NAN declares state of emergency in Ginoogaming

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) declared a public State of Emergency on Oct. 9 following a drug related shooting incident in Ginoogaming and the search for two suspects.

"I ... just want to acknowledge my kids — they don't come to every meeting but I know that they showed up here this afternoon because they know that this is important," says Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. "It's also just a powerful reminder to me why we do this work and why we need to do more work to ensure that every family, every community in the NAN territory feels safe, that they should not be afraid in their own homes or in their commu-

Fiddler says the NAN leadership had some "very difficult discussions" around public safety, policing, justice and health at the justice forum, held Oct. 7-9 in Thunder Bay with the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service (NAPS) AGM on Day 1, the Nishnawbe-Aski Legal Services AGM on Day 2 and the NAN Chiefs Justice Forum on Day 3.

"And how these systems that are currently operating in our communities are creating harm to our people, especially our children, and we talked also about how these failures manifest themselves in our communities with the high rates of our people being in jail or our people, especially our young people, taking their own lives or overdosing on illegal drugs," Fiddler says. "So our leadership over the last twoand-a-half days have instructed us to make this declaration and also to create a plan in partnership with our treaty partners, Ontario and Canada, to ensure that the things they talked about here over the last two-and-ahalf days are not just words on a piece of paper but actually action on the ground in their communities. And yesterday morning while we opening up

our meeting we received some very difficult news from one of our communities, in Ginoogaming, that there was a

tragic incident that happened there."
The Ontario Provincial Police states that two males, an 18-year-old and a 15-year-old, both from Brampton, were charged with second degree murder and attempt to commit murder using firearm in connection to an ongoing investigation in the area of Echum Dr., where one person was found deceased and another person was found with injuries. Both of the accused remain in custody and are scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Thunder Bay at a

The OPP states that anyone with information is urged to contact police at 1-888-310-1122, or to remain anonymous, to call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or visit ontariocrimestoppers.ca.

"For decades, the governments of Canada and Ontario have failed to uphold their shared responsibility for public safety in First Nations communities," Fiddler says. "The time for studies, meetings and excuses is over. The time for clear, responsible action is now, and we expect that action before there is an opportunity for any more violence in our communities."

NAN states that NAPS reports an increase of more than 300 per cent in cocaine and fentanyl seizures between 2023 and 2024, underscoring the scale and urgency of the crisis and need to protect community borders, and the NAN Chiefs have previously supported a NAPS border control strategy to assist communities in protecting their entry points.

This is our daily reality," says Eabametoong Chief Solomon Atlookan. Lives are being lost every day in our communities to shootings, to drugs, to violence. If these events were happening in southern Ontario, the response would be immediate and national. For



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler speaks about Nishnawbe Aski Nation's declaration of a public State of Emergency on Oct. 9 following a drug related shooting incident in Ginoogaming and the search for two suspects.

us, there is silence."

NAN states that both levels of government must immediately come to the table with ministers and senior officials to implement real solutions, including proper resourcing for border screening at points of entry such as airports, and sustained investments in prevention, and mental health and addictions

'Our officers, our families, our Elders, our children and our communities deserve the same safety and protection that is taken for granted elsewhere in Canada," Fiddler says. "Our leadership is at the table doing the critical

work to meaningfully address public safety issues. We need our counterparts in provincial and federal government to step up and do the same. We will not stand by to attend another funeral while governments hide behind juris-

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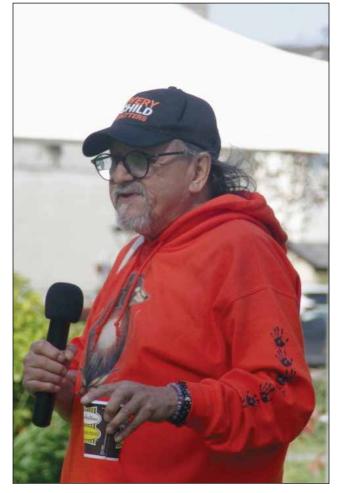
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News



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News Peter Sackaney shared his story during Nishnawbe Aski Nation's.



Deputy Grand Chief Mike Metatawabin.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Former Long Lake #58 chief Allen Towegishig.

NAN holds Orange Shirt Day walk in Thunder Bay

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Residential school survivor Peter Sackaney shared his story during the circle event at Nishnawbe Aski Nation's Orange Shirt Day Walk, held from City Hall to Vickers Park in Thunder Bay.

"It's so ironic it should be here (in Vickers Park), but as a kid I used to run to that little cabin and hide ... because that's where I found comfort," Sackaney says. "The (St. Joseph's residential) school was just located on the other side of the street (Arthur St.) and I was there, and I was also in Fort Albany,

one of the worst places a person can send children. When I tell this story I don't try to tell it with comfort because there is no comfort in the things that happened back then."

Sackaney says he could have stayed angry and hated religion and non-Native people after his residential school experience.

"I could have stayed all of that but that's not me, what happened in residential school was something that moulded me into becoming the person I am today — today I'm more spiritual in my walk, I still have some issues with anger but it's something that we work with as we go," Sackaney says. "When

I went to that place, I met with with things that should not happen to children but they did happen, and it happened to many children. We became victims of monsters that were in those walls, and the sad thing about it is we carried the torment and endured the pain throughout our walk."

Sackaney says he still gets nightmares and he still feels the pain when he come outs of the nightmares.

"So the trauma is real, the things that happened are real and the people who are going to sit out there and deny the fact that these things happened, then you better do some work

on yourself," Sackaney says.
"I'm not coming here to bring shame to anybody, I'm coming here to educate you about a history that was real, I'm here to share a little bit of that."

Deputy Grand Chief Mike Metatawabin says the residential school legacy did not stop with just the survivors, noting that the next generation is called the intergenerational survivors.

"The legacy continued behind closed doors in our homes, the dysfunction that is carried from residential school," Metatawabin says. "The story didn't end when the last school was closed, and for your information the last school only closed in 1996, that's only 29 years ago. So it's still very fresh, it's still part of our lives, but we want to move forward, we want to thrive, we want to be a part of the economy, we want to be a part of the opportunities."

Metatawabin says when you displace, dispossess and disown people of their lands, what opportunities do you leave for them

"So that is what you have to take back with you and discuss, you have to reverse what's been done, the displacement, the disowning," Metatawabin says. "We're very much part of this planet each and every day when we wake up." Former Long Lake #58 chief Allen Towegishig says he went to St. Joseph's residential school for two years, McIntosh residential school for six years and a day school for two years.

"They cut our hair, we couldn't speak our language," Towegishig says. "I've been healing all my life, it takes a long time to be healed, but one thing we have to share with the other people (is) our pain that we went through."

Towegishig says he was glad that he attended the Orange Shirt Day Walk.

"It's good to see young people want to learn what we've gone through," Towegishig says.

Thank You, Airlines!

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Rick Garrick/Wawatav News Darren Lentz, principal at Algonquin Avenue Public School, demon-



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News Tanya Moses shows a group of students how to prepare manomin.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

George Price shows a group of students how to fillet fish.

Algonquin Avenue Public School celebrates fall harvest

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The preparation of geese, fish, manomin, bannock, Labrador tea and beaver skins were highlighted during Algonquin Avenue Public School's Fall Harvest celebration on Oct. 1 in Thunder Bay

"It's the ending of our Truth and Reconciliation week-and-ahalf that we do, and it's teaching kids about the meechum, the traditional food from the land, and giving thanks for all the animals of the Earth and the gifts from the Earth as we get into the next season," says Darren Lentz, principal at Algonquin Avenue Public School. "I'm showing the children how to pluck the geese and then bashkobiisige, or burn the feathers off of them."

Lentz says he also teaches the students about respecting the animal as well as about the animal's anatomy and some of it's biology.

"And then (the teachers) take them back into the classroom and they do work with that in the classroom through writing and science and those different curriculum areas," Lentz says. "The students love it each year, you can see as they're moving around through different things they're right into it. It's a reminder for us adults and for students where our food comes from, to respect the land and learn that we need to build relationships with the land and its creatures."

George Price, a Coast Salish wood carver, says he was demonstrating how to fillet walleye at his booth.

"And I also brought about a 12-pound spring salmon from the Fraser River and we're going to take that and turn it into what we call Indian candy,' Price says. "So we let (the students) touch it, let them poke the eyes and things like that, and smell it, a lot of it has to do with smell. So far everybody's really been enjoying the booth the kids are great again, I've been here at the school before teaching so a lot of the kids know who I am already and that turns out really well."

Tanya Moses, a Biigtigong Nishnaabeg citizen, says she was teaching the students about food sovereignty and connection to the land at her booth.

"I'm going through with them a more gentler process of processing manomin," Moses says, noting that she talks to the students about offering tobacco to the water as an acknowledgement of where the manomin grows as well as to keep the manomin harvesters safe while harvesting the manomin. "I just kind of talk to them about the process of letting it dry, spreading it out and then the next stage is about parching it, so roasting it ... over a gentle fire."

Moses says she then explains the teaching of why women are not allowed to step over sacred items, so they cannot dance on the manomin.

"So that's why we have a male that would dance on the rice," Moses says. "When that stage is done you are then able to move on to the winnowing."

Marten Falls Elder Catherine McGuire says the students enjoy learning about making bannock over a fire at her booth.

"They know what bannock is, some of them have tasted bannock before — they get excited when they see this bannock, they think it's pop corn," McGuire says, noting that she learned how to make bannock from her mother. "I used to watch my mom."

