkegowuk Council, says he did a presentation on the National Marine Conservation Area feasibility study in the James Bay/Hudson Bay area.

"All of this process is being Indigenous led," Martin says. "We're doing a whole feasibility engagement process to get point of views and ideas on how to do all of that and to get the traditional knowledge from the Elders as well on what we mean by protecting and what to protect."

Reginald Proffit, director at WSP Aotearoa New Zealand and chair of the New Zealand Planning Institute, did a presentation on A NZ Indigenous Perspective.

"The really important thing with this gathering is the connecting of people from the different communities," Proffit says. "It's been really inspiring to see the conversations that are happening between people, the learning, the sharing of ideas and approaches (and) also the different aspects that are being taken in terms of monitoring the environment from land through to tree species right through to water monitoring in terms of quality, but the important common thread with that is recognizing the First Nation people's culture as part of that monitoring."

Ivan Isheroff, mineral development advisor at Mushkegowuk Council, says he was most interested in the presentation by the Maori from New Zealand.

"It's always good to know what they're doing, how they're advancing as a people and how we are advancing slowly as a people ourselves, so it's always a good exchange," Isheroff says, noting that he also attended a Zoom presentation by an Elder from Cape Breton. "It was very interesting on what they're doing out there, I guess they're fighting for every inch of land too just like us. So it was good to know how different provinces deal with our Native issues, especially with land."

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# Community



submitted photo  
Lakehead University's Bora  
Laskin Faculty of Law.

Bora  
Laskin  
holds  
blanket  
ceremony

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

Lakehead University's Bora Laskin Faculty of Law held a blanket ceremony for about 30 graduates in attendance on June 16 at the Faculty of Law's PACI Gymnasium. Many of the about 60 graduates were already back home or out of town so they were not able to attend.

"We had a beautiful blanket ceremony," says Samantha Gauvreau, a Faculty of Law graduate and Timiskaming citizen. "It's been such a great day, beautiful."

Gauvreau says the key features of the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law that encouraged her to attend were the Indigenous components in the program and its three-year length of study.

"I'm from northern Ontario so it was great to stay in the north," Gauvreau says, noting that she now has a job at a law office in New Liskeard. "I'm hoping to do some pro bono work for my band one day, but because they're in Quebec I've got to stay on the Ontario side."

Brittany Bouchard, a Faculty of Law graduate and Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek citizen, says one of the key components for her was the Integrated Practice Curriculum.

"In your third year for a semester instead of basic classes you can actually go work for a law firm or a legal clinic and you get hands-on experience," Bouchard says, noting that she did her Practice Placement with Frangione Garrett LLP in Thunder Bay. "I was very privileged to be there and Richard (Garrett) is Indigenous, so it was a very great place to be. Marco (Frangione) is very well educated in the child welfare system and he's had 10 years of experience so I wanted to go there because I too want to practice child protection."

Leticia Wabash, a Faculty of Law graduate and Waywayseecappo citizen, says one of the key components for her was the Indigenous law.

"I really enjoyed the courses, the Indigenous law components that they really incorporated," Wabash says. "I also really just enjoyed having the support, like in the second year I was the president of the Indigenous Law Students Association and then I sat on the committee for the Indigenous Law Justice Institute and I was working with pro bono students about about possibly opening an Indigenous human rights clinic here."

## REVIEW

# Review of Draft Forest Management Plan Lac Seul 2024-2034 Forest Management Plan

The Ontario **Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF)**, **Ondaadiziwin Forest Management Inc (OFMI)** and the **Sioux Lookout Local Citizens' Committee (LCC)** invite you to review and comment on the 2024 – 2034 Draft Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the **Lac Seul 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 third opportunity (Stage Three) for this FMP occurred on March 6th, 2023, when the public was invited to review and comment on proposed operations for the ten-year period of the FMP. This '**Stage Four**' notice is to invite you to:

- review and comment on the draft FMP; and
- contribute to the background information

Comments from the public will be considered in revisions to the draft FMP.

