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# Politics



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum, pictured at an event last fall, called for the federal and provincial governments to take the evidence and recommendations from the Inquest into the death of Moses Beaver seriously and to work to implement them in partnership with First Nations.

# Moses Beaver inquest calls for 63 recommendations

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

The verdict of the jury for the Inquest into the death of Moses Beaver found the cause of his death was undetermined and included 63 recommendations, including annual funding to support Beaver's vision of preserving cultural knowledge through art.

The annual funding recommendation, which was the first

recommendation and one of two directed to the federal and provincial governments, called for funding to be directed to the Nibinamik Education Centre as well as one additional Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) community, rotating annually, to support a program each school year for an artist to work with students to create art reflecting traditional knowledge.

**con't on next page**

# Thank You, Airlines!

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# Politics

## Death undetermined

from page 2

The second recommendation directed to the federal and provincial governments was: Ensure equitable funding, resources and adequate policing services in Indigenous communities. Indigenous police services must be deemed an essential service under the Police Services Act (PSA). The PSA should be amended with Indigenous consultation to include an Indigenous specific section to address the unique cultural and geographical issues.

The Verdict of the Inquest Jury was posted on the Falconers LLP website at: [falconers.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/The-Beaver-Verdict-FINAL\\_Redacted.pdf](https://falconers.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/The-Beaver-Verdict-FINAL_Redacted.pdf). Falconers LLP counsel Asha James, Meaghan Daniel and Christopher Rapson represented NAN at the inquest, which ran from April 17-May 12 in Thunder Bay.

"This inquest has been a long and difficult process for the family, friends and community of Moses," says Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum in a NAN press release. "We recognize their strength, resiliency and unwavering resolve to uncover the truth behind the loss of their loved one, and we thank them for attending this inquest for the past four weeks."

Beaver, a Nibinamik citizen, died in hospital in February 2017 after being transferred from the Thunder Bay Jail. He

was remembered as a kind and loving man who had many gifts and one of the great artists, storytellers and teachers of NAN.

"He continues to teach us many things," Achneepineskum says. "Over the past several weeks this inquest has revealed systems designed with fatal flaws that ignored the realities of the people and communities they should have served. Under-resourced systems left an entire community with only two nurses and no police officer. In the final weeks of Moses' life he was, though innocent, imprisoned by a justice system that did not care for his life or treat his illness."

NAN states in the press release that it looks forward to working with community partners to ensure the implementation of the recommendations.

"We thank the Coroner and jury members for their work and for each witness who provided honest, thoughtful reflections on the failures of the health, mental health and corrections systems," Achneepineskum says. "We now call on Canada and Ontario to take the evidence and recommendations seriously and work tirelessly and efficiently to implement them in true partnership with First Nations. We urge the governments of Canada and Ontario to review the recommendations and to make it a priority to implement the recommendations so that no First Nations individual is denied the required care when in extreme crisis."

The sixth recommendation called for a mobile mental health and addictions clinic to be created in consultation with NAN and funded by Indigenous Services Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Health with the following goals: to provide early intervention care in a culturally appropriate and safe manner; to address mental health challenges before they become more significant and debilitating; to offer a variety of services together under one roof close to home, including but not limited to case management of wrap-around services for the individual and to assist in sustained and continuous access to a therapeutic relationship; to reduce the need for clients to travel to access healthcare services; to ensure individuals receive the care and support they need when and where they need it; and if individual communities deem it appropriate, persons with lived experience should be integrated into the planning and implementation of service.

Recommendations were also made to the Ministry of the Solicitor General, the Ontario Ministry of Health, Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police, Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority, Ornge, the Ministry of the Attorney General, Crown Attorneys and criminal defence lawyers in Thunder Bay and the Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario.

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# Commentary

## The Worry Of Maachestan (The Spring Breakup)



**Xavier  
Kataquapit**

UNDER THE  
NORTHERN SKY

There is a great deal of worry, fear and anxiety to Maachestan, the Cree word for “spring break up” on the James Bay coast. There are so many variables and chance events that can turn an average break up event into a disaster.

In my home community of Attawapiskat, we grew up with stories from our parents, grandparents and Elders who recalled spring flood events during their lifetimes. I remember sitting with my aunt Rose Kataquapit years ago in her small house in Attawapiskat. In the 1950s, she remembered one May spring breakup when the river ice had dammed in an unusual way and instead of water coming at them from the river side, the flood waters filled the forests around the community and water came at them in all directions. Aunt Rose explained how fearful, anxious and worried they all were as they hurriedly filled their canoes with their families and fled into the forest away from the moving river ice.