Anne Chondon, McGuire's daughter, says they also taught the students how to say some of the ingredients in the bannock such as flour in Anishinabemowin.

"They're actually not making the bannock today, they're just watching an Elder make the bannock," Chondon says. "I think it's important for kids to learn how to make bannock, it's part of the food we've eaten since I was a kid. You just can't get a recipe and make bannock, you kind of have to watch someone that's been doing it for a while make it, so it's nice to have an Elder here to show the kids how to do that."

Jenn Gill, from Roots Community Food Centre, says they served cooked manomin and Labrador tea to the students at their booth.

"They're choosing different toppings all from this land, so cranberry, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, some

maple syrup," Gill says, noting

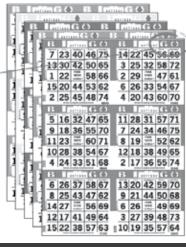
that they also had some cinnamon for the students to use as a topping. "We're also making Labrador tea for everybody to give a try. They're asking lots of great questions, they're being super brave and trying things, big smiles and for the most part loving the food."

Joel Crookham, who has a trapline by Armstrong, says he did beaver preparation at his

"My wife taught here for years so that's how I got involved," Crookham says. "I share the life of the beaver, what the animal does, how it lives, what it eats, and some of the kids are pretty knowledgeable and some are not. I make a point that beavers are an animal that used to be harvested quite extensively and used quite extensively (but) not so much

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Commentary

Respect Mother Earth On Your Hunt



old has arrived. Here in the north of Ontario we see vast streams of gold shimmering across the landscape as autumn is here and the the leaves are turning. There are also flashes of red and brown as though a huge blanket has descended onto Mother Earth from the heavens. This is my favourite time of the year as it is not too hot or too cold and the wilderness beckons us to wander and wonder at the sights and scents of fall.

It was an extremely hot summer, there were terrible forest fires and many alerts of dangerous storms and even tornadoes here in northern Ontario. Climate change is reminding us of the damage we have done to the environment with the rise of global warming and we are on notice. However, we are ruled by the addiction to money and that probably means that our governments and corporations will keep moving with development causing global warming.

This time of the year reminds me of the many hunting trips I was involved in as a boy growing up on the land in my home community of Attawapiskat. When I ventured out to southern towns and cities for school and work I found that there was also a huge fall hunting movement. I witnessed many hunters preparing for the hunt and packing up their guns, ammunition, supplies, boats and ATVs for trips out to hunt camps all through the north. Most of the nonFirst Nation hunters were envious of the Indigenous hunting rights and complained about being restricted to what they could harvest. Strangely enough many non Natives wanted these Indigenous hunting rights so bad that they began to organize and lobby the provincial and federal government. Even more strange these governments provided the Metis groups in northern Ontario many of the rights that First Nations had been promised in treaties more than a hundred years ago.

The idea of Metis in northern Ontario has been very controversial but it has been determined by a report this past summer put out by the Wabun Tribal Council in northeastern Ontario that there is no documented evidence of a Metis presence in their territory. A similar report was put out by the Saugeen Ojibway Nation and both documents were supported by the wider Chiefs of

Ontario which represents all Ontario First Nations.

All this does not dismiss the historic, documented and recognized Metis Nations in parts of western Canada.

Those that could not convince governments they could be Metis became best friends with many First Nation people to invite them out on hunting trips so that just maybe they could get away with harvesting wildlife without going through the rules. In my dad's time, it was a common occurrence to have wealthy hunters from the south venture to the wilderness of far northern Ontario to hunt almost whatever they pleased and if they were questioned, everyone would point to their First Nation guide as their excuse and permit to hunt beyond their restrictions.

What has all this meant for Mother Earth's creatures? It has meant a decline of moose, goose, duck and many other species of wildlife. The other thing that these annual hunt trips feature far too often is the party mode with alcohol and at times drugs while out on the land with guns. Understanding that there are many hunters wandering the forest with alcohol handy and carrying guns is concerning to say the least.

My people up the James Bay coast continue to head out in the fall to their traditional lands to harvest moose, caribou and migratory birds. Far up north in the remote First Nation areas hunters and gathers travel out on their freighter canoes to traditional camps for the hunt.

I wish all those on their hunt a safe and rewarding adventure. I hope this is a time of bonding, good stories and recollections around camp fires. I pray that people stay safe and take care of each other out on the land where hunting happens in remote or semi remote areas. More than anything I ask that the hunters take time to really experience Mother Earth and all the beauty she has to offer us. I urge our hunters to respect the forest and the creatures as they roam on the land to harvest.

Our creatures on the land have no voice but I would ask vou to give them one by being thoughtful about your hunt. Take only what you need and do not over hunt or take advantage of killing an animal just because you can do it. We need to respect the land and all the creatures and if we want to continue with this traditional hunt experience and pass it down to new generations we have to make sure that we don't end up causing the extinction of many animal and bird species. We need to be respectful to Mother Earth.

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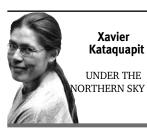
Anishinabek Nation hosts Economic Development Opportunities Forum



submitted photo

The Anishinabek Nation Economic Development Department kicked off its 3rd Annual Anishinabek Nation Economic Development Opportunities Forum (ANEDO 2025) held in Chippewas of Rama First Nation.

Mother Earth Needs You Now



am the product, evolution of many thousands of years as are you. I grew up on the land in the remote far north of Ontario following in the footsteps of my Cree ancestors of the great James Bay and Muskego.

I speak my Cree dialect based on a language that is ancient and I understand the history of my people and our connection to Mother Earth.

My people have been living the nomadic life of hunters and gathers for thousands of years and this is knowledge that I have learned from my parents and Elders.

I grew up on the land in my remote First Nation of Attawapiskat but I have also lived and worked in southern cities and towns of Ontario.

I have been fortunate to have travelled to 35 countries, learned about other cultures, their foods, music, issues, life and filled my eyes with incredible and beautiful images.

All of these experiences, teachings and connection to the land has given me a real appreciation for Mother Earth. I am in awe of what a wonderful planet we live or

For many reasons I have discovered and was trained in writing, reporting, journalism, research and communication. I do my best to learn as much as I can about our world and our history. I carry the knowledge I learned from my Elders and my dad Marius and mom Susan.

My partner Mike has also been an excellent guide that has helped me as a writer and to dedicate my efforts to representing my people the Cree and all First Nations of this country. This is a wonderful, challenging and rewarding reality however it comes with much responsibility and vulnerability.

I have almost 30 years sobriety and being in recovery.

In my world I have needed to research and write about so many things including: drug and alcohol addiction, how government works in both Native and non Native politics, how corporations operate, the dangerous state of dealing with global warming and its causes, the incursions by government on First Nation lands without free prior informed consent and consultation, the pollution of lakes, rivers and air with all kinds of out of control resource development and the unjust reality of racism, bigotry, homophobia while globally wealth inequality dominates the world. In a 2023 report by Oxfam, '81 billionaires have more wealth than 50% of the world combined'.

The responsibility of being a journalist, a writer and columnist is daunting at times and often I wish I could just jump into a float plane and fly off to the remote Akamiski Island or the remote parts of the Attawapiskat River where my family origins trace back to. The problem is that if I did so I would be abandoning you, all of the people who have given me teachings on my way, First Nation people who need a voice and most importantly Mother Earth. We are all life forms on this planet not separate from Mother Earth.

We are Mother Earth and what happens to our planet affects us all directly.

I do my best in my own way with my research and writing but we all need to act to really make it all worthwhile. We need you to rise up and demand a change in how politics are run with out of control lobbying that makes governments more like casinos. We need to make a stand and step up to protest war and out of control development causing global warming and destroying our world.

We need to stand up to racism, bigotry and hate in any form. We need to stand up to the system that has allowed a small group of billionaires to control everything.

We all have to think about the fact that two wars right now could end up in a nuclear conflict that would end our civilization at any moment either by accident or design. We need to think about the fact that global warming is causing severe weather, terrible forest fires, floods and storms all over the planet.

We need to think about what our Federal government is doing with Bill C5 and in Ontario with Bill 5 which will result in development that could remove protection in terms of conservation, the environment and labour laws. These fast tracked developments will affect huge carbon sinks like the Hudson Bay Lowlands that we need to combat global warming.

These new laws have ignored free prior and informed consent and consultations with First Nations. These governments are giving their rich corporate friends out of control development and funding while at the same time cutting all kinds of social programs for people.

You can join groups and donate to organizations that are standing up to all of this. Right now First Nation youth are looking for support as they push back and stand up for Mother Earth and the land, the rivers, the lakes, the creatures and the very air we breath. Movements like 'Here We Stand – Call To Action', 'Youth Rising Together' and 'Okiniwak'. Help them out if you can.

Mother Earth needs you

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Phone:(705) 3604556 Toll Free:18779292829 Fax:(705) 3601601 ACTING CEO/PUBLISHER Mark Kakekagumick markk@wawatay.on.ca

MANAGING EDITOR Chris Kornacki chrisk@wawatay.on.ca

NORTHERN LIGHTS BANNER Dan Russell http://NorthernLightsNow.com

SALES REPRESENTATIVE Tom Scura Phone: 807 6226000 Fax: 807 6226010

toms@wawatay.on.ca

CIRCULATION/PRINTING Safeguard Business Systems Thunder Bay, ON TRANSLATION Vicky Angees vickya@wawatay.on.ca

DESIGN AND LAYOUT Through the Sky Studio

CONTRIBUTORS Lindsay Cote Rick Garrick Xavier Kataquapit Guest editorials, columnists and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of Wawatay News.