## How to Get Involved

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

**Date: July 12, 2023**

**Location:** Royal Canadian Legion 78, Sioux Lookout, ON

**Tel: 807-737-1310**

**Time: 3 pm to 7 pm**

The Draft FMP, including supplementary documentation, the Draft FMP summary and the current versions of the information and maps which were previously accessible will be available at the information forum and on the Natural Resources Information Portal at [www.nrnp.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online](http://www.nrnp.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online) and can be made available by contacting the Obishikokaang Resources Corporation (ORC), contact listed below, during normal office hours for a period of 60 days **July 12, 2023 to September 11, 2023**. Comments on the draft FMP for the Lac Seul Forest must be received by Kevin Pruys of the planning team, by **September 11, 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 non-business 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:

**Kevin Pruys, R.P.F.**

Management Forester  
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry  
Red Lake-Sioux Lookout District  
Sioux Lookout Work Centre  
P.O. Box 309  
Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 1A6  
tel: 807-738-4937  
e-mail: kevin.pruys@ontario.ca

**Genevieve Hennessey, R.P.F.**

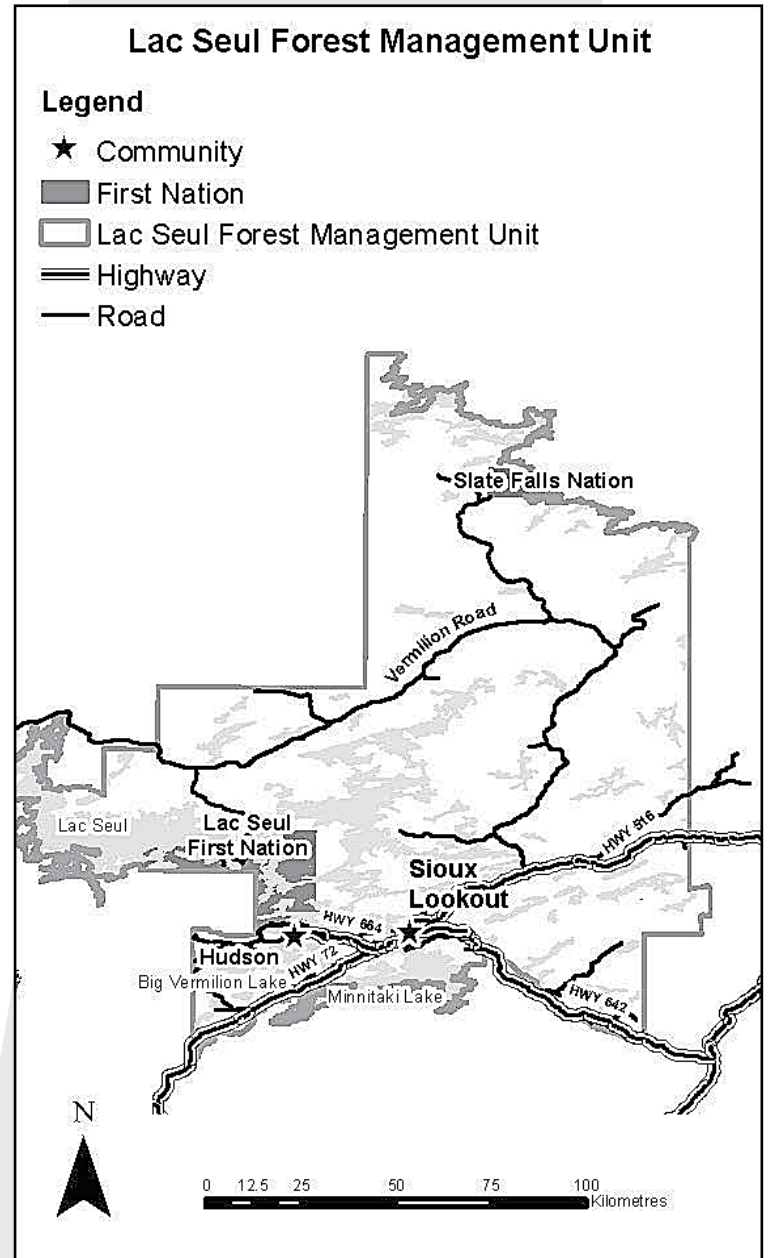
Plan Author, Obishikokaang Resources Corporation  
33 3rd Avenue  
P.O. Box 38  
Hudson, ON PoV 1X0  
tel: 807-285-3496  
e-mail: info@obishcorp.ca

