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www.wawataynews.ca

News

Communities mourn the loss of Chief Keesic and former Chief Hunter

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

Nishnawbe Aski Nation recently expressed condolences over the loss of North Spirit Lake Chief Caroline Keesic and former Weenusk (Peawanuck) Chief George Hunter in late August.

“We are very saddened to learn that our friend (Chief Caroline Keesic) began her journey to the Spirit World this morning,” says Grand Chief Derek Fox on behalf of the Executive Council in an Aug. 22 press release. “Our thoughts and prayers are with her family, council and the entire community of North Spirit Lake at this difficult time.”

Fox says Keesic was a tremendous leader who put the needs of her community before her own.

“She worked tirelessly when the community declared a State of Emergency in 2019 after an escalation of the addiction epidemic and a breakdown of the community’s water system spread widespread crisis,” Fox says. “She personally led efforts to address long-standing community issues stemming from addictions and mental health issues to bring stability and healing to her community.”

Fox says there was an outpouring of emotion and support for Keesic during her lengthy illness, which she fought with courage and determination.

“We join her family in thanking the people and organizations who provided so much loving support until her final days,” Fox says. “Caroline’s dedication to her community was matched by her compassion for her people, and we will cherish her life of leadership and friendship. We will do everything we can to support her family and the community as

this beloved leader is returned to North Spirit Lake.”

Fox also expressed condolences on behalf of the Executive Council over the loss of Hunter in an Aug. 30 press release.

“We are very saddened to learn that our dear friend has begun his journey to the Spirit World,” Fox says. “Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Jean, their children and the entire Peawanuck community.”

Fox says Hunter grew up living off the land, hunting animals with the seasons and gathering medicine.

“He taught his children and grandchildren to appreciate and respect Mother Earth and how to live from what the land has to offer,” Fox says. “When George was first elected he was the youngest chief in the Mushkegowuk region, and he spent the rest of his life as a leader. Among his many accomplishments as chief was the relocation of the community upriver to protect against seasonal flooding from ice jams on the Winisk River.”

Fox says Hunter, as an Omushkego Cree knowledge keeper, raised concerns about changes in the environment and animal behaviour, which is now called climate change.

“He knew the importance of the seasons’ connection to our traditional way of life and culture, and he hoped for a sustainable future for our families, communities and the land,” Fox says. “We will support his family and community in the difficult days ahead, and we will honour his memory as we enjoy, protect and harvest from the land.”

Lakehead students participate in seminar at Stanford

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

A group of Lakehead University students recently participated in an Indigenous Student Seminar hosted by Stanford University’s Hoover Institution in California in August. The four-day immersion program explored federal policy, tribal governance and Indigenous entrepreneurship.

“There were so many key takeaways — one of them I had mentioned before was having a deeper appreciation for the rich history of entrepreneurship and trade that took place among Indigenous people prior to European contact,” says Tyna Legault Taylor, a master’s student in Social Justice Studies and Attawapiskat citizen. “We see that here in Thunder Bay, as an example a lot of the arrowheads that we find along Lake Superior, a lot of that material is not native to these areas. That chert or other materials will be found in places like in the U.S., say in Montana or different areas.”

Taylor also learned what makes Indigenous businesses unique versus other businesses, and what factors Indigenous business owners and managers have to deal with that may not be present in other businesses.

“A lot of those businesses take into consideration or incorporate ways of being in terms of being Indigenous people, ensure those values are instilled in their businesses, that they’re authentic, that they’re contributing in terms of training, employment, revitalizing language and culture,” Taylor says. “There’s a lot of barriers too in terms of Indigenous businesses in rural areas that non-Indigenous businesses don’t have to deal with in terms of power, water, wifi and also getting the capital they need to start their businesses.”

Taylor says it was interesting to learn various perspectives on renewing Indigenous econo-

mies from other Indigenous students from the U.S., Australia, New Zealand and Canada during the seminar.

“Although we’re all diverse nations from around the world, we do share similarities in terms of colonization, but also in terms of our relationship with the land, culture, values along with our common vision and goal to help strengthen our communities and nations,” Taylor says. “So it was a good networking opportunity.”

Sydney Belleau, a Master of Science in Forestry student, Tashya Orasi, a PhD candidate in Leadership and Policy Studies in the Faculty of Education, and Olivia Adams, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing student, also enjoyed participating in the Indigenous Student Seminar.

Adams learned that stereotypes of Indigenous people continue to undermine tribal sovereignty.

“To identify the origin of these stereotypes we need to re-evaluate the government documents — look at what is said, who said it, and identify the obvious racism that is still used in today’s government,” Adams says. “These are the stereotypes that continue to undermine tribal sovereignty today. From the staff and faculty, I learned that you never stop learning. No matter your age or background, there is always a space to grow and learn at Stanford.”

Taylor adds that she is delivering an Indigenous Canadian World Views course this year at Lakehead University.

“It explores how the world is viewed from the perspective of Indigenous people in Canada,” Taylor says. “Yesterday we had our class at the sweat lodge site at Lakehead University. We had an Elder that was there providing a smudge, a song, teachings around the Seven Grandfather Teachings, teachings about the healing circle, and it was also a chance for all students to gather around the fire.”

Thank You, Airlines!

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



Commentary

It's Time To Say Meegwetch (Thanks) For Public Health



**Xavier
Kataquapit**

UNDER THE
NORTHERN SKY

COVID19 is still a very prominent part of our lives. As much as we would like to think that this pandemic is coming to an end, it is still a very dangerous period for many people.

This past month, I lost my uncle Elder Alex Kataquapit through complications from the COVID19 virus. At 89 years of age, he was doing well for his age until he contracted the virus which completely weakened him and sent him to hospital. Older people and those with compromised health issues are most at risk with COVID19 but many younger people are also having problems and what is known as long COVID.