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A group of dancers dance their styles during the Ontario Native Women's Association's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Powwow on Oct. 4 at the Fort William First Nation Community Centre.

ONWA holds Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Powwow

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) held its Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Powwow as part of its Sisters in Spirit Vigil on Oct. 4 at the Fort William First Nation Community Centre. ONWA states that the Sisters in Spirit Vigil is a time to remember and pay tribute, while also calling attention to the urgent need for action to end violence against Indigenous

"This is our ninth powwow honouring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls," says Cora McGuire-Cyrette, CEO at ONWA. "This is what the women had asked us is more than enough room for to do nine years ago from our board as an opportunity for us to come together to heal, to role model and to bring our community together around honouring women."

McGuire-Cyrette says they invited an Inuk Elder and some Métis women to share some of their teachings at the powwow.

"So (the Inuk Elder) lit the qulliq, which is their oil lamp up in her territory, and shared the teachings about how up in her territory it's actually the woman's responsibility to care for the fire," McGuire-Cyrette says. "We also invited in the Métis women to come in and share some of their songs and their teachings with us — there everybody in this circle."

Jan Greenfeather, emcee at the powwow and an Iskatewizaagegan #39 citizen, says it was a day to reflect on what has happened to the Missing and Mur-dered Indigenous Women and

"It's also to reflect on the domestic abuse and violence that women and girls face at a higher rate than mainstream," Greenfeather says. "Some of the highlights were recognizing those things but also celebrating that we're here to heal together, a powwow is meant to uplift our spirits and to gather and celebrate our way of life, Anishinabewaadiziwin."

Greenfeather says the Métis

women did a Virginia reel dance demonstration during the pow-

"That was really nice to witness because it's something similar that we do at our powwows and our social gatherings called the friendship dance," Greenfeather says. "The Inuk did an igniting of the qulliq. She talked about how they practiced that when she was a little girl and that she came back to that way of life later in life when she had to leave the community."

Anne-Marie Armstrong, one of the Métis women who shared their songs and teachings, says dancing is a pleasure and a joy

"It was an honour to be asked here to share our love of the dance, and what we love the most when we share it is to see the smiles on those that are participating with us," Armstrong says. "I think you could see that with the youth, all of them amazing dancers in their own right, to see them smiling. And this is what we see when we're in the schools or at the fall harvests that we attend — some are reluctant to participate but they enjoy it and it is really good to

Tina Armstrong, who won a beautiful skirt in the draw at the powwow, says she did not expect to win the skirt.

"I buy tickets just to help people out and then I was really surprised," Tina says. "It's crazy

Tina says she thinks about the missing and murdered brothers as well as 2SLG-BTQIA+ people on Oct. 4.

"I also think about my aunt who got murdered out in Alberta, my cousin got murdered in Thunder Bay," Tina says. "So you think about those things and that sadness, however though it's important to also have that balance too. Here we bring everybody together to stand up and honour them, acknowledge them that their lives mattered, they mattered and they still matter even though they might not be

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37th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, December 6, 2025

Time: 9:00 a.m. Location: Valhalla Inn

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"I was nervous going back to school after so long, but Canadore welcomed me. They didn't just teach me-they believed in me."

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"When you're far from home, missing the land or your people, the First Peoples' Centre grounded us."

> Jeremy Hookimaw Drug Task Force Coordinator, Moose Cree First Nation



Matawa Co-Op features local Indigenous artisans

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Constance Lake's Steven Martin shared his cedar leaf essential oil products at the Matawa Health Co-operative's Indigenous Artisan Market at the Matawa Training and Wellness Centre in Thunder Bay.

"I make products using cedar leaf essential oil that I produce," Martin says. "I make balms and candles, bath salts, bar soaps. All my products are 100 per cent natural. I have a very high return rate, especially from Elders."

Martin says cedar is a spiritual medicine.

"We all recognize its power and its effect in our lives," Martin says. "I use steam, which distills the essential oils out of the cedar leaf."

Martin says he collects the cedar leaves from the traditional lands around his community.

"I travel far out to get mine," Martin says. "I do everything on my own, I collect the cedar leaf, I cut it down, I use steam distillation, then I make the body products myself."

Martin says he began making his cedar leaf essential oil products about five years ago.

"It was sort of a hobby, it was something I wanted to do for close friends and family," Martin says. "As I advanced in the business, I started to see the demand for this product was so high I decided to go into it full

time and to initiate a full scale business."

Martin says people who are interested in his products can reach him at www.facebook. com/p/Martin-Cedar-Products-61577002415525/.

Kaija Saarinen, health promotions worker at Matawa Health Co-operative, says the Indigenous Artisan Market featured a variety of arts and crafts for all ages.

"We have tons of different stuff, a lot of beading, a lot of sewing, ribbon shirts, ribbon skirts," Saarinen says. "We just wanted to showcase any of our Indigenous vendors, whether they are Matawa members or not. It is really amazing work and it's a lot of work, so we really want these people to be able to continue with it and support themselves."

Saarinen says she has been enjoying the use of Martin's cedar leaf essential oil balm after previously purchasing it from him

"It's just really soothing," Saarinen says. "It just smells amazing and it really does work and it makes you feel good, but I found even when they were setting up we walked in here and the smell hit us and that is enough to just make you feel amazing."

Saarinen says their new building includes a smudge room with ventilation next to the cultural room where the Indigenous Artisan Market was held. "We do have an Elder in residence," Saarinen says, noting they usually have smudges on Monday mornings and Friday afternoons. "So we always start and end the week in a really good way. It's a good way to refresh and just really take the load off."

Saarinen says they also hold Elders events once a month in the cultural room for the Matawa Elders.

"And we've got our community garden outside and we're already getting quite a bit of harvest, which is great because we do have a lot of issues with food security," Saarinen says. "So people are coming to the garden, they're learning about growing their own food but we're also able to use it for our Elders meals and send them home with some veggies."

Karen MacDougall, public health nurse at Matawa Health Co-operative, says it was great to have the space to host the Indigenous Artisan Market in their new building.

"It's great that we have programs like this developing where we have vendors coming and we have events in the cultural room," MacDougall says. "The new building is great, it's lovely that we're all in the same building because we used to be split in three different locations. Now we're all under one roof so it feels more cohesive as a working group to have everybody together."

Homicide investigation begins landfill search

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler recently stressed the importance of the search for evidence, including partial human remains, at the Thunder Bay Solid Waste and Recycling Facility as part of the homicide investigation into the death of Deborah Anishinabie. The Thunder Bay Police Service announced on Sept. 22 that they are, with assistance from Ontario Provincial Police and the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, conducting a search for evidence beginning on that day at the Thunder Bay Solid Waste

and Recycling Facility. "It's important that the investigation continues to look for the evidence related to Deborah's death and to ensure that the Crown, once this goes to trial, that they have strong evidence against the suspect so that Deborah and her family can have some measure of justice," Fiddler says on Oct. 3. "(The search) needs to be meticulous, and of course that will take time to cover the area that they want to cover. We just hope that they are able to find what they are looking for."

Anishinabie, 42, was reported missing in early December 2024. After an extensive search was launched by police, members of her family and community, Thunder Bay Police Service officers located a deceased individual on Dec. 14.

A suspect was arrested by members of the Thunder Bay

Police Service's Major Crimes Unit and Intelligence Unit on Dec. 17 and charged with indignity to a human body, and as a result of the continued investigation, the suspect was also charged with seconddegree murder.

Anishinabie's family, with support from the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Executive Council, released a statement on Sept. 22, as follows:

"Deborah will always be remembered for her radiant, bubbly spirit and the warmth she carried wherever she went. She had a way of lighting up every room, making people feel seen, heard and loved. She was eagerly pursuing a career in health care, and her determination, strength and kindness inspired not only her classmates but also everyone fortunate enough to cross her path. Deborah was devoted to her family. We were her heart, just as she is ours. Deborah was never far from us, constantly checking in with friends and loved ones. She always had so much love to give. In her work, she poured every ounce of that same compassion into the people she cared for.

Deborah had a unique gift – one that left a mark on every soul she touched."

The NAN Executive Council has issued the following statement:

"We had always hoped that Deborah would be returned to her loving family. Our prayers are with her family, friends, and everyone in Sandy Lake who are suffering and continue to grieve. We ask the Creator to give them strength during the difficult days ahead.

This investigation has been heartbreaking, and the next phase of this investigation will be especially difficult for the family. We have joined them in ceremony as they prepared for today's announcement and will continue to support them in any way possible.