**Bruce Van Horne**

Sioux Lookout Local Citizen's Committee  
c/o MNRF Sioux Lookout Work Centre  
P.O. Box 309  
Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 16A  
tel: 807-737-2904

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

The last possible date to seek issue resolution with the MNRF Regional Director is **September 26, 2023**.



## Stay Involved

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

<https://ontario.ca/forestmanagement>

**Stage Five** - Inspection of the MNRF-approved FMP. The MNRF-approved FMP and the FMP summary will be available for inspection for the 10-year duration of the FMP.

The approval date of the FMP is tentatively scheduled for **November 2023**.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) is collecting your personal information and comments 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/or the sustainable forest licensee 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 Seanna Landry, District Business Co-ordinator, MNRF, at 807-738-5461 or [seanna.landry@ontario.ca](mailto:seanna.landry@ontario.ca).

Renseignements en français : Sébastien Niemi, Stagiaire en Foresterie au 807 728-2278 ou [sebastien.niemi@ontario.ca](mailto:sebastien.niemi@ontario.ca).



Community



submitted photo  
Lakehead University's Bora Laskin Faculty of Law held a sunrise ceremony and a blanket ceremony for about 30 graduates on June 16 at the Faculty of Law's PACI Gymnasium.

30 Grads participated in Blanket Ceremony

from page 21

Jula Hughes, dean at the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law, says they are proud of the graduates, noting that the graduates started their studies at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We were in lockdown, we were doing everything online and then over the past couple of years they've been able to be here in the building and complete their legal studies in that way," Hughes says. "This group has really shown a lot of resilience and a lot of fortitude, so we're very proud of them today."

Hughes says they taught classes over the Zoom platform

during the pandemic.

"The students were learning how the technology worked, we were learning how the technology worked and there were some early hiccups, but we all got pretty good at it pretty quickly," Hughes says. "And it turned out to be not such a bad medium, we were quite successful. But it was delightful to have the students back in the building and have that energy you get from being together."

Hughes says they also did graduations online for a while.

"So to be able to celebrate together in this way is just wonderful," Hughes says.

Robin Sutherland, director of Indigenous relations at the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law, says the

blanket ceremony is open to any of the graduates whether they are Indigenous or non-Indigenous.

"The blanket ceremony is very special to us, it takes a lot of preparation, we go and harvest enough cedar to lay out a cedar pathway for the graduates to walk through and then on inside the lodge that we build," Sutherland says. "Each of the graduates has two either family, friends, teachers, guides, mentors to wrap them. They will wrap their grad and provide some words of encouragement, some words of advice, words of congratulation, anything like that that is special to them."