Uncle Alex was a great man and he was part of an old generation of Elders that were the last to be born and raised on the land and to live our people's traditional way of life. He spent his entire life on the banks of the Attawapiskat River where his parents James and Janie Kataquapit's family were situated.

He and his wife Elder Susan Kataquapit raised a strong and prominent family in the community. They raised their

children Margaret, Helen, Maurice, David, James, Evelyn, Bertha, Roseline and twins John and Janie. My cousins were older than me and I always saw them as siblings that watched out for all of us as we grew up. There was no greater excitement than to run around with my younger cousins on what we saw as the 'Kataquapit homestead'. Our grandfather had originally settled in a home on a street in the middle of the village decades ago and from there, his son Leo built a home nearby, then his son Gabriel, his son George and finally Alex. They all had big families. Further down the way my father Marius and their brother Thomas also raised their families.

Uncle Alex and aunt Susan's home was a central place for our entire family and it always seemed like we ended up in their yard. It was a safe, exciting and fun place for all the children to mix and play games.

It was sad news to hear that Uncle Alex had contracted the latest variant of this terrible virus. My father often remarked that among their brothers, Alex was the strongest. It was no wonder that Alex had outlived his younger siblings including my father Marius and their brothers Gabriel and David as well as their older brothers George, Thomas and Leo. Thankfully we still have my aunt Celine Nakogee who is the last of Alex's siblings.

This pandemic also hit home for myself and my partner

Mike recently. He has a lung condition and recently we both picked up a virus which was likely COVID19. He had trouble breathing and in a panic we headed to the emergency department late at night in Kirkland Lake. As soon as we arrived, the capable and kind staff made both of us feel safe and comforted. We spent the night in Emergency and in the morning we met with Dr. McPherson. He was quick, thorough and very kind. He convinced Mike that it would be a good idea to stay in the hospital for a few days so that he could be stabilized and treated.

We could not believe how supportive, kind and caring all staff members were during those days in the Kirkland and District Hospital (Blanche River Health). We learned that many hospital front line workers were not compensated during the pandemic and they are still not although another wave of COVID is here.

All those lab specialists, cleaners, X-ray technicians, respirologists and other support staff have to deal with COVID patients during this pandemic and the government has not compensated them. We should be aware of this and hope these people get the support they deserve.

Some of the people I give thanks to that I met during Mike's stay include: nurses Fiona, Michelle, Laura, Brianna, Lisa, Affie, Junior, Rachel, Patty, Andrea, Jacob and of course Dr. McPherson and Dr.



submitted photo

Alex Kataquapit.

Dozois.

People like these health care workers are what make our public health care system great. We are hearing more about privatization of our public health care system and we need to push back on that strongly. In our social democracy in

Canada, we need to fully fund public health care and public education. We need to do our part for all our hospitals and health care teams and donate to any of the necessities they need. Our nurses and doctors are the ones that help people in crisis like my partner and I or families

like my Uncle Alex and his children. In the face of privatization of our health care system, we need to do our part to help those who help us the most.

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Commentary

It's Up To Us To Save Democracy



**Xavier
Kataquapit**

UNDER THE
NORTHERN SKY

What is it with all of the hate circulating these days? If anyone knows anything about being oppressed or hated it has to be Indigenous people like me. I grew up feeling discriminated against and I had to push myself to leave my remote First Nation and venture out into the greater world for school at first and then later to work at writing. My father Marius Kataquapit left the north when he was a teenager in the 1950s in search of work in the south but he realized he couldn't survive in the outside world on his own at the time. He never liked to talk about it but he often mentioned being taunted, intimidated, excluded and gen-erally looked down upon as a brown skinned Indigenous man who was not welcome in the cities and towns he tried to find work in.

I decided to write as a means to give a voice to my people, inform others about my traditions and culture, the issues we face, how our communities work and who we are.

It surprised me that there was an interest in the views of an Indigenous person and I have enjoyed more than 20 years of writing for Native media, tribal councils, First Nation communities and mainstream news. Happily, I have met many won-derful people on this journey. I have been encouraged and supported by Indigenous leaders, media producers, editors and journalists and a lot of good people.

These days I am shocked at how the culture and politics of the world is taking a turn to the right and more fascist ways of seeing things. I see so much hate and intolerance promoted in the media, on so-cial media in particular and by people I would think were more open, loving and hopeful about the world.

There is a huge movement that is well financed and equipped to promoting hate and fear these days and it is ending up with very right wing governments being put in power all over the globe and it is also happening in peaceful and socially democratic Canada.

I love to study history and I have come to understand that the movements to the right and fascism in the past were always about the very rich and powerful pushing back on any interest in the public shar-ing wealth, having democratic elections, providing unions for workers, making education accessible and affordable for all and pro-

viding public health. Wars and far right political movements are always a strate-gy of the very wealthy to ensure that they are making profits in armament sales, grabbing resources, weakening any challenge to power and sending young people off to die to do their bidding.

This seems so terrible and evil yet history proves that this has happened time and time again.

Hate, conspiracy theories, fear and misinformation can be marketed like Coca-cola or Tide laundry detergent. All that is needed is a lot of money, bright people to initiate the messages, corporately con-trolled media that will never question the narrative of those in power and a public that can be targeted and convinced of just about anything.

I like to believe that more and more people are figuring out that a world of war, hate, fear and fas-cist right wing political movements are not something that just happens randomly but orchestrated by the very wealthy. The partnership between war, the military and big business is what US President Ike Ei-senhower warned against in this 1961 farewell speech and what he famously referred to as the military-industrial complex. He realized how dangerous the world would become if the power ended up in the hands of those who were only concerned with money and might.

Ask an Indigenous person what racism and hate is all about and they will tell you how it feels to be discriminated against and marginalized. We need to become activists and do our best to protect our democracies.