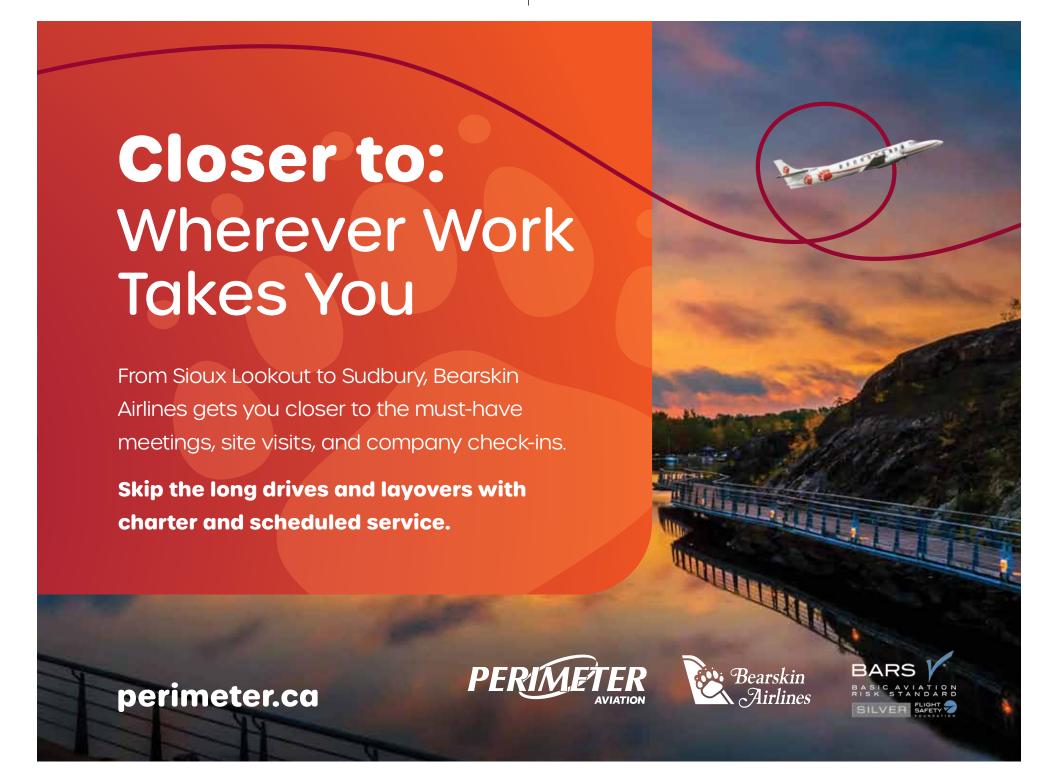
We acknowledge the cooperation of the investigators, Thunder Bay Police Service, Nishnawbe Aski Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police, the City of Thunder Bay, and everyone who has supported the family throughout this difficult process. We will

continue to support them throughout the investigative process to ensure they receive the justice they deserve."

The Thunder Bay Police Service is asking anyone with information related to the investigation to contact them at 807-684-1200. Tips can also be submit anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or online at www.p3tips.

NAN encourages all those who are grieving to seek support and care from loved ones, community resources and mental health professionals. Anyone requiring emotional support or assistance is urged to contact: NAN Hope at 1-844-NAN-HOPE (626.4673)

HOPE (626-4673), First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line at 1-855-242-3310 or Beendigen Talk4Healing – For Indigenous Women at 1-888-200-9997.





Rick Garrick/Wawatay News The Regional Multicultural Youth Council held their No Filter: Girl Power Weekend Confer-

RMYC welcomes Grand Chief Fiddler to girl power conference

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Regional Multicultural Youth Council (RMYC) enjoyed hosting Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler at their No Filter: Girl Power Weekend Conference, held Oct. 10-12 at the Prince Arthur Waterfront Hotel in Thunder Bay.

"He was very open to questions from the youth about what he's been doing, what his job is and how he can support our girls and women," says Kamryn Woloschuk, peer mentor and program coordinator at RMYC. "The youth were quite honoured to have someone as important in the public eye come to visit us at our conference, they were all paying a lot of attention to him even though he came on the last day that was the end of a long conference. They were just curious to hear more about what's happening in the grown-up world and I think they felt grateful to know that someone's out there listening to them."

Woloschuk says the conference was a success.

"I heard from most of the girls that they definitely feel like it's something that they need in their schools because bullying has been getting bad again," Woloschuk says. "And with the increase of the misogynistic content online the young boys are seeing, the girls really feel that they want to spread this message to other girls to keep them safe, and not just to other girls but to the boys as well so they know what it means to be a woman and what they can do to support their friends, girlfriends, sisters, cousins and women in their lives."

The conference also featured an expert on warning signs of domestic violence and human trafficking, a harm reduction expert, a registered therapist and an Elder with years of experience mentoring youth as well as art workshops, writing workshops, a hygiene 101 and self care night and girl-power team building.

"I noticed that the girls as well as the boys that did arrive here were very supportive and open and excited about the idea of learning these concepts and

having these conversations in a safe environment," says Summer Spade, peer mentor at RMYC and one of the facilitators at the No Filter: Girl Power Weekend Conference. "Some of them were comfortable enough to ask questions that they felt were otherwise invasive previously but were open to asking them because they felt they would be supported and not judged."

Spade says she was excited about having Fiddler at the conference.

"He's become a really good friend because of how involved he is with the youth," Spade says. "I would love to have this conference happen yearly just so we have more opportunity to bring more girls that weren't able to attend this year."

Summer Wabasse, a member of Nishnawbe Aski Nation's (NAN) Oshkaatisak (All Young People's) Council, enjoyed participating in the conference.

This morning we had a workshop on self esteem and now currently I'm working on building an art project to envision what I am now and what I hope to be in the future," Wabasse says. "Young women have so much pressure on them these days, and they did when I was growing up too, so I think being able to gather together, really get that girl power energy and just learn about ourselves and about building our self esteem and being good leaders is so important for young women."

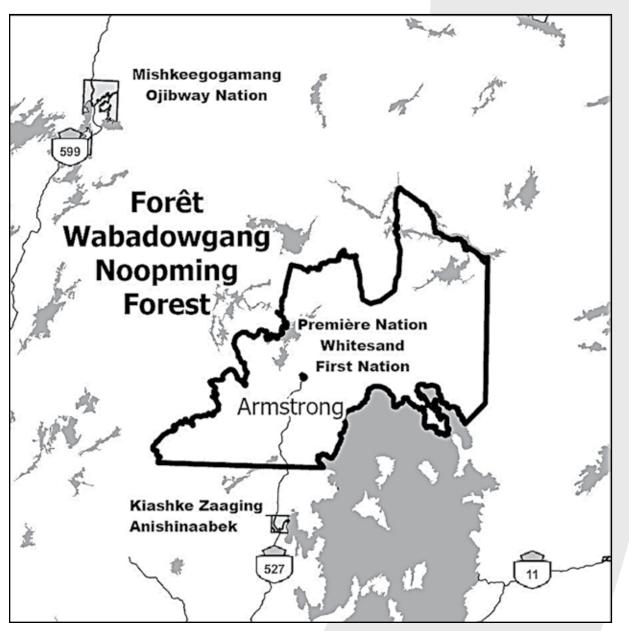
Andrea Yesno-Linklater. youth initiative coordinator at NAN, says she enjoyed the self esteem presentation at the conference.

'When it comes to self esteem in girls specifically, there is a lot of stigma with that and I really enjoyed the presentation from Sophie from Thunder Bay Counselling, and I'm looking to work with them in the future when we have our youth gathering in the New Year," Yesno-Linklater says. "I think that the collaboration between the NAN youth and the RMYC is very vital. A large part of what our programming tries to do is create those bridges between the two and really foster those relationships."

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ρρ⊃•Δα: 807-631-8744

LLbC∧b ▷√∧∆ba: jcameron@northwindsenv.ca

Renseignements en français : Linda Sebo, linda.sebo@ontario.ca, 807 621-2313.





Tikinagan and SLFNHA raise awareness for child safety



Darren Kwandibens, a youth advocate at Tikinagan Child and Family Services, highlights that Dress Purple Day is more than just a campaign, it's a reminder that every child and youth has the rights to feel safe, supported and heard no matter where they are or what they've been through.

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Tikinagan Child and Family Services has partnered with Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) and the schools in their First Nations to "Colour the North Purple" and raise awareness for every child's right to safety. The two organizations celebrated Abitewaapisowikiishikaa, which means Dress Purple Day in Anishiniimowin, on Oct. 16 after earlier signing a Memorandum of Understanding at SLF-NHA's 2025 Annual General Meeting in September.

"The well-being of our children is a shared responsibility, from immediate family to extended family, community members, Elders and leaders," says Thelma Morris, executive director at Tikinagan. "By working together, we can create a bigger impact for the children, youth, families and communities we serve. Every child deserves to know how important their well-being is and that they are cared for wherever they are.'

Tikinagan has traditionally connected with schools in their 30 First Nation communities every Abitewaapisowikiishikaa. This year, alongside SLFNHA, they are sharing an updated Educator's Toolkit that includes curriculum, video messaging, contests and activity sheets to engage with students. Helping children and youth understand their rights and who they can go to if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable is the main goal of their efforts.