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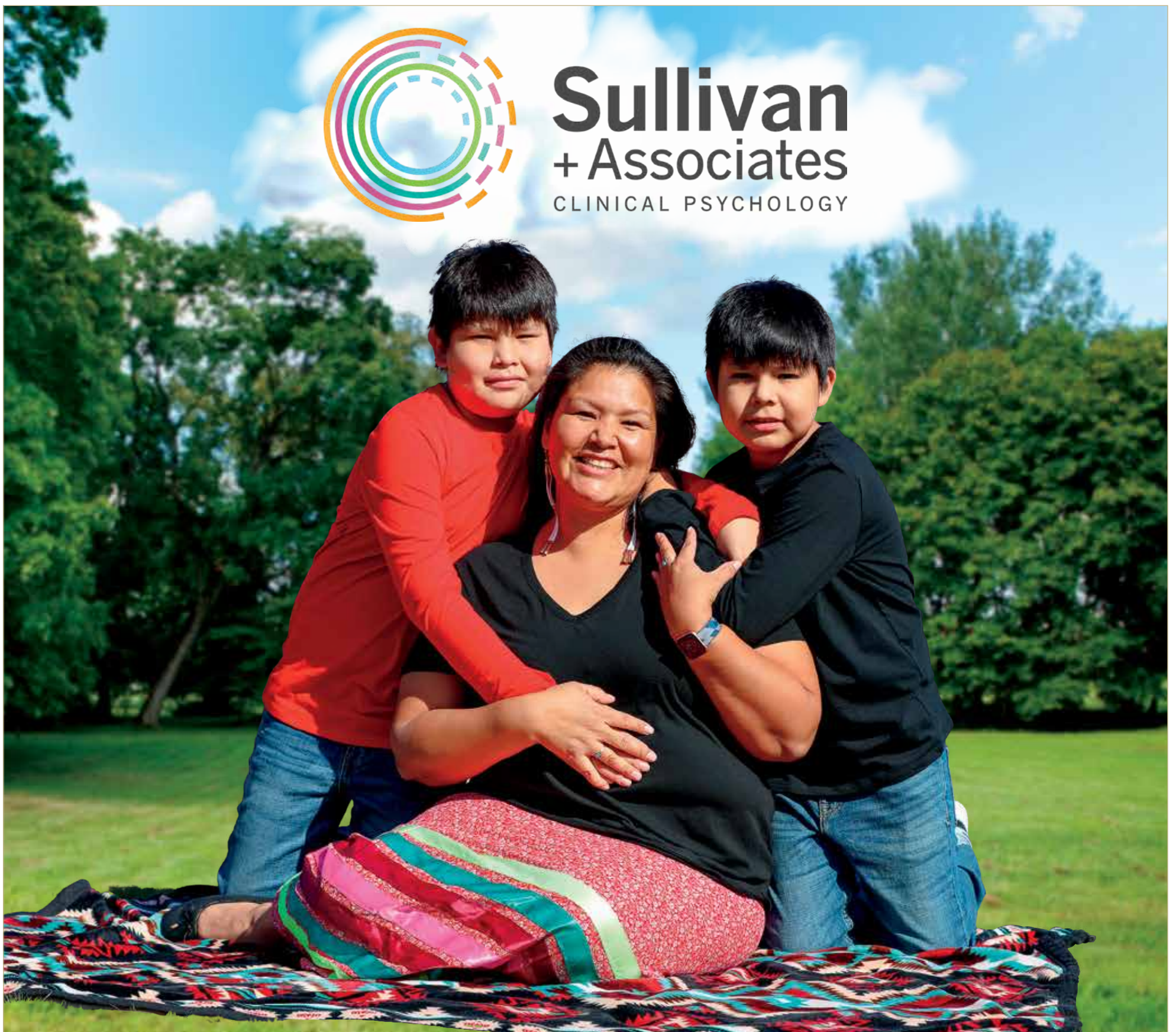
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- Why is it hard to learn in school?
- Why is it hard to remember things?
- Is that fall making it harder for me to think properly?
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Your honor, I declare my client totally incompetent of doing anything right

**Outcast**

WHERE DID YOU GO OFF TOO?

THOUGHT I WOULD GO OUT BACK AND BUILD AN ALIEN LANDING PAD

YOU DO SOME OFF THE WALL STUFF. BUT THIS TAKES.....?

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I had to get a higher dosage of meds because I still like you and don't know why.

**Old Guys**  
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Dr. says my mind still works. He says I'm just getting too lazy to use it.



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