If we fail to do this in the next few years our young people and future generations will be inheriting a very unfair, intolerant and oppressive environment. I don't think most of us realize just how much our democracy is in danger. We have to do our best to become involved with more social democrat-ic political movements or at the very least make our voice heard when we see or hear hateful speech or ideas.

Indigenous people all across Canada are doing better these days because our leaders, our Elders and our people fought against discrimination, colonial oppression and racism.

This goes to show that it is possible to overcome hate and fear. We all have a responsibility to protect and promote our social democ-racy here in Canada and if we miss this opportunity future generations of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people will be living in a very dark and dangerous world.

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SLAAMB sod turning ceremony



SLAAMB held a sod turning ceremony on September 7 in Hudson, just outside of Sioux Lookout. The ceremony was held on the site where the new building for a women's trainees accommodation facilities will be located.

photo submitted by Pete Kakagamik

Preparing For The Coming Winter Months



**Graham
Saunders**

WEATHER

Most of Northern Ontario experienced a warm August and for many locations it was the warmest summer month. This honour usually goes to July. The far north, along the Hudson Bay coastline was as much as 2 degrees Celsius above normal. Extreme heat, 30° C and higher, was not common and only experienced for a couple of days in the Thunder Bay area.

Rainfall was less than 50 per cent than the long-term average in most of the region. Reduced rainfall was a relief in Kenora and other locations near the Manitoba border. High and near-record water levels that had been experienced through spring and early summer dropped considerably in August.

Most of the region experienced a slow start to summer because of slightly cooler temperatures and wetter than usual conditions. Gardeners and people who enjoy the outdoors had improved conditions through August and the summer like weather continued well into September.

In the beginning of September occasional days with 30° C and warmer were experienced

from Fort Frances to the Thunder Bay area, in Moosonee and in occasional locations in the Northeast.

The mainly dry conditions of August persisted until mid-September. Several weeks of minimal rain prompted some concerns about forest fires. There were a few small fires across the region but fire starts were limited. There was not a lot of lightning activity and perhaps careless humans were very few in number.

A potent rainstorm passed over the Northwest in mid-September. The system was very slow moving and rainfall and occasional thunderstorms persisted for more than 48 hours over Thunder Bay and some other locations in the Northwest. Rain totals ranged from 75 mm to slightly more than 100 mm and likely interfered with outdoor activities but did not result in flood issues. The rainfall rate was relatively low and gentle, which allowed for significant absorption by the dry soils. The storm preceded into the central and eastern parts of the region with amounts of rainfall combined with considerable fog and reduced visibility over two or three days

Outlook for September – and a mention of the coming Winter

September has been warmer than usual to date but some

very cool overnight temperatures forecast for the third week are likely to result in frost in many areas. In spite of the timing of these frosts, this growing season is likely to go into the record books as longer than usual.

There is considerable talk in various media about likely effects of La Niña on the coming winter. It is well known that sea surface temperatures in the eastern equatorial Pacific can contribute to winter conditions across Canada. It may seem a leap of faith to believe that small changes in temperature more than 10,000 kilometres away in the central Pacific could have major effects on the winter season in Northern Ontario.

More direct impacts of the changes in sea surface temperature of the eastern equatorial Pacific are felt by the west coast of South America. Thus, the Spanish terms used to describe how warm or cool water is when compared to average have become the convention. Water temperatures can be in the warm phase called El Niño (little boy), when the sea temperatures are 0.5° to 2.0° Celsius warmer than average. In the La Nada phase (nothing or no effect) temperatures close to average.

Presently, we are in an extended La Nina (little girl) phase with water temperatures have been consistently cooler-than-average. Even though these temperatures are only between 0.5° degrees and 1.0°

Celsius cooler than average, such cool waters can affect the position of jet streams and winter storm tracks over North America.

Environment Canada states that impacts of La Niña on winter climate and weather include: above average precipitation in British Columbia, colder-than-normal temperatures in the Prairies and above average precipitation in Ontario and Quebec. This usually means more snow in our part of the world. La Niña may impact lake ice extent and thickness.

The 2020-21 winter qualified as La Niña winter according to Pacific Ocean temperatures, but across Northern Ontario temperatures were actually much warmer than average with less snowfall generally. Last winter, 2021-22 also qualified as a La Niña winter. Winter conditions were more like what might be expected with a La Niña winter. Temperatures were below normal, precipitation was mainly snow - with lots of it, and winter conditions persisted well into spring.

The cooler than normal conditions in the Pacific are predicted to persist through the coming winter. It is very unusual to have three la Nina winters in a row.

Many are on the La Nina bandwagon for this winter in Ontario. It will take a while to see who was closest but I'm predicting near-average temperatures. Of course, keep your parka and shovel handy.

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Arts and Entertainment

Wake The Giant music festival returns after two years

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

A group of jingle dress dancers from Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School (DFC) kicked off the 2022 Wake the Giant Music Festival with a dance performance on Sept. 17 at Marina Park in Thunder Bay.

"Dancing up there was scary, but I felt the support of everyone there who was watching me," says Harmony Fiddler, a Grade 11 DFC student from Sandy Lake. "The entire time I was in the dress, I literally felt like a celebrity. Dancing with all the other dancers was a fun experience and since it was my first time dancing I was like exhausted. It's part of my culture and I wanted to be a part of the healing dance."

Fiddler says she walked around and hung out with the other jingle dress dancers after performing, and watched the different musicians at the Wake the Giant Music Festival.

"The music performances were great, I was having a blast in the crowd," Fiddler says. "Some of the performers were interacting with the people in the crowd, and I found that pretty cool."

Fiddler says Neon Dreams did a music session with students at DFC the day before the Wake the Giant Music Festival.