"Dress Purple Day, it's more than just a campaign, it's a reminder that every child and youth has the rights to feel safe, supported and heard no matter where they are or what they've been through," says Darren Kwandibens, a youth advocate at Tikinagan. "Tikinagan and OACAS (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies) started this movement to raise awareness for those rights and to remind adults, teachers, parents, social workers, neighbours and even strangers that

safety doesn't end with physical

Kwandibens says youth in

nagan website includes information about the Beastie Vallev educational series, which touches on subjects such as getting help and well-being in the community. The Beastie Valley educational series is located at: www.tikinagan.org/beastie-val-

community well-being for kids and youth," Kwandibens says.

part of.

you can ask us for help or guidance," Kwandibens says. "We've been on this side of the system so we have a good understand-

Abitewaapisowikiishikaa posted on the social media of both organizations as well as at:

but it also builds silence." care don't need saving.

protection, it means emotional, spiritual and cultural safety too because youth in care grow up learning how to survive before they learn how to live. They learn to be OK with things that shouldn't be OK, losing people, moving homes, being misunderstood — that becomes normal. You learn to keep going on when no one really gets you, and that builds strength, yeah,

"We just need people who listen, who stay through the rough, who don't give up when we test their patience, because once youth in care finally feel understood, trusted and true, that's when they can start to heal in a safe place," Kwandibens says. "The truth that most people don't get is a shirt doesn't fix it, but what it does do is it allows that difference to make a connection. So when we wear purple, it's not just awareness, it's a promise that we will be the adults that we needed when we were Kwandibens says the Tiki-

"That is a fun video series that teaches safe and unsafe behaviours, boundaries and

Kwandibens says they also have a youth team, which he is

"You can ask us question,

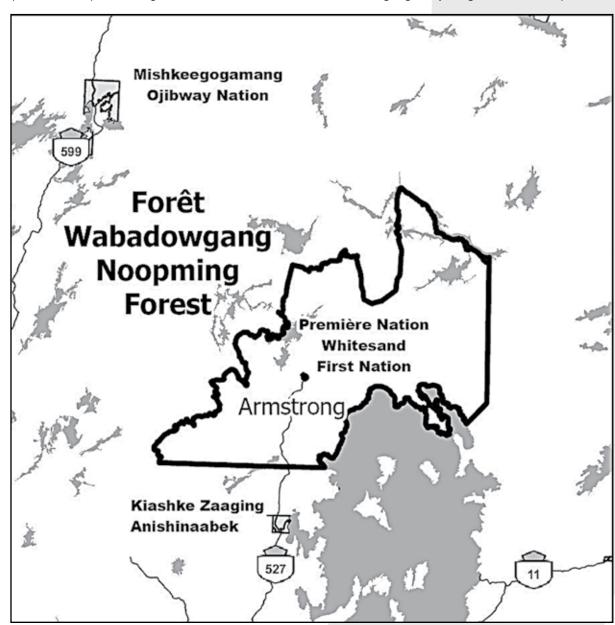
More information about Tikinagan.org/DressPurple.



INSPECTION

MNR-Approved Prescribed Burn Plan for Slash Pile Burning for Wabadowgang Noopming Forest

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) invites you to inspect the MNR-approved prescribed burn plan for slash pile burning that will be carried out in the Wabadowgang Noopming Forest (see map).



As part of our ongoing efforts to regenerate and protect Ontario's forests, some recently harvested areas have been selected to be burned under the guidelines of the MNR's Prescribed Burn Manual. The prescribed burn will reduce the area covered in slash piles while increasing the area available for regeneration and reducing the fire hazard. The burn is scheduled for ignition between November 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025.

The approved prescribed burn plan for slash pile burning, including specific locations and maps, is available for inspection by contacting Wabadowgang Noopming Management Inc. and on the Natural Resources Information Portal at https://nrip.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online until March 31, 2026, when the Annual Work Schedule expires. Please note, the burn will be occurring in a specific area of the Wabadowgang Noopming Forest, and not the entire forest management unit. More detailed information on the location of the activities within the Wabadowgang Noopming Forest can be obtained electronically on the Natural Resources Information Portal https://nrip.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online, or by contacting the MNR staff below.

Interested and affected persons and organizations can arrange a virtual or in-person meeting with MNR staff to discuss the prescribed burn plan. For more information, please contact:

Kristy Vannieuwenhuizen, R.P.F.

Management Forester Ministry of Natural Resources 435 James Street South, Suite B001 Thunder Bay, ON P7E 6S7 tel: 807-708-3403 e-mail: kristy.vannieuwenhuizen@ontario.ca Jeffrey Cameron, R.P.F.

General Manager Wabadowgang Noopming Management Inc. 231 Red River Road **Unit 112** Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1B9 tel: 807-631-8744 e-mail: jcameron@northwindsenv.ca

Renseignements en français : Linda Sebo, linda.sebo@ontario.ca, 807 621-2313.





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Arts & Entertainment

Kikiskinow Âpahcikân fibre arts exhibition

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

A class of Lakehead University students, with guidance from Indigenous artist Betty Carpick, enjoyed creating the Kikiskinow Âpahcikân: We are all here learning together fibre arts exhibition at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery. The Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism OUTD 4150: Critical Land Studies and Relations class, which was instructed by Carpick, had explored the historical, present and future impact of Indigenous peoples being forcibly removed from the lands and waters that have sustained them.

"We used the Great Lakes as a focus to think about the colonial history and the ongoing colonial legacy," Carpick says. "The students stitched on seven inch by seven inch squares and then at a certain point, week six, they had to give up their square like many of our Indigenous relatives have had (to do), and doing that actual physical exchange really was an emotional time for them. They were no longer theorizing about what happened, it happened to them in a very small and intimate way and it made it real for them I think."

Carpick says each of the students chose to stitch a square for a different part of the Great

"It was a great journey," Carpick says. "A lot of the students in the Outdoor (Recreation, Parks and Tourism) program are from southern Ontario, so they have a kind of a different idea of connecting to the land



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A class of Lakehead University students with guidance from Indigenous artist Betty Carpick recently created the Kikiskinow Apahcikan: We are all here learning together fibre arts exhibition at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery.

and I feel like they really appreciated the deep history and all the learning that's come before colonization."

Carpick says they used a reference map with Indigenous place names, Coming Home to Indigenous Place Names in Canada, that was researched and designed by Margaret Wickens Pearce, an Indigenous cartographer from the U.S., for the Canadian-American Center at the University of Maine to mark the 150th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada.

"I've had the map for a couple of years and it's really such a fascinating map because it has the First Nation, Métis and Inuit names of places with the English translation and none of the existing place names and no borders, so it's really a good exploration of the way we think about where we live," Carpick says. "With the students, I encouraged them to think of the sections of the Great Lakes that they chose to stitch by looking at the original place names, not the names that they knew them by."

Carpick says people have been "really delighted" by the Kikiskinow Âpahcikân exhibi-

"They like that idea of exploring using maps and thinking about the way we think about territory and whose land it is," Carpick says. "So I feel it's

starting a conversation that I'm really pleased about."

Evan Spence, Adam Royston and Ethan Albrecht, three of the students, shared their experiences with the creation of the Kikiskinow Âpahcikân fibre arts

"It was really fun, really creative and we got to learn how to do a lot of things like the stitching and the mapping," Spence says. "The credit's to Betty Carpick for the idea, she introduced it to all of us and we just were a part of the journey, but all the execution was her."

"It was fun to do a project together and not just a solo endeavour, we all combined to make a final product," Albrecht says. "We collected snow from outside on campus and that's what we used (with) the watercolour to make that blue bleed through."

"It definitely added a lot of perspective and opportunities to learn," Royston says. "I don't think the three of us were really big into sewing before this course, so we kind of all learned that together and while we were sewing we were also learning about the land that we were kind of sewing and representing, so for each patch we sort of did some additional research into it and built more of a connection to what we were kind of displaying, so that was a really cool opportunity."

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Arts & Entertainment

Aanikoobijiganag hosts Beading Symposium

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

The Aanikoobijiganag: Thunder Bay Beading Symposium 2025 featured a keynote by quillwork expert Joe Big Mountain as well as local and regional artists and workshop leaders on Oct. 15-18 in Thunder Bay.

"Porcupine quillwork is one of North America's oldest art forms, spanning across the northern continent several tribes utilized the porcupine all having different techniques, purposes and reasons for why they make it and why they wear it," Big Mountain says during his Oct. 15 keynote. "As far as myself, I was taught by my family. I was passed on quillwork from my grandfather, my father does quillwork but I was taught by my oldest sister Caroline on how to actually quill."

Big Mountain says he and his four sisters and three brothers were brought up at the powwows

"I was lucky enough to watch my three older sisters, my parents and my grandparents all make their own regalia," Big Mountain says. "Learning from them, they all had a different way of doing things. My father, he was a bit more traditional and made things with original materials and did it the way it was originally made. My sisters were far more contemporary, utilizing contemporary designs and colours and they were the ones who taught me how to bead, how to sew, how to quill Tranterelle



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Joe Big Mountain delivers his keynote on The Modernization of Quillwork on the first evening of the Aanikoobijiganag: Thunder Bay Beading Symposium 2025, held Oct. 15-18 in Thunder Bay.

and pattern making."

Big Mountain says he gained a reputation for making regalia pieces but later transitioned to making jewelry and has since started up his own business, Ironhorse Quillwork, which is located online at: ironhorse-quillwork.com/.

"There's different ways to do quillwork and I think it's important that it's carried on in every way," Big Mountain says. "As long as it's done with respect and knowledge, ultimately it's a good thing for the art."

Leanna Marshall, one of the

co-directors of the Aanikoobijiganag: Thunder Bay Beading Symposium, says the first day was about relationship building and getting to know one another.

"We spent the afternoon with the wonderful and gracious Shannon Gustafson," Marshall says. "She had medicine bags and we all just collectively made medicine bags together, which was really lovely."

Marshall says the second day featured a variety of workshops by Kaaren Dannenmann, with her Gifts from our Relation the Moose workshop; Bev Koski, with her How to Bead Over Anything workshop; and Anong Beam, with her Tisgeh'dah! Let's Put Colour On It! Watercolour for Designers workshop.