On May 16 1986, the worst spring flooding event occurred in the old village of Winisk on the Hudson Bay coast north of Attawapiskat. Two people died in this terrible event and an entire community was destroyed and was later rebuilt as the modern settlement of Peawnuick.

I remember several spring break up events when I was a young boy in the 1980s. It all depended on the weather and how fast or slow the ice and snow melted. If the weather was consistently warm, then it was fairly predictable but if the weather constantly changed from warm to cold over weeks, then there was no way to know what would happen. I remember monitoring the breaking ice with everyone on the river bank as Elders and traditional people did their best to read the conditions. There was a lot of anxiety at night as anything could happen at any time. Big freighter canoes were positioned upright next to our front doors, ready with paddles and some emergency supplies.

There were some nights that our parents warned us to prepare to move if anything happened and we went to bed listening to the booming sounds of massive blocks of ice tumbling onto themselves in the dark. It was frightfully anxious to listen late a night to

the movement of the river. It was contrary to what you would expect. It was good to hear the crackling of brittle ice crystals, the loud static sound of sharp ice rubbing against themselves and the crash of heavy blocks because it meant the ice was moving. If the sound stopped, it meant the ice had dammed and it was a matter of waiting for the water to rise. Silence in the dark meant that we were in danger.

The dangers of the annual spring break up is no different today. Thanks to the work of our leadership and knowledgeable traditional people who have a good understanding of the river and ice movements we have a better idea these days of the threat of flooding. These Elders and traditional people fly in helicopters and aircraft along the river and water systems to monitor the situations for our community citizens. I was happy to see traditional people like Joe Louttit taking a prominent role in monitoring the ice. His father Reg Louttit, who was a memorable Chief in our community in the 1980s, had done the same with so many Elders in the past. Meegwetich for everyone involved in keeping family and friends safe.

There are evacuations that take place with the threat of potential flooding and often the most vulnerable are the first to be flown south to be safe. Many prefer to escape to their traditional territories and camps where they know how to be safe from flooding. However, many others are not able to travel on the land and it is safer for them to go south.

I also am very concerned for those who go south where there are so many possible dangers. People end up driving on busy highways and some fall into using alcohol and drugs or associating with dangerous people. I worry about our Elders, young people and family and friends who end up transplanted in cities and towns to the south.

Leadership and coordinators have become experienced in these dangers and every year they take more and more efforts to keep everyone safe. I know that our leadership, volunteers in southern communities and organizations do a lot to make sure people are cared for and made comfortable during every evacuation.

So I wish everyone a safe and careful evacuation during the spring breakup and I hope and pray that severe flooding does not take place. I will be more content when everyone manages to return to their homes and the danger of flooding passes with no harsh or tragic consequences.

[www.underthenorthernsky.com](http://www.underthenorthernsky.com)

## Lac La Croix First Nation Holds Treaty Land Entitlement Signing Ceremony



submitted photo

Chief Carrie Atatise-Norwegian of Lac La Croix First Nation; local Member of Parliament Marcus Powlowski, on behalf of the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations; and the Honourable Greg Rickford, Ontario Minister of Indigenous Affairs; announced that the Lac La Croix First Nation, the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario concluded tripartite negotiations and signed a settlement agreement in relation to the Lac La Croix First Nation's Treaty Land Entitlement Claim.

## Growing season hesitates and some high-water concerns persist



**Graham  
Saunders**

WEATHER

When does spring begin in Northern Ontario? If you take seriously

weather forecasts made by ground hogs, it could be as early as February 2. Another date could be the Spring Equinox, which happened on March 20 this year. The Spring Equinox can occur from the 19th to 22nd of March. The exact timing of the Equinox, Latin for equal day and night, varies because of the Earth's orbit around the Sun.

This astronomical definition of spring makes some sense. After the Spring Equinox the Sun is above the horizon for over 12 hours and increased warming potential. By the end of April there is a gain of about 2.5 hours. Both this increased duration of sunlight and the Sun being higher above the horizon contribute to warming temperatures.