"I actually got to write a song with them," Fiddler says. "It was fun — I played a ukulele and they actually liked the tune I was playing so we put my chords with the song we were writing. The song was about our experiences of coming out for school and leaving our families."

Saffron Fiddler, a Confederation College student from Sandy Lake who previously attended DFC, says the jingle dress performance "went really well."

"When we were dancing together it was quite crowded, but it was still fun to be around the girls with such positive energy with them," Saffron says. "It was definitely really nice to be on with them, especially getting ready for the morning, helping each other out, deciding what kind of looks we wanted to go for and then going on the stage together."

Janine Desmoulin, a jingle dress dancer from Bigtoogong Nishnaabeg who assisted the jingle dress dancers, says they were offered semaa (tobacco) to perform at the Wake the Giant Music Festival.

"These dresses here, every jingle is a prayer, every cone is a prayer," Desmoulin says. "When we make these dresses and when we wear these dresses it's a deep connection of love not only for Mother Earth but for each other."

Desmoulin says the jingle



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

TOP LEFT: A group of jingle dress dancers from Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School.
TOP RIGHT: Anishinabe musicians Raven Kanataktak and ShoShona Kish and their band Digging Roots.
ABOVE: Anishinabe musician Aysanabee.
ABOVE RIGHT: Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse performed as the Nish King.
RIGHT: Indigenous fashion designer and artist Janet Napash had some of her work for sale.



dress originates in the Whitefish Bay area north of Fort Frances from a vision a man had to help his ill daughter, noting that the jingle dress dance is for healing.

"He made this dress for his daughter and he was directed to have her dance in it," Desmoulin says. "She danced in it and not only did it heal herself but many people found that healing in that dress the same way we find healing in our drums and our songs, it's connected to our heart."

Aaron Therriault, keeper of the Thunder Spirit Drum and Aroland citizen, says they did an opening song for the jingle dress dancers and another song to show the public the unique steps with the jingle dress dance.

"It was very uplifting to see First Nations dancers and singers at the forefront of a good event like that," Therriault says. "Even the Anishinabe Elvis from Aroland was there to perform,

I was pretty happy to see that. It was very nice to be around people again after two years of COVID-19. When I was there around 9:30, the whole field was just full."

Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse, who performed as the Nish King during the Wake the Giant Music Festival, says it was important to support and welcome the students.

"It's a welcoming for them — Thunder Bay is such a diverse city with various cultures and languages, and I think we need to celebrate that diversity and we need to also have an opportunity for everyone to gather in a safe environment to really enjoy the concerts," Narcisse says. "I see a lot of organizations here as well ... to let people know what the resources are out there for all of our students across Thunder Bay as well. We're here to support this very worthwhile initiative, and this is not the only thing they are doing, there is a whole school year of events that

we need to support and provide safe spaces for our First Nation students coming in to engage in positive activities such as this."

Kiiwetinoong MPP Sol Mamakwa says the Wake the Giant Music Festival was an opportunity for the residents of Thunder Bay to welcome the students from fly-in First Nation communities who are pursuing their high school studies in Thunder Bay.

"When you have to leave at either 13, 14, 15, 16, 17-years-old, it's hard," Mamakwa says. "It's a welcoming thing and it brings people together. Music brings people together and it's a very positive vibe. It was quiet earlier but I think what you feel here is almost like a calm before the storm because of some of the acts they're going to have this evening. It's very important that we have (the students) welcomed and they succeed in their lives and their goals in life and their path towards education."



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Arts and Entertainment

Vox Popular Festival celebrates local filmmakers

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

Films by local filmmakers Victoria Anderson-Gardner and Adrien Harpelle were featured at the 18th Annual Vox Popular Media Arts Festival, held Sept. 8-11 at Definitely Superior Art Gallery in Thunder Bay. Braided Together, co-directed by Anderson-Gardner and Kyle Schmalenberg, and Journey to Our Homeland, directed by Harpelle, also the Vox Popular Media Arts Festival festival director, were screened on the first day of the festival.

“This is serving as a proof of concept film for a feature film that I am writing currently with my co-director Kyle Schmalenberg,” says Anderson-Gardner, an Eagle Lake citizen. “As Kyle and I started talking about the main characters of the feature film, we decided we wanted to focus the short film on Tenaya and Autumn. We just developed a story around their relationship because the theme explored in this film, friendship between Black culture and Indigenous culture, is like tying into the themes we explore in the feature film.”

Anderson-Gardner says there was a “really good turnout” for the Sept. 8 film screenings.

“It’s also just really nice because it’s my hometown, so it was nice to start off its festival circuit at home,” Anderson-Gardner says.

Anderson-Gardner, who has been working professionally in the film and television industry



Eagle Lake filmmaker Victoria Anderson-Gardner speaks about her film Braided Together during a Q and A session on the opening night of the 18th Annual Vox Popular Media Arts Festival, held Sept. 8-11 at Definitely Superior Art Gallery in Thunder Bay.

for about four years, says her career has been “going pretty good so far.”

“I feel like I’ve had a lot of good opportunities,” Anderson-Gardner says. “I’ve managed to get a lot of really good mentors in my circle, which I think has really helped me to get to where I am right now.”

Anderson-Gardner says she worked with Daniel Roher, who recently directed Navalny and Robbie Robertson and the Band, when she first started out in film as an intern.

“He just kind of saw something in me and he just kind of took me under his wing,” Anderson-Gardner says. “Because of that, I’ve wanted to do the same thing for other people whenever I have the chance to bring people on who wouldn’t otherwise have the chance. It really makes you feel like you are seen and that someone thinks that your voice and the work you are doing is really important.”

Harpelle says the experience of capturing a four-day canoe

journey by Nibinamik Elders Tommy Yellowhead and Stephen Neshinapaise and a group of youth to the Elder’s birthplace at PinnaeMootang for his film, Journey to Our Homeland, was “the time of my life.”