"Tonight (Oct. 17), the Co.Lab art gallery and the Thunder Bay Art Gallery collaborated and did a show with (14) artists," Marshall says. "Melissa Twance curated the show along with Shelby Gagnon and they invited (14) Anishinabe and Métis artists to come and display their work in this (Co. Lab) gallery. All of the works in

the gallery are stunning — the theme that brought all them together was plants, medicine."

Marshall says they also had the Aanikoobijiganag Beading Symposium Craft Market at the Co.Lab gallery on Oct. 17.

"People are having a lot of fun just visiting and shopping," Marshall says.

Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler enjoyed attending the Public Reception and Artist Talks event on Oct. 16 at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery featuring Justine Gustafson: Agawaatebiigisin (it is reflected in

the water) and Jean Marshall: Gakina Gegoon and the Aanikoobijiganag Beading Symposium Craft Market.

"I'm just so amazed with all of the talent that there's out there in our community, to be able to create such beautiful pieces of art," Fiddler says. "Justine's presentation was just so impressive with her creations. That's something that we need as a community is just to support these talented and gifted artisans in our community."





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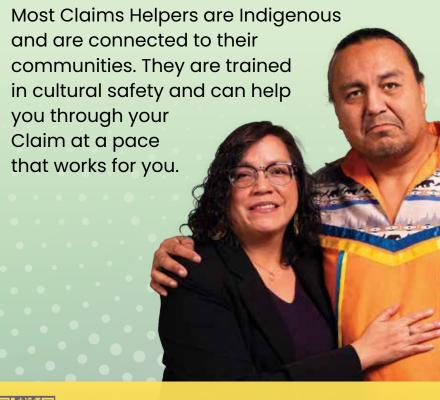
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rts & Entertainment



Stanley Alto, who performed the role of Stan, speaks about his role in Morningstar Derosier's film My Friend Saabe, which was featured at the 2025 Vox Popular Film Festival, held at Definitely Superior Art Gallery in Thunder Bay.

Vox Popular Film festival held at Thunder Bay Art Gallery

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Morningstar Derosier's film My Friend Saabe was one of the films featured at the 2025 Vox Popular Film Festival, held at Definitely Superior Art Gallery in Thunder Bay.

"It's really exciting for us be able to premiere it in town here," says Adrien Harpelle, festival director at Vox Popular Film Festival. "It's a really touching story, it's really wholesome and it's nice seeing the idea of finding your culture again. It was really special and you could tell by the audience how moved so many people were and the cheering at the end of the film — it was so nice to be able to present that to this community."

Harpelle says he appreciated having two of the people who were involved with the film, Stanley Alto, who performed the role of Stan, and Andrew Mandamin, who performed the voice of Saabe, to attend and speak with the audience after the film screening on Sept 19.

"It kind of makes the experience full circle where people can interact and see that it's real people that are making this and doing all the work," Harpelle says. "I thought it was really interesting what Andrew was saying about translating and

the difficulty of making things fit. Sometimes things get lost in translation so it was really cool to see that side of the work because that's not something that everybody might think of or people might take for granted."

Harpelle says it was also special for Alto to share his experience in making the film.

"It's just really special to have such amazing local talent right here in our town," Harpelle says. "We're really excited about how many artists are involved with this festival. We have hundreds of artists, we have musicians and visual artists and filmmakers and so many people involved, and we're just really grateful to have all their stories being shared and to have such an amazing night."

Alto, who began acting when he was 13-years-old and has since been acting professionally for about 40 years, says he enjoyed the opportunity work with many of the first-time actors on the film.

"I got to ... show them the ropes in how to work backstage on the film, how to really engage themselves and show (them) what to do behind the scenes and then how to prepare themselves for what they had to do when it was their turn to get in front of the camera," Alto says, noting that he played Stan,

who was having problems with alcohol. "Once he found himself again with a lot of guidance from the medicine woman, he was able to find his own spirituality and really come out of it."

Alto says he loves the film and has been waiting for it to be

"I really love seeing it on the reen," Alto says. "I think a lot of people are really going to enjoy it."

Mandamin says Derosier had asked him if he wanted to be the voice of Saabe in the film.

"I said, 'Yeah, well, I've never done anything like this before but I'll give it a shot," Mandamin says. "I went to meet her and she showed me the dialogue. So I looked the dialogue over and I said, 'Well, this looks like a piece of cake, it should be done in a few minutes.' It was not to be, it took us five hours. We had to rephrase all of the sentences because translating English into Anishinabemowin is not easy. We had to take a lot of breaks in between to rephrase and to make it fit what Saabe is saying."

Mandamin says he had never heard himself speaking before doing the film with Derosier.

"It was a new experience for me," Mandamin says. "It was quite an experience for me to be able to do that for her."

Education



Pikangikum's Cheryl Suggashie speaks about some of the jingle dresses she displayed during her Jingle Dress presentation.

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Cheryl Suggashie gives jingle dress presentation at Thunder Bay Museum

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Pikangikum's Cheryl Suggashie highlighted her path to learning about the jingle dress and how she has since shared her knowledge during her Jingle Dress presentation at the Thunder Bay Museum.

"I remember going to my first powwow, I was with my aunt and we were travelling towards Kenora and she took me to Whitefish Bay," Suggashie says. "I had never been to a powwow before but when I saw all the dancers and drummers, I was just very excited and I wanted to dance so bad. I was about maybe 12 or 13, I didn't grow up around the culture or anything so I didn't know about teachers or Elders or anything like that."

Suggashie says she learned more about powwows and the traditional ways when she attended Sault College in Sault Ste Marie

"I noticed, wow, everybody just loves dancing and singing and I met a lot of people that way," Suggashie says. "The college had a lot of cultural programming and I started to immerse myself in those and met a lot of people. I went to my first sweat lodge there in Garden River, it was eye opening, I never knew this stuff existed until my early 20s and I was thinking, how could I not know about this stuff, how come I didn't grow up with it."

Suggashie says she also volunteered at the Three Fires Confederacy gathering while she was in Sault Ste. Marie.

"I met all these dignitaries from all over Ontario and they all met in Garden River," Suggashie says. "The women were wearing ribbon skirts and that was my first time seeing ribbon skirts. They wore them all the way down to their ankles to cover up, and they told me, 'You've got to wear a skirt,' and I was like, 'Why.' So that was my first time starting to practice ceremonies, and I met all these

people. I just loved it, time didn't exist, it was just morning until night."

Suggashie says she met more traditional teachers and dancers when she began studying at Algoma University in Sault Ste. Marie, including the late Eddie Benton-Banai and the late Grandmother Water Walker Josephine Mandamin.

"I really miss them, they helped me a lot," Suggashie says, noting that she did the 2011 Mother Earth Water Walk from the four corners of Turtle Island with Mandamin from the East Coast. "When I started in Montreal I had no idea what I was getting myself into. They got me up early, every day it was like a 3:00 a.m. wakeup call."

Suggashie says she walked with the water walkers for three weeks, noting that she recalls seeing Benton-Banai standing on the road when they got to Wisconsin.

"And all the corners were coming together and they started dancing as soon as they met," Suggashie says. "It was a big powwow in the middle of the intersection, there was traffic coming but we were all dancing anyways."

Suggashie says she learned more about regalia and jingle dresses especially during that time in Wisconsin.

"While I was there there were these women that had specific designs on (their regalia), specific layout and even the colours were very specific," Suggashie says. "I was just watching them and then I really wanted to be a dancer."

Suggashie says she then began working with students to create their own regalia as part of her role as president of the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students Association at Algoma University.

"We sewed anywhere we could, we sewed in the lounge, we sewed in the hallways, we sewed on the stage, just any room we could," Suggashie says. "It was pretty epic, and then we were getting help from



the teachers, getting help from families and everyone just kept coming in to help us — we only had one or two months to finish before our powwow."

Suggashie says their teachers also explained the significance of the jingle dress.

"You dance for the sick, you dance for good intentions and just healing," Suggashie says. "After we did this, they always told me when there's a powwow for jingle dress dancers, try your best to go and share your knowledge to others."

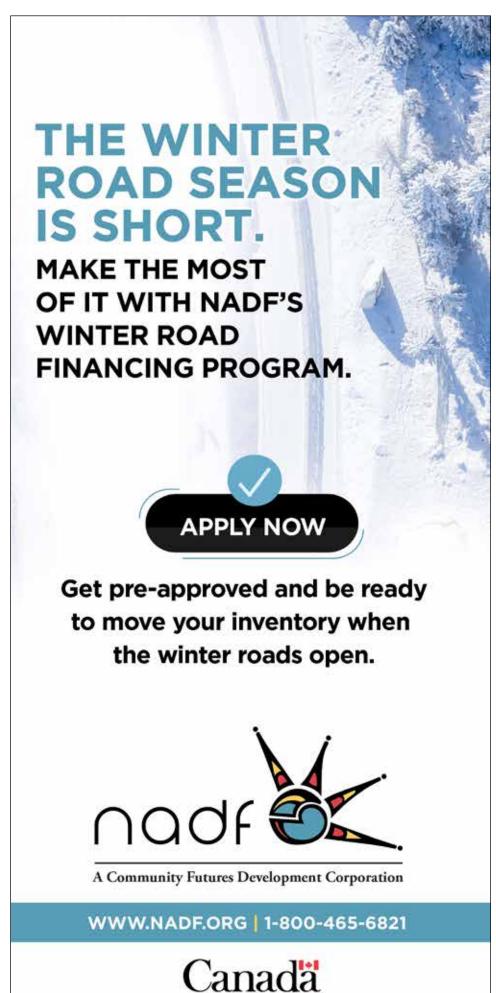
Suggashie says she stopped dancing for a while after her brother passed away in Thunder Bay.