Another way to define spring is when the growing season begins. The growing season for native (boreal) vegetation technically begins when average daily temperatures reach or exceed 5°C for five days in a row. The beginning of the growing season usually is associated with other signs of spring,

return of robins and other migratory birds and poplar trees blooming. (Sorry to remind some people of allergy symptoms timed with the spring.)

The growing season began slightly earlier than average this year. Kenora, Sioux Lookout, Thunder Bay and communities in the Northwest reached the “5 and 5 threshold” (see above) around April 13. In the Northeast it happened a couple of days later.

It was a “false spring” across the entire region. Snow, freezing rain and daily temperatures colder than 5°C soon followed. The growing season resumed in late April in the Northeast and early May in the Northwest.

Last month I mentioned some concerns about potential flooding. Many areas in the region had more winter snow than usual. A week of warm temperatures in the first half of April had reduced the snowpack - always good to have a gentle melt in the springtime. However, a large, slow-moving low pressure system was over western Lake Superior when I was writing the final words of last month's column. It was forecast to move east and take days to cross over Ontario. It contained considerable moisture, fed in from the Gulf of Mexico, and was the third precipitation events in April contributing to the present concerns about flooding.

The first occurred on April 1, a Colorado Low delivered freezing rain and snowfall from Sault Ste. Marie to North Bay. (More about April 1 later.)

Snow amounts from 15 to 30 cm were measured in this corridor. Much of Northern Ontario was affected on April 5-6 by another Colorado Low. Snow, ice pellets, freezing rain and rain resulted in multiple highways being closed across Northern Ontario. On April 16-17, the third slow-moving Colorado Low tracked over the region. It brought widespread snow, ice pellets, and freezing rain and resulted in rural school bus cancellations and school closures for several school boards in and west of Thunder Bay and the north shore of Lake Superior.

Usually, in April rain is the main type of precipitation, although snow, especially in the first half of the month, is not unusual. This April featured copious amounts of rain and snow, often in combination. Areas around Kenora, Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury received triple their average snow amount for the month. An area from Thunder Bay northeast to Attawapiskat, Kashechewan and Fort Albany on James Bay received double the normal amount of precipitation impacting the Albany and Attawapiskat River systems.

Some residents from these First Nations on the James Bay coast were evacuated on April 25. A general evacuation began on May 5 due to flooding (Source: Indigenous Services Canada).

Regular updates of maps with flood watches and warnings warned of potential or actual flooding for most of Ontario. See site: Flood Forecasting and

Warning Program ([gov.on.ca](http://gov.on.ca))

### Outlook for May

It is always risky to predict weather a month into the future. This is especially true presently because of conflicting forecasts. Environment Canada is predicting warmer than average temperatures extending into June. Other forecasts are suggesting average or even cooler conditions.

If the Environment Canada forecast is correct, we could potentially move quickly into a significant later spring fire season. In 1995, 2010 and 2021 relatively wet Aprils were followed by warm and dry Mays resulting in a number of wildfires, especially in the Northwest.

### Back to April 1.

This year the world passed a foreboding threshold on April 1. The global average sea surface temperature reached a high of 21.1°C, exceeding the previous record of 21 degrees set in 2016. Sea surface temperatures have increased, whereas they typically decline during April and May.

Also in the news is that we are entering the El Niño phase with warmer than average Pacific Ocean water temperatures. This implies the 2023 El Niño is starting from already elevating global average temperatures, making it easier to set records.

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# Commentary

# A Good Path Forward



**Xavier  
Kataquapit**

## UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

Recently I had conversations with friends family about how important it is to help others and in particular those who are marginalized and who have addictions. We were agreed on the fact that too many Indigenous people are dealing with addictions as a result of colonization and all of the racism, abuse and bigotry that went along with this reality for many decades.

We have come a long way in how we look at people with addictions and we now understand this has to be treated as a health issue which is debilitating and often fatal. Thankfully we have more and more Indigenous people who are involved in assisting our people with alcohol and drug addictions.

We also have a lot of people with life experience as recovering alcoholics or addicts involved in assisting those who are suffering from addictions.

These days it seems like colleges are pumping out social workers who have good intentions but that don't have the life experience to provide the necessary care and understanding for those who are suffering from alcoholism and drug addiction.

I am reminded of a story

I read some time ago that explains a view on helping a person with alco-holism or drug addiction. Here is the story:

“An alcoholic addict had fallen into a hole and was pleading for help from anyone.