“I felt really lucky to get to go along on the trip,” Harpelle says. “I was also the audio recorder on the shooting days with Tommy and Stephen, and just following them and learning from them — their whole goal was to share this traditional knowledge with youth



Nibinamik Elder Tommy Yellowhead speaks about his experiences with the Journey to Our Homeland film during a Q and A session.

from their community — I was very privileged to get to tag along and capture that for them.”

Harpelle says the festival was a “huge success” with about 450-500 people in attendance and about 20 Q and A sessions, including 10 in-person Q and A sessions with visiting or local filmmakers.

“The best of it was getting together and having a real live conversation,” Harpelle says. “A lot of the films surrounded about activism and the best part

of it was just getting those discussions out felt really good.”

Harpelle says the festival featured 46 films, including seven local films, as well as several performances and musicians.

“Last night (Sept. 14) we wrapped up our last in-person event — a workshop called Rebel 101,” Harpelle says, noting that it featured the group Disrupt on how to organize a protest and zine making. “It was really fun and a lot of people got together and made their own zine.”

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Community

Fort William Historical Park hosts 2022 Anishinaabe Keeshigun

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

Fort William Historical Park's (FWHP) Anishinaabe Keeshigun gathering featured a powwow with dance exhibitions and a variety of Indigenous foods, tools and games.

"It's a way of sharing our culture, our heritage once again to our tourists, to our non-Indigenous people and also to the staff and the community that's here at the old fort," says Dave Simard, master of ceremonies at Anishinaabe Keeshigun. "We did an exhibition of the different styles of dancing, we're going to showcase a little bit of the different steps they have, and also we had a woman hand drummer — she shared some songs as well."

Simard says they also had storytelling about the different dance styles and the eagle staff at the powwow and Fort William Elder Sheila DeCorte also spoke about importance of continuing the late Water Walker Josephine Mandamin's water walks.

"I brought my hand drum just to showcase a different style of singing and drumming," Simard says, noting that he participated in Anishinaabe Keeshigun in his early teens. "It hasn't changed all that much, we're still doing the same kind of thing where we're showing our culture, we're showing our heritage, we're teaching our language, we're teaching our dances. It's nice for myself because after the (COVID-19) pandemic everybody is kind of coming back to sharing and it's nice to see something that's always been in the community as long as I've known it and that is continuing on."

Annabelle Laframboise, historic name at FWHP, says she was teaching visitors about the Anishinabe culture at the Anishinabe Encampment.

"We're teaching about the hunter canoes that we used for personal use and what the grandfathers and grandmothers would be teaching the kids when they're younger and what skills they would be using when they grow up," Laframboise says. "And I'm also talking about the wigwam — one of the main things is people get it mixed up with the teepee, a teepee is made out of animal hide and a wigwam is made out of birch bark."

Julie Chaurette, historic name at FWHP, says she was cooking up some bakwezhigan (fry bread) for visitors.

"There are so many various ways of making it, the voyageurs tended to do their's with just flour and water and roll it on a stick," Chaurette says. "But today we are frying it."

Chaurette says a bakwezhigan-making competition would also be held later in the day at their campfires.

"There have been some people inquiring about it and it'll be fun," Chaurette says. "It's a good skill to have."

Alicia Brink, a Métis artisan from Thunder Bay, says she was carving spoons and giving a demonstration on the axe work and tool work to make the spoons.

"First you split the wood with your axe and then after that you want to plane it to almost a 2x4," Brink says. "You use a carving axe to axe out the side profile and then from there you want to axe out the other side profile. Then you carve out the bowl and match the bowl to the



TOP: A variety of dancers shared their dance styles.
ABOVE: Fort William Historical Park's Julie Chaurette, historic name, made some bakwezhigan (fry bread) for visitors



TOP: Fort William Historical Park's Annabelle Laframboise, historic name, shared information about the Anishinabe Encampment with visitors.
ABOVE: Fort William Historical Park's Ignace Lavallée, historic name, shared information about atlatl (spear throwing).

outside."

Ignace Lavallée, historic name at FWHP, says the atlatl (spear throwing) demonstration site was very busy.

"This is a traditional method of hunting that the Anishinabe peoples around 3,000 years

ago were using before the bow-and-arrow," Lavallée says. "It's basically spear throwing but you use a platform to throw the spear which gives you extra length kind of like a lever, so it gives you more power too."

Anishinaabe Keeshigun also

featured popped manomin (wild rice), corn-on-the-cob, smoked fish at the Anishinabe Encampment, baggataway (lacrosse) and double ball.

"Fort William Historical Park is delighted to expand its daily

activities and demonstrations that highlight Anishinaabe culture, traditions, language and technology at Anishinaabe Keeshigun," says Patrick Morash, general manager at FWHP.

Canadian Rangers rescue 17-year-old hunters on Hudson Bay



photo submitted by Warrant Officer Ron Wen, Canadian Rangers
Sergeant Christopher Koostachin, holding a trapped marten, led the successful Canadian Ranger search team that found two 17-year-old youths stranded near Hudson Bay.



photo submitted by Sergeant Christopher Koostachin, Canadian Rangers
Stranded hunter Zachary Kakekaspan, right, watches as his rescuers repair his ATV engine.

Peter Moon
Special to Wawatay News

Two Canadian Rangers and a civilian volunteer went to the rescue of two 17-year-old youths whose all-terrain vehicles broke down and left them stranded 100 kilometers east of their home community.

The boys were hunting for caribou when their ATV engines broke down in an area with an abundance of polar

bears near to Hudson Bay.

They managed to use their cell phones to alert their parents in Fort Severn, Ontario's most northerly community. Fort Severn is a small and remote Cree settlement 1,500 kilometers north of Toronto. It has a population of just over 400.

The two youths were Dakota Bunn and Zachary Kakekaspan, both experienced at living on the land.