"But then I missed it, I missed dancing, I missed the positive energy," Suggashie says. "I think it's such a good way to kind of release and at the same time you're healing."

Suggashie says she did her Masters in Social Justice at Lakehead University, and worked with students at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School to create jingle dresses as part of her practicum.

"So I started teaching them about the significance of the healing dress, the jingle dress," Suggashie says. "There was a lot of good energy and the principal asked me to come back the next year to do this again."

Suggashie's presentation was broadcast via a Zoom webinar and is scheduled to be posted on the Thunder Bay Museum's Youtube page, www.youtube.com/user/ThunderBayMuseum, at a future date.



Cassandra Spade wins Abella Prize

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Mishkeegogamang's Cassandra Spade, a Lakehead University Bora Laskin Faculty of Law graduate, was recently recognized with a Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella Prize by the Royal Society of Canada.

"The prize is awarded to one graduating law student from each of the Canadian law schools, so there's 24 prizes in total and it goes to the student who is most likely to positively influence equity and social justice in Canada," Spade says. "To be recognized as one of the prize winners is a great honour and it brings me great joy to know that I'm working in the north and I'm from the north and that this prize is celebrating change makers who are from the north, and it brings me even greater joy just to be one of the many Indigenous women in northern Ontario working to make positive change in our region."

Spade says Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella, who served on the Supreme Court of Canada

from 2004-2021, advanced equity and social justice in Canada

"To see the path she has blazed, it's a real honour to share the award with other people doing the same work," Spade says.

Spade says she passed both of the bar exams this summer and recently submitted her administrative call to the Law Society of Ontario.

"So with a bit of time in the next few weeks I'll be hopefully a licensed lawyer and I'll be starting my practice here in the

Rainy River district at Judson Howie LLP as an associate lawver," Spade says, noting that she was a student at law at Judson Howie LLP over the summer. "So I'm really looking forward to starting to take on my own clients and working in community. In the meantime, of course I'm still doing my (Anishinabemowin) language programs and classes and I've also been reaching out to the community and working in community to try to build justice programs and try to think about how I can share my knowledge of Anishinabe law with the local communities here."

Spade says that she wears items that represent Anishinabe people such as beaded earrings, handmade ribbon skirts and medicine bags to work every single day.

"So when I have clients who are also Anishinabe and they come into my office, it's been a real meaningful moment to see the clients see themselves in the legal profession but also to bring some pride to the region in the sense that Anishinabe people are providing legal services too and lawyering and advancing justice for our communities," Spade says. "So it's been really meaningful to me and I think to some of the clients who I work with in the sense that we can see ourselves in each other."

Spade says her language work with Anishinabemowin is her heart work.

"That's what I will do for the rest of my life, so every weekend I host language classes for Indigenous youth who are looking to advance the proficiency of their language but also maybe be introduced to their language," Spade says. "It's such a special time because it reminds me of why I wanted to go into law, and that was to bring about meaningful change so that young Indigenous people could thrive and see themselves in the legal profession but also just do whatever inspires them, to pursue any kind of dream they have. The language work



submitted photo Mishkeegogamang's Cassandra Spade was recently recognized with a Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella Prize by the Royal Soci-

is really important to me and working with youth is really important to me."

ety of Canada.

Spade encourages people to pursue their dreams, noting that her community was her biggest support during her studies.

"In those moments where I was really struggling or having a hard time, it was always our community that lifted me back up, so your community is here to support you and you can do anything," Spade says.

The 2025 Justice Rosalie Sil-

The 2025 Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella Prize recipients will be honoured during an Awards Ceremony on Nov. 14. Information about the recipients is posted at: rsc-src.ca/sites/default/files/25_Abella Winners_EN.pdf.



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Lakehead hosts 2025 Fall Harvest

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Lakehead University's Fall Harvest featured a variety of cultural teachings and traditional foods on Sept. 20 at the Sweat Lodge site in Thunder

"It's amazing — we have people from the community sharing all their skills and knowledge," says Denise Baxter, vice-provost Indigenous Initiatives at Lakehead University. "We have a lot of students, I just talked to an exchange student from Indonesia, we have students from the region here and it's a really nice opportunity for people to come and learn about our various cultures and sample some of our foods and practices."

Baxter says they served some fried sturgeon that her father Lawrence Baxter and brother Dan Baxter harvested from the Albany River during the Fall Harvest.

"My two aunts are here, Maggie Baxter and Cathy McGuire, and they've been cooking the sturgeon today," Baxter says. "And my cousin Annie and her son Noah are doing the bannock, so we're making some fried bannock."

Baxter says her father's family was raised on the land at Washi Lake on the Albany River.

"This was part of the food they would eat," Baxter says. "They would smoke the sturgeon for winter and they would make pemmican out of it for when they were trapping and serve it with fried blueberries and some lard in the wintertime. My grandparents ran a fishery for years so they would harvest the sturgeon and then

they would fly it out and it would end up in New York City."

Baxter says they had 30 student volunteers from Lakehead University who were assigned to help out at the various tables at the Fall Harvest.

"Fall is a time when people are coming together and gathering and for us it's a really important time of year where we can host people from the community and host students from the university to come and meet each other, meet our First Nation and Métis community members from the region and really just welcome everybody to campus," Baxter says.

Métis Senator Grant Robbins says they served fried walleye for the participants at the Fall Har-

"There's a lot of people ... who are not Indigenous and a lot of them come up and ask what kind of fish it is," Robbins says. "So it's important that we as Indigenous people share that knowledge with them as they come in, especially with the people from other countries that are now living in Canada. This is my third year that I've been here, and every year it's a good turnout."

Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaa-bek Elder Gene Nowegejick says he shared some sweat lodge teachings and did a pipe ceremony at the Fall Harvest.

"I talked about the sweat lodge ceremony and what it means and how do you participate in it," Nowegejick says. "When we do the sweat lodge ceremony ... we nurture our spirit, so it's a connection between the physical and the spirit side of things, so they were interested in that. Then I



Fried sturgeon was cooked over the fire at Lakehead University's Fall Harvest, held at the Sweat Lodge site in Thunder Bay.

talked about the pipe for a little bit and where it came from and what it's used for and how it's connected to the sweat lodge ceremony.

Fort William Elder Sheila DeCorte says she normally shares the water teachings at the Fall Harvest but this year she shared some drum teachings.

"I've been sharing various songs that are specific to the animals in the seven grandfather

teachings," DeCorte says. "I did share some water songs too but one of the new songs that I've been practicing and learning and sharing with people is Shy-Anne Hovorka's song, (Gookum's Song). It speaks about the eight grandmother teachings, which are the same as the seven grandfather teachings but there's one extra one and that's life. That's what the grandmothers teach us about, the very important teachings of life because we're the life givers and we're the ones that bring life into this world."

Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug's Charlotte Marten says she shared some Anishinabemowin and Anishininiimowin language teachings at the Fall Harvest.

"It's always exciting to share the language to the people, all ages, kids, and we also encourage a lot of interaction and

we develop relationships with people through the language," Marten says, noting that she used cards with words in English on one side and words in the language on the other. "People get really excited when they can say where they're from, what their name is and so forth, so it's also a very healing journey for me and the people that come to the table."





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Health

Narcise Kakegabon receives successful lung transplant

Rick Garrick Wawatay News

Long Lake #58 Councillor Narcise Kakegabon is feeling better thanks to a lung transplant this past April after being diagnosed with a terminal lung disease in 2016.

"The thing now is for me to watch out for the rejection, but since I had my surgery it's been going well," Kakegabon says. "I wasn't afraid to die because I knew I had lived a good life and no matter where I went, I knew I was going to wake up somewhere peacefully, either continue on with my life or somewhere else in the spirit world. So going through that and having a positive mindset really helped me get through this whole situation."

Kakegabon says he had decided to live his life the way he wanted to after being diagnosed in 2016.

"At that time it wasn't the right time for me to give up because I knew I had an opportunity to go and share what I had to share and I had a lot left in me to share with the people and the students," Kakegabon says.

Kakegabon says he was told he had seven years to live, but he made it to eight years before he began to get worse.

"The symptoms were lack of oxygen, every time I would get up and move my oxygen levels would drop down to the low 70s," Kakegabon says. "The average range is from 88 and up. So they did put me on

an oxygen concentrator to help me with my breathing and my energy level. By the time I had my surgery I was on 12 per cent oxygen that I needed for my activities."

Kakegabon says he had the lung transplant at Toronto General Hospital, noting that he knows who the person is that passed on and gave him the opportunity for the lung transplant.