He just could not figure out how to get out of this despair of alcoholism and addiction he had fallen into. A businessman went by and the alcoholic addict called out for help. The businessman threw him some money and told him to buy himself a ladder.

But the alcoholic addict could not buy a ladder in this hole he was in. Then a doctor walked by. The alcoholic addict cried out that he could not get out of the hole he was in.

The doctor gave him some drugs and suggested that the medicine would help. The alcoholic addict said thanks but the pills just made him numb and he was still stuck in the hole. Next a psychiatrist/social worker was walking by and heard the alcoholic addict cries for help. He stopped and asked, "How did you get there? Were you born there? Did your parents put you there? Tell me about yourself, it will alleviate your sense of loneliness."

So the alcoholic addict talked with him for an hour and poured out his heart. The the psy-chiatrist/social worker noticed the time and said he had to leave but would try to return the next week.

The alcoholic addict thanked him, but he was still in the hole. Next thing you know a priest minister came by. The alcoholic

addict again called for help. The priest minister said, "I'll say a prayer for you." He got down on his knees and prayed for the alcoholic addict, then he left.

The alcoholic addict was very grateful but he was still stuck in the hole. Suddenly, a recovering alcoholic addict happened to be passing by and he was coming from a Narcotics Anonymous meeting.

The alcoholic addict cried out, "Hey, help me. I'm stuck in this hole!" Right away the recovering alcoholic addict realized what the alcoholic addict in the hole was dealing with and he jumped down in the hole with him.

The alcoholic asked, "What are you doing? Now we're both stuck here!" But the recovering alcoholic smiled and said, "Calm down. It's okay. I've been here before. I know how to get out."

As more and more of my people become recovering alcoholics and addicts thankfully some of them are finding work in assisting others with this problematic health issue. It is a long difficult road for Indigenous communities as we have had to struggle through generations of abuse, tragedy, trauma and marginalization.

I often repeat to anyone who might listen that these tragedies took generations to accumulate and it may very well take generations to deal with.

Life is a lot better than it was for my parents who grew up in a culture of normalized racism and ignorance.

However, there are still barri-

ers in place that need to be dealt with today. Through the work that so many people are doing today, life will be many steps better for future generations.

I say Meegwetch, thanks to all of the wonderful, caring and wise Elders, leaders, traditional guides, recovering alcoholics and addicts who are providing the care and support needed to assist our brothers and sisters heal and also recover from these life threatening and debilitating alcoholism and ad-diction health issues.

As a recovering alcoholic I can tell you, with qualified, experienced intervention and support there is a good path forward.

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 SCAN ME



A person in traditional Indigenous regalia, including a feathered headdress and a beaded necklace, is captured in a dynamic dance pose. The background is a blurred natural setting with green foliage. The text "Na-Me-Res Pow Wow Indigenous Arts Festival 2023" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font, spanning across the middle of the image.

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Fancy Shawl Dancer at the 2022 Na-Me-Res Pow Wow, photographed by Jose San Juan.











# Community

## Wiikwogaming Elders Council gathers | Continuity of Care Forum

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

The Wiikwogaming Elders Council Gathering included presentations on the History of the TRC and Unmarked Graves and an Archaeological Assessment, including detailed maps of grave sites. Held May 2-3 at the Best Western Nor'Wester Plus Hotel and Conference Centre in Thunder Bay, the gathering was the second of two held by Grassy Narrows and the Wiikwogaming Missing Children and Unmarked Burials Project, with the previous gathering held in Winnipeg.

"The key points that we're hearing from both (gatherings) is, number one, the healing that needs to happen in all the communities," says Marie Lands, emcee at the Wiikwogaming Elders Council Gathering and consultant with the Wiikwogaming Missing Children and Unmarked Burials Project. "That was very key because they're all recognizing the trauma that has been experienced at the school. They want to understand things that never seem to have been resolved that they experienced at residential school because the focus here is on unmarked graves and burials. They talked about stories of children they know and they never heard of again."

Lands says she attended McIntosh Indian residential school from when she was five-years-old until it closed in 1969. "We like to call ourselves

warriors because we went through this and came through and we're still here," Lands says. "We're going to be creating a report from the first (gathering) and we're going to be having a mental health plan from that as well as the archival research plan."

Stephen Lands, co-lead for the McIntosh Indian residential school search and a McIntosh Indian residential school survivor, says they identified many survivors from the McIntosh Indian residential school during the gatherings.