Much of their community

was locked down because of a COVID-19 crisis so the Canadian Army authorized the local Ranger patrol to go to the aid of the two youths. Rangers are part-time army reservists.

The search team consisted of Sergeant Christopher Koostachin, Ranger George Kakekaspan, and James Kabestra, a civilian volunteer and an uncle to Dakota Bunn. They reached the youths late in the day as the sun was setting and

decided to camp out overnight.

"They were very happy when they saw us arriving and carrying treats their parents sent for them with us," said Sergeant Koostachin.

The rescuers repaired the two ATV engines and returned with the youths to Fort Severn late on the second day. Because it was dark when they got back they left their ATVs and all their gear on the far side of the wide River Severn and crossed it in

canoes. "We did not want to risk crossing with our gear in the dark," Sergeant Koostachin said. "We could easily have got swamped. We went back to get our gear the next day."

It was the second time Rangers have gone to the aid of Dakota Bunn while he was on a hunting trip. Two years ago he and a friend got their ATVs stuck in mud. Sergeant Koostachin and Ranger Kakekaspan conducted a suc-

cessful rescue. "I teased him about it," Sergeant Koostachin said.

He said the parents of the two youths rescued this week sent the Rangers a grateful message for going to the aid of their sons.

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

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Community



The Survivors' Flag

Elder Catherine McGuire raises National Truth and Reconciliation flag

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

Marten Falls Elder Catherine McGuire did not know a word of English when she was picked up from her family's summer residence on the Albany River to attend residential school. McGuire, who recently raised the National Truth and Reconciliation Flag during a Sept. 7 ceremony at Lakehead University, was first sent to Pelican and then to Shingwauk.

"I didn't know where they were taking me," McGuire says. "I knew my brothers and sisters left every fall and came back in June. When it was my turn to go I didn't know what was going on, all of a sudden they just landed and threw us on the plane and away we went. That's kind of a scary feeling."

McGuire says she couldn't talk to her siblings during her time at residential school.

"There were junior girls, intermediate girls and senior girls so we had to stay in our group," McGuire says. "I never got to see my sister or my brothers. The odd time was when they thought we could mingle playing outside on the weekend. We would go for a walk and that was when we would see our siblings, enough to say: 'Hi,' but we couldn't mingle with them."

McGuire says she did good in school at Pelican but when she was sent to Shingwauk she had to walk back and forth to a school in Sault Ste. Marie.

"We got harassed but nobody ever did anything," McGuire says. "When I got to Grade 8, the passing mark was 60 per cent back then and I had 59.5. They failed me and put me back in Grade 8, but by then I was

turning 16 so I didn't go back."

McGuire says it took her a long time to go back to school, noting that she tried going to college a few times.

"I had my family — I lived by Lake Nipigon, I raised my kids there," McGuire says. "I didn't speak the language to them, and I should have. I didn't want them being ridiculed, when you talk the language you sound different when you talk another language. So in a way they won when I went to residential school, and I'm sorry I didn't teach them the language."

McGuire eventually taught there for about two years after graduating with Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education degrees in 1993 from Lakehead University.

"I loved teaching kids," McGuire says. "I went to Wunnumin for three years and I taught Grade 3 and 4. I had to get used to living there because it was a remote community, I had to fly out from Sioux Lookout."

McGuire says the cutest thing she ever heard was a young child speaking his language to his mother in Wunnumin.

"I went around the corner to

see who that was and it was a little boy talking to his mom," McGuire says. "The children there were talking their language — that was so nice to hear. I took my youngest son over there for three years and he was learning the language when he was there, they were teaching Native language all the time so he picked it up."

McGuire says she also taught Grade 1-3 in Eabametoong from about 2001-2012.

"It was like going home or near home because I had my own boat and motor and everything to live in the bush to go camping on the weekend," McGuire says. "We used to have programs to do with children taking them out on the land."

McGuire says she couldn't work for about three or four years after having a stroke.

"I went back to work in 2017, I went back home (to) Marten Falls," McGuire says. "Then COVID-19 hit, so I never went back."

McGuire now helps out with Elders in the community and with Lakehead Public Schools at the Kingfisher Outdoor Education Centre or Fort William Historical Park.