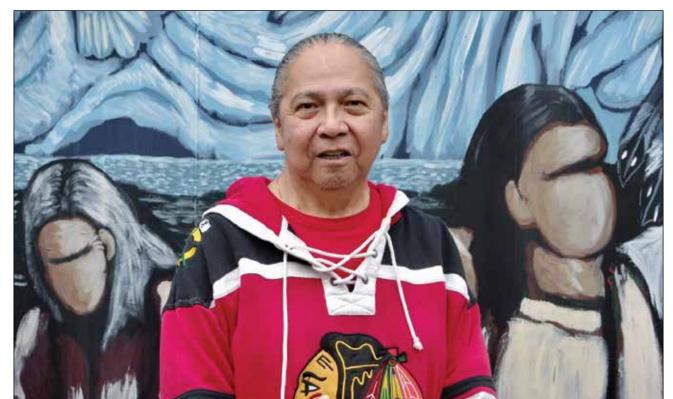
"I'm grateful for that but since I had the surgery I never had any complications or any doubts about the lung that I have," Kakegabon says. "I can walk around, I can dance, I can have lots of opportunities with my children, my grandchildren, it gives me all that time."

Kakegabon says he was not able to do activities with his youngest son and his grandchildren before the lung transplant.

"But now I'm able to do things and pick up where I should be doing things with my grandchildren and my youngest son," Kakegabon says. "Spiritually, I'm thankful for the guidance I had, I always had my faith in God so I never gave up my faith in where I was going to end up and it really helped me a lot."

Kakegabon says his medical team wanted him to focus on gaining his strength back during the first three months after the lung transplant.

"Once the surgery was done I was immobile for a while, it takes a lot out of you," Kakegabon says. "So now I'm building up my strength, I'm able to



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Long Lake #58 Councillor Narcise Kakegabon enjoyed being able to participate in Lakehead University's Fall Harvest on Sept. 20 after receiving a lung transplant this past April.

walk and I'm able to do a lot of things. I do have goals set aside and right now it's day by day, I'm grateful for every day that I wake up."

Kakegabon says he is currently on immunosuppressant drugs.

drugs.

"My immune system is really low right now so getting a cold could be pretty hard on me," Kakegabon says. "It's going to

be a really big test this winter. We're getting colds already in my household and I was able to manage them."

Kakegabon says he is thankful for the support team he had while undergoing treatment.

"When I was living in Toronto I needed a support team and my brother was there, my eldest brother Patrick," Kakegabon says. "And my postsupport was my daughter after surgery — she helped me out in the post-physio and getting me going. She had a goal to increase my level of activity by each day and that really assisted in my development and getting me home."

Kakegabon says he is thankful that he can now attend events such as Lakehead University's Fall Harvest on Sept. 20.

"Right now being out and checking out all these people here at Lakehead University putting on this great event for the students, it's good and it's very diverse," Kakegabon says. "(They) have a lot of people here from different nationali-



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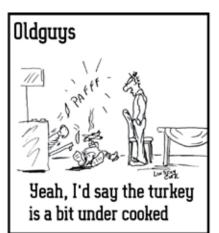
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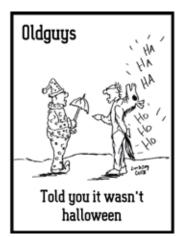
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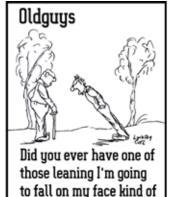
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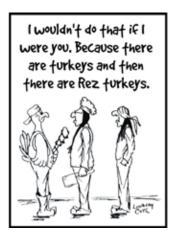
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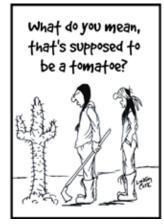












Job Posting



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)

Wawatay Communications Society is currently looking for a dynamic and results-driven Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who brings management expertise and embodies the mandate and mission in service of Nishnawbe Aski Nation communities.

Wawatay Communications Society serves the communication needs of First Nations people and the communities of Nishnawbe Aski Nation. It does this through the distribution of a monthly newspaper, daily radio programming, other communication services and a multimedia website that seeks to preserve and enhance indigenous languages and cultures of Indigenous people in northern Ontario.

Mandate

"Wawatay Communications Society is a self-governing, independent community-driven entrepreneurial Indigenous organization dedicated to using appropriate technologies to meet the communication needs of people of Indigenous ancestry in Northern Ontario, wherever they live. In doing so, its founders intended that Wawatay would serve their communities by preserving, maintaining and enhancing Indigenous languages and culture."

Mission

The membership of the Society – 49 First Nation communities within the territory of Nishnawbe Aski Nation– formally adopted the above mandate and mission statement at an Annual General Membership Meeting on May 5-6, 2004.

Location: Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout, Timmins

Position Summary:

The CEO serves as the chief executive of Wawatay Communications Society and in partnership with the Board, is responsible for the success of the Wawatay Communications Society. Reporting directly to the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for creating and implementing a clear sense of direction for the Wawatay Communications Society and its related businesses by defining, communicating, and overseeing the Corporation's mission, goals, operating principles, and strategic actions.

This position is the senior management position in Wawatay Communications Society, with responsibility for:

- The overall management of the business including its overall strategic direction, preparation of agendas and background information for Board meeting and Executive Committee meetings.
- Keeps the Board fully informed of the conditions of Wawatay Communications Society and on all important factors influencing it.
- The development of annual works plans and related capital and operating budgets.
- Development of operational policies and procedures.
- The day-to-day operations management, human resources recruitment and management and budget and financial oversight and monitoring.
- Overall planning, design and implementation of projects and programs within the mandate; and
- Communications and marketing for the purpose of business development

Governance, Strategy Development, Planning and Reporting

- Formulates and updates annual business plan and strategies, policies and procedures for Wawatay Communications Society and brings these to the Board for input, and decision as to ratification.
- Ensures strong strategic and annual planning processes and procedures are undertaken and effective budget and plans are prepared for Board approval.
- Seeks out and develops business opportunities and presents such opportunities to the Board for consideration and decision.
- Oversees fiscal activities, ensuring that all financial and nonfinancial reporting requirements are met on a timely and accurate basis, and
- Ensures that reports to the Board are always transparent and timely basis.

Community and Relationship Management

- Initiates, develops, and maintains effective strategic relationships and networks with key stakeholders including the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, government agencies, business owners, contractors, customers, potential customers, partners, suppliers, residents, and the business community in relation to their interests in the Corporation.
- Examines and recommends partnerships with private and public entities in support of projects that will assist the Corporation in fulfilling its mission and objectives; and
- Promotes and advocates the profile of the Wawatay Communications Society.

Operational Management

- Schedules Board meetings, prepares agendas, information and reports for consideration and decision by the Board, and ensures the completion of minutes of all Board meetings.
- Ensures the operation of Wawatay Communications Society follows all appropriate legal, regulatory and internal policies as approved by the Board, and are not contrary to policies, bylaws, and relevant government legislation and regulation.
- Prepares an annual performance management plan for approval by the Board.
- Analyzes, prepares reports, presents information and recommendations, and ensures timely completion of all activities.
- Implements the decisions of the Board in an efficient and effective manner
- Ensures the day-to-day operations of Wawatay Communications Society are effectively and efficiently coordinated, implemented, and conducted within the policy and procedure framework approved by the Board.
- Implements stringent project management processes to ensure the timely, cost effective and profitable development and completion of projects.
- Determines limitations of authority for employees of Wawatay Communications Society covering expenditures, contracts personnel actions, etc.; and
- Establishes policies and procedures for Board approval in relation to consultants and contractors being retained by Wawatay Communications Society and exercises appropriate controls to ensure their use is managed cost effectively.

Staff and Contractor Management and Leadership

- Builds and maintains a high-performance culture through effective performance management, communication and coaching of staff,
- Recruits appropriately skilled staff to all positions and establish appropriate remuneration levels and performance-based conditions for each employee.
- Establishes performance management plans with employee and undertakes performance reviews, recommends salary and benefit changes, promotions and dismissals as appropriate within the authority of the position; and
- Recruits and appoints with the approval of the Board, where necessary.

Financial Management

- Prepares and presents an annual budget to the Board for approval complete with all supporting background information and documentation; and
- Establishes financial controls in relation to undertaking and monitoring the activities of Wawatay Communications Society against the approved budget and provides monthly (or more frequently, as necessary) reports to the Board on the performance of Wawatay Communications Society against the approved budget.

Job Knowledge:

The work requires the following knowledge, skill and/or abilities:

- Significant and proven leadership skills developed through at least five (5) years in a senior management role and experience related to media, communications and business.
- ment, marketing, finance, and business processes related to economic and business development activities.
 Proven ability to build effective relationships with external stake-

Substantial knowledge of business operations, asset manage-

- Proven ability to build effective relationships with external stakeholders and collaboration, inspire and motivate high performance and effectively resolve conflict.
- Knowledge and experience with the First Nations of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation territory.
- Ability to speak and understand one of the languages of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation communities;
- Excellent communication and presentation skills.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Post Secondary MBA in Business Management, Commerce or Finance.
- 5 10 years of experience in Business Development and Senior Management.
- The ability to communicate in English and Ojibway, Cree or Oji-Cree is an asset.
- Ability to work with both Macintosh and Windows computer platforms.
- A valid Ontario driver's license and cell phone.
- A combination of education and/or experience will be considered.

The Position will be Posted until Filled Start Date: ASAP

Applicants can send their resume, cover letter and contact information for references (in confidence) to:

Board Chair Nick Day nickday@sandylakefn.com

Board Vice Chair Vivian Waswa vivianw@wunnumin.ca

Note: Only applicants considered for an Interview will be contacted.



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For counselling services, we are happy to help clients access funding through Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) and Indian Residential School (IRS) programs.





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