"I've seen a few of them that I attended there with," Stephen says. "(The gathering) in Winnipeg was for the community of Grassy Narrows and that was quite successful, we got a lot of work and direction from the Elders."

Stephen says many of the McIntosh Indian residential school survivors were taken from various northern communities in Nishnawbe Aski Nation territory.

“The survivors) are happy that something is being done, they suffered a lot of trauma and many of them are starting to acknowledge now that it’s time something was done and it is being done for them,” Stephen says. “Our mandate is we want to find all the children that are missing and unmarked graves.”

Former Grassy Narrows chief Arnold Pelly says they want to make sure everything is preserved the way it has been and also to protect their traditional land use area.

"McIntosh, the former residential school area, is not just property any more, but it's sacred ground," Pelly says. "That is what this is all about, we want to protect that sacred ground."

Pelly says they are looking at the timespan from 1921 to 1969, when the McIntosh Indian residential school operated.

"So there could be hundreds and hundreds of graves in there, one on top of another in some cases," Pelly says. "Right now the archeologists have done the preliminary ground search. We haven't started a GPR (ground penetrating radar) yet and we probably won't be until we have all the available information that they are able to collect."

Henrik Akerlund, lawyer at Major Sokiski Moffatt LLP, says an archaeological assessment of the McIntosh Indian residential school was conducted by Golder with input by Grassy Narrows Elders during his Archaeological Assessment presentation at the gathering.

"There are recommendations on follow-up work that (Golder) provided as part of this work, and part of those recommendations is to expand this work and bring in (citizens) from other communities to get more information and create a more comprehensive record of potential unmarked sites and then of course move on to other ways to assess for unmarked graves such as using ground penetrating radar and so forth," Akerlund says.

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

Nishnawbe Aski Nation's Continuity of Care Forum — Seven Youth Inquest included comments by family members of the seven youth who died while pursuing their secondary school education in Thunder Bay and a Student Panel. The Continuity of Care Forum was held on April 26-27 at the Best Western Nor'Wester Plus Hotel and Conference Centre in Thunder Bay.

"It's going on 17 years (since) I lost my boy here in Thunder Bay," says Maryanne Panacheese, mother of Paul Panacheese, who died in 2006. "It's never easy talking about my boy or coming to these kind of forums or even meeting with the students."

Panacheese says she moved to Thunder Bay in 2006 to be with her son while he was attending school.

"I knew what he was going through, he used to tell me the struggles that he had here in Thunder Bay," Panacheese says. "That's why I took the time to come out and be with him, hoping that this would be his last year. I was only here for four months when he passed on Nov. 11, 2006. I still can remember that day, actually he came home that afternoon, not knowing that this would be our last time together."

Panacheese says she wants to see change for the students who have to leave their home communities to attend high school.

"I don't want them to go through what my son went through," Panacheese says. "I know he used to say he would like to see changes happen for the students, he used to tell me the struggles that they had and what was happening to them here in Thunder Bay. I always told my son: 'Don't retaliate, just continue to be strong.'"

Panacheese says she is thankful for all the hard work that is happening to help students while they are attending high school in Thunder Bay.

"I think we need to do more," Panacheese says. "We need to do more and Thunder Bay has to do more for us too because we know we want our kids educated and to be safe."

Panacheese says her son's goal was to travel and see the world after he graduated.

"After his death, the next year or two years after, I started travelling and going places," Panacheese says. "That kind of pushed me to go travel for him, that's what he wanted to do."

The Student Panel featured Marco Fiddler and Darren Aysanabee, both Grade 11 Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School (DFC) students from Sandy Lake, on the first morning of the Continuity of Care Forum.

Fiddler says he missed being in Sandy Lake while pursuing his secondary school studies at DFC.

"I was out of my zone and I didn't feel comfortable for a while," Fiddler says. "Adapting to a new lifestyle and living

out here in the city was kind of overwhelming. Eventually I did feel comfortable being out here; overall I was really grateful about being out here for school.”

Fiddler says another obstacle for him was meeting new people.

“Before coming out here I was ready to make new friends,” Fiddler says. “Once I came out here I just didn’t really talk that much, I felt like I was out of place and I had difficulty talking and I couldn’t really initiate or hold on to conversations. I felt awkward most of the time I was here but I did make a few good friends towards the end of semester. I’m really happy about meeting my new friends and achieving my little goal before I came out here.”