Community

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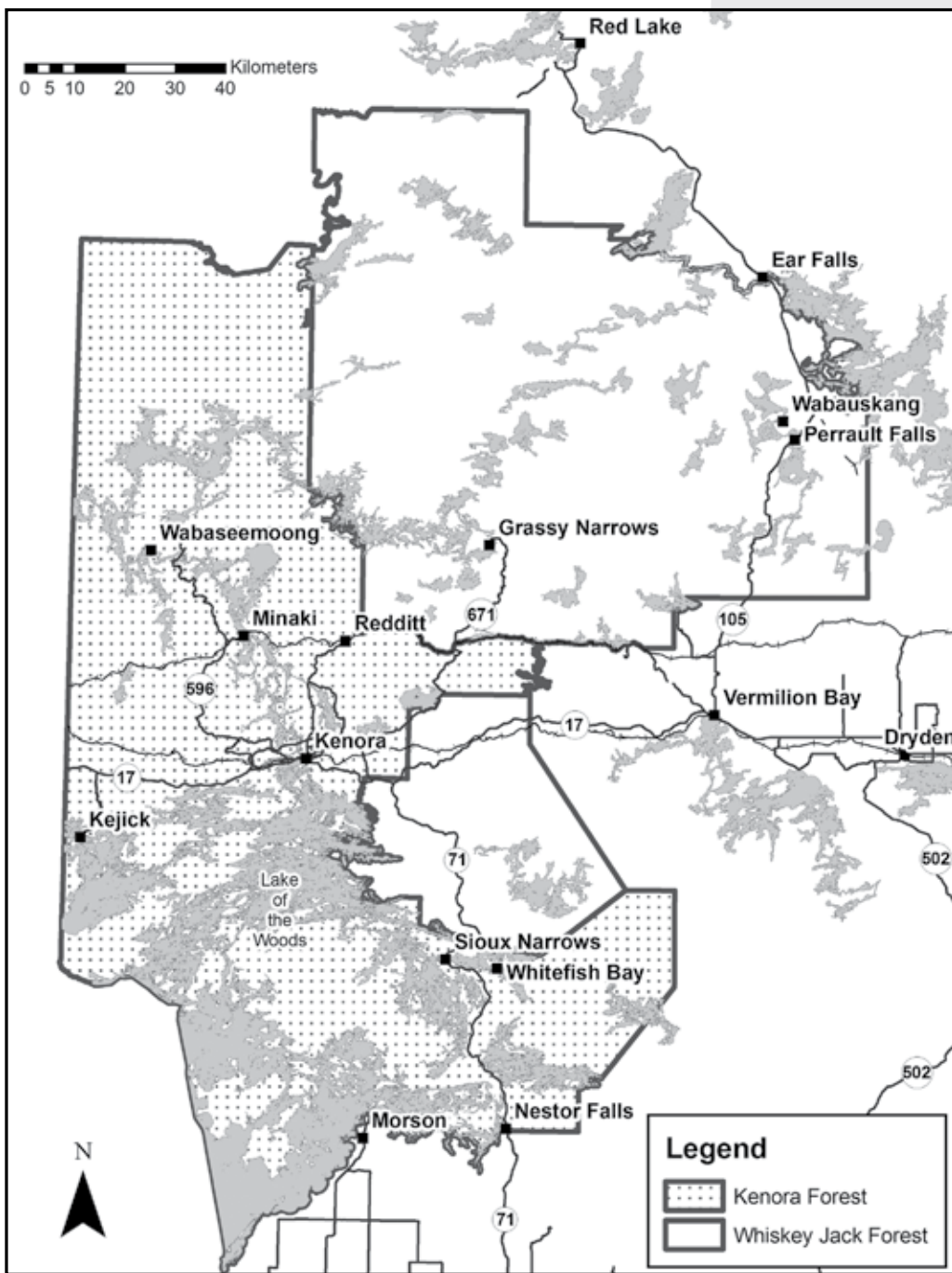
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INSPECTION

Inspection Of MNRF-Approved Prescribed Burn Plan for Slash Pile Burning Kenora Forest and Whiskey Jack Forests

The Ontario **Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF)** invites you to inspect the MNRF-approved prescribed burn plan for slash pile burning that will be carried out in the **Kenora Forest and Whiskey Jack 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 **October 31, 2022 and February 15, 2023**.

The approved prescribed burn plan for slash pile burning, including specific locations and maps, is available electronically for public inspection by contacting Miisun Integrated Resource Management Company and on the Natural Resources Information Portal at <https://nrip.mnr.gov.on.ca/s/fmp-online> until **March 31, 2023**, when the Annual Work Schedule expires.

Interested and affected persons and organizations can arrange a remote meeting with MNRF staff to discuss the prescribed burn plan. For more information, please contact:

Charlotte Caron
Management Forester
 Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
 808 Robertson Street
 Kenora, ON P9N 3X8
 tel: 807-456-1659
 e-mail: charlotte.caron@ontario.ca

Kurt Pochailo
Forester
 Miisun Integrated Resource Management Co.
 510 Ninth Street North
 Kenora, ON P9N 2S8
 tel: 807-467-3351, ext. 2
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NAN Corporate Services
Statement of Financial Position
As at March 31, 2022

Community



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

TOP LEFT: Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum spoke about the importance of acknowledging residential school survivors and those that didn't return
TOP: Lakehead University's National Truth and Reconciliation Flag Raising and Every Child Matters Crosswalks Ribbon Cutting ceremony on Sept. 7 at the Thunder Bay campus.

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Lakehead University
raises Reconciliation Flag

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

Lakehead University's National Truth and Reconciliation Flag Raising and Every Child Matters Crosswalks Ribbon Cutting ceremony featured Marten Falls Elder Catherine McGuire raising the flag and speeches by Indigenous representatives on Sept. 7.

"It was an honour," says McGuire, a residential school survivor who graduated from Lakehead University in 1993 with Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education degrees. "It represents our people and what they went through — for myself, I went to residential school and it's still hard for me."

Moir McPherson, president and vice-chancellor at Lakehead University, says 140 federally-run residential schools operated between 1831 and 1998.

"This flag is an expression of remembrance meant to honour residential school survivors and all the lives and communities impacted by Canada's residential school system," McPherson says. "Survivors from across Canada were consulted on the flag design — every facet of this flag has meaning and was carefully crafted from those survivor consultations."

McPherson says the orange Every Child Matters crosswalks that were added to both the Thunder Bay and Orillia campuses represent Lakehead University's recognition of the harm done to Indigenous children.

"These pathways serve to remind everyone each day that we must be vigilant to ensure that no child experiences the hurt of being taken away from their families," McPherson says.

Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse stressed the importance of the National Truth and Reconciliation Flag Raising ceremony, noting that the flag is very important to many Indigenous people across the country.

"It's a testament that the university is doing this because the university is a place of learning, academia, where we need to write the history books to really ensure the true experience of the first peoples of this country," Narcisse says. "It is also a testament too that this

university is also a celebration of diversity — we have many diverse individuals and students from all across Canada and internationally that are here to further their education. What a place to have this commemoration, to really speak to the testimony and the history of First Nations people and the experience of First Nations children that never came back."

Narcisse says the flag raising is a also testament to moving forward.