Fiddler says he had a counselor to talk to and support from Northern Nishnawbe Education Council.

"I could just call if I needed something to eat or just go out and about," Fiddler says. "Even if I was feeling upset about something, NNEC was always a call away for extra support when needed."

Fiddler says his advice for high school students is to never give up on themselves.

"And to keep striving towards success in your dreams," Fiddler says. "Be the best of you for yourself, for the future and the people around you."

**see YOUTH on page 10**

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# Community

## Youth inquest

**from page 9**

Aysanabee says his first obstacle was getting used to new friends at his boarding home.

"I was kind of uncomfortable being around them, at building a friendship or relationship," Aysanabee says. "I wasn't comfortable with them and they were uncomfortable with me."

Aysanabee says another obstacle was getting used to the city and the Thunder Bay Transit bus system.

"I wasn't used to the people in the city," Aysanabee says.

Aysanabee says his supporters were his friends.

"Every time I went through something they were there for me," Aysanabee says. "When I needed to find out about extracurricular activities, they would tell me there's the gym, there's the complex, there's after school supports and the teachers, by asking them questions."

Aysanabee says his advice for high school students is to go to school every day.

"Just do their work because there's no way you can fail if you just show up and do the work," Aysanabee says.

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

A group of Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School (DFC) students recently celebrated the launch of the Waa Nish Kaan (Wake Up) continuing audio series on CBC on May 10. Posted on the CBC website at: [www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-1389-waa-nish-kaan-wake-up](http://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-1389-waa-nish-kaan-wake-up), the Waa Nish Kaan (Wake Up) series is about the Wake the Giant Music Festival and the students' experiences. Episodes 1-5 were posted on May 5-9 featuring DFC students Kaydia Okemow, Malachi Beardy, Harmony Fiddler and Eugene Kakegamic and DFC Student Chief Derek Monias.

“This podcast was developed through CBC,” says Monias, a Grade 12 DFC student from Sandy Lake. “The students wanted to create an ongoing media club because of the success of the interview I did with world famous Ryan Reynolds, and I’m glad we did because it was so much fun. We got everyone to have a chance at the spotlight (on) different episodes.”

Monias says the Waa Nish

Kaan (Wake Up) podcast was created in the spirit of the Wake the Giant initiative, which is a cultural awareness project that aims to create a more welcoming and inclusive city for Indigenous people, youth and their communities and includes the Wake the Giant Music Festival.

“We wanted to help people get to know us more and hopefully wake up Thunder Bay some more and also wake up the Giant,” Monias says. “This podcast is a series of interviews we did with former acts at Wake the Giant, students (and) some celebrities too, which is pretty awesome.”

Fiddler, a Grade 12 DFC student from Sandy Lake, says she had fun working with her classmates and friends on the podcast.

"I never thought I would work on something like this, especially in the media industry," Fiddler says, noting that Episode 5, where they asked students around DFC about who they wanted to see, was the coolest podcast for her. "But also my (Episode) 3, the one I did. I interviewed my friend who was a dancer and who did a poem at Wake the Giant. They

enjoyed the interview, there was a lot of laughs.”

Okemow, a Grade 12 DFC student from Sandy Lake, says she had never thought she would experience anything like doing the podcast during her high school years.

“For me the coolest podcast would be when I interviewed X Ambassadors and we got to share some laughs with them,” Okemow says. “During our interview with X Ambassadors, we were talking about birthdays and my birthday happened to be the next day so they wished me happy birthday, and that was very cool, that was awesome, and I can’t wait to see them at Wake the Giant (Music Festival) this year.”

Mary-Jean Cormier, host of CBC's *Superior Morning* program, says they initially started with a media class at DFC to share information about story ideas, booking interviews and asking questions.

“(The) Ryan Reynolds interview obviously turned into a big project for us and we all worked together to draft questions, make that interview happen,” Cormier says. “The students actually decided to focus



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

**A group of Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School students and staff.**

on Wake the Giant because of course that involves great interviews with celebrity musicians but it's also about them and their role with Wake the Giant."

DFC principal Sharon Angcone says she is happy about how Wake the Giant and other initiatives have encouraged and motivated the students at DFC.

"Instead of just a regular school year, we try and offer as much as we can with these fun events, these exciting media events," Angecneb says. "Wake the Giant is a big part of that where the students get to learn all about these opportunities that they normally wouldn't have in their home communities, learning how to put on

a big festival, learning how to put together an event like DFC Experience.”

Angecone says the students also get a voice by participating in the initiatives.

“They get to be able to share their experiences, they get to show their vulnerability, they get to show also their courage, their bravery, to be able to step into new experiences, meet new people,” Angeconeb says. “And you see that in the faces of the students who participated in this project, they’re vibrant, they’re full of energy, they’re looking forward to great new things and that’s what we want to see.”

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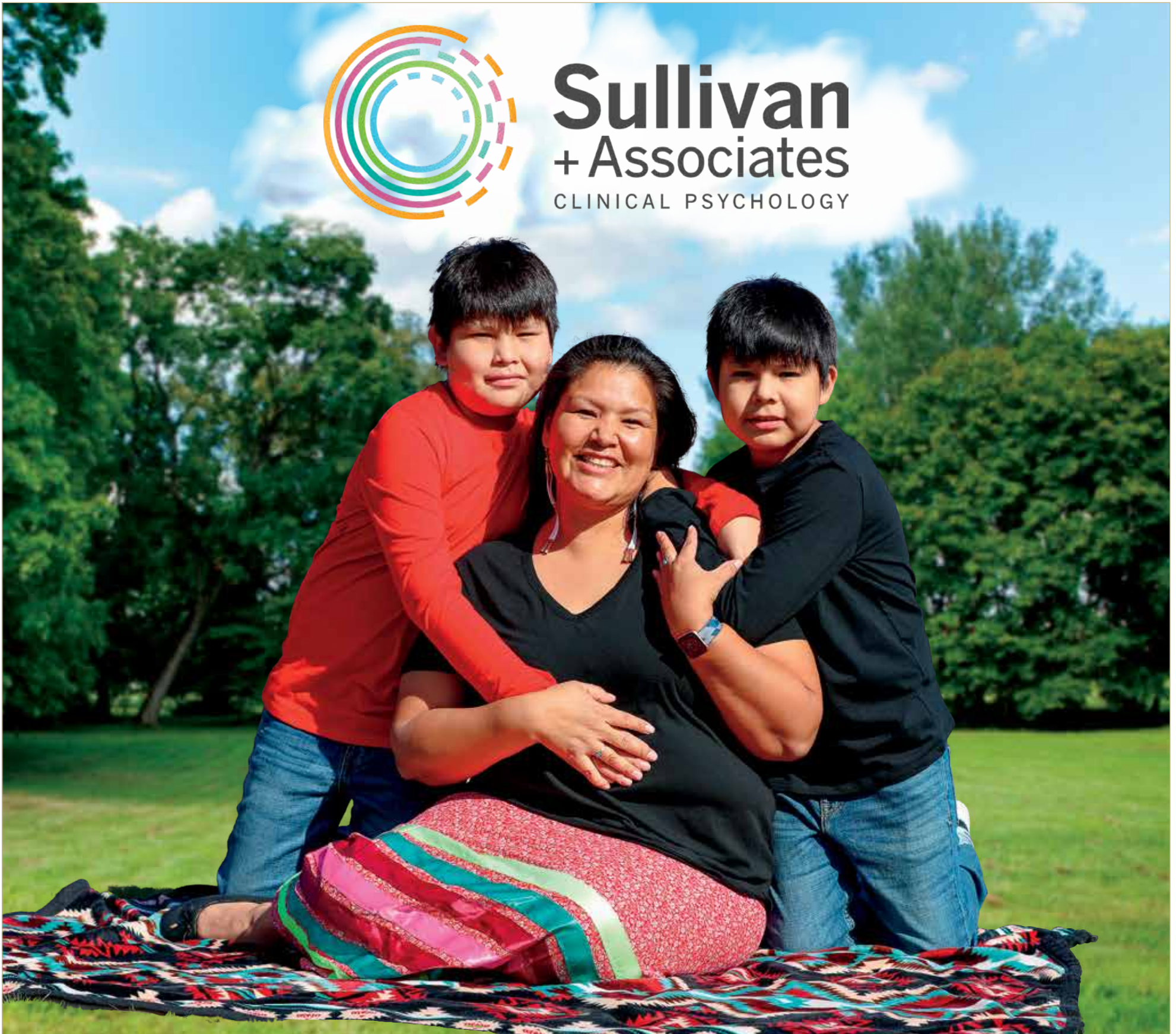
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