"We need to evolve in terms of creating an education system that is reflective of the true experience of First Nations people and of Canadians here as well in the spirit of reconciliation," Narcisse says. "It is here also where we will start to develop curriculum for elementary school, for high school and post-secondary as well. Our knowledge is also there to assist in furthering the education of our post-secondary students, and it's great to see the diversity of post-secondary students attending here at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay to really show that measure that there is an opportunity here to really find reconciliation and to really learn from each other."

Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum stressed the importance of acknowledging the residential school survivors and those that didn't return from the residential schools.

"I come from a family where seven of my older siblings spent in total close to 60 years in these institutions, and I also had a few family members who never returned, including Charlie (Chanie) Wenjack," Achneepineskum says.

Wenjack was a 12-year-old residential school student from Marten Falls who died along the CN railway tracks in 1966 after running away from a residential school in Kenora to return home to his community.

"Throughout Ontario there are gravesites that represent the very tragic history, horrific history of Canada and the First Nations people," Achneepineskum says. "So we all have a lot of work to do in terms of bringing these truths to the surface — it is only then that we can have reconciliation and healing, is if we acknowledge the truth."

Community

Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon celebrates 25th anniversary

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon celebrated its 25th anniversary of providing educational and cultural programming to children through the Aboriginal Head Start program on Aug. 26 in Thunder Bay. The celebration included a community BBQ, mini powwow, cultural activities and comments by guest speakers.

“Since then we have added to the Aboriginal Head Start, which is for ages two to six-years-old, we have added the Biwaase’aa program, which is located in nine schools throughout Thunder Bay for the ages of seven to 13 and then into the high school,” says Marilyn Junnila, executive director at Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon. “The youth that come through the program learn about their culture, they learn about their language. Some of those youth become dancers for us, some of them have even come back and worked for us because they remember their experiences, they want to be mentors to other youth and to children. So they’re role models for up and coming youth for the future.”

Junnila says the powwow featured the Thunder Mountain Singers and some instructions on protocols at a powwow.

“We may have a woman hand drummer do a song as well,” Junnila says. “Some of the staff as well as some of the dancers will be explaining what their regalia is and what it represents, and how that spiritual part of dancing helps heal them on their journey.”

Junnila says they currently have a two-to-three year wait list for the Aboriginal Head Start program.

“We have an overwhelming response for our Aboriginal Head Start program,” Junnila says. “It’s very much needed in the community and part of it’s because we have that cultural component to our program.”

Junnila says the Biwaase’aa program enables students to learn about their culture and heritage.

“They also get the homework support with math and English and some of the other subjects,” Junnila says. “Sometimes we’re even in the classroom with the teachers — we’re showing them how to talk about residential school or about our true history.”

Betty Kennedy, vice president at Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon, says Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon began with the passion and spirit of many individuals and organizations in Thunder Bay that provided the leadership for the development of the Aboriginal Head Start program.

“We gratefully acknowledge the support of the federal and provincial governments and the leadership of the Aboriginal Interagency Council and the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre for taking the lead role as the sponsoring organization while the community established a board of directors for the Thunder Bay Aboriginal Head Start program back in 1996,” Kennedy says. “Since that time our programs have expanded through the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and with the support of others, including the Ontario Native Women’s Association and others like the United Way and Shania Kids Can.”

Kennedy also, on behalf of the Shkoday Abinojiiwak



Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon held a mini-powwow at its site on John St. Rd. in Thunder Bay to celebrate its 25th anniversary.

Obimiwedoon board, extended gratitude to all past and present Elders and staff at Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon.

“From our very first executive director Bernice Dubec to now Marilyn Junnila and all administrative and program staff, please know that because of you and because of your leadership today future generations of our young people will be the leaders of tomorrow who will bring our nations back to their original glory,” Kennedy says.

Hand drummer Janine Desmoulin says the song she sang at the powwow to celebrate Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoon’s 25th anniversary came to her last year when the 215 potential grave sites of children were found at the former residential school in Kelowna, B.C.

“The song kind of generated with two distinct words, which were love and blessings from our ancestors and Abinoojii, which is child,” Desmoulin says. “That’s the first song that came to mind when I came here today because it speaks to the love and blessings that Creator and our ancestors had prayed for us, to have things like this and such a special event go on with Shkoday for our children, and not only the children that were passed but to honour the children that are up and coming as well.”

JOIN OUR TEAM!

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Tikinagan

Child & Family Services

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We value our employees’ education, skills and most importantly their cultural awareness and respect for our service model, Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin. Employment opportunities at Tikinagan are vast. There are opportunities to work directly with children and families, in what we call frontline work, or to work “behind the scenes” in areas such as management, administrative support, information technology, data entry, finance or human resources. Our opportunities are full-time or casual and often are great stepping stones to a very fulfilling career.

THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

We have more than 30 offices throughout our region. While we have many opportunities in city/town based locations, we also have many community-based positions in the First Nation communities. Our formal head office is located in Sandy Lake First Nation. The administrative office is based in Sioux Lookout, because it is a major transportation centre for the Tikinagan communities. The agency continues to increase the numbers of community-based staff in order to provide more responsive services at the local level.

TIKINAGAN.ORG

HOW TO APPLY

We ensure that our hiring process is accessible as possible. As a result, there are a few ways to apply for a job at Tikinagan:

Email
Emailing your resume and cover letter to hr@tikinagan.org

Mail
Mail your resume and cover letter to:

Tikinagan Child & Family Services Hiring Committee
PO Box 627
Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 1B1

Fax
Faxing your resume and cover letter to (807) 737-4550.

In Person
You can drop by any Tikinagan community office/unit and bring your resume/cover letter to the receptionist. Let them know you are applying for a job and ask them to fax it to Human Resources.

ONWA launches strategic 10-year plan

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Community



submitted photos
Lac Seul's Keisha Necan and Patrick King harvested and distributed a variety of vegetables from the community garden they built and planted this summer with help from Nishnawbe Aski Nation's community garden starter kits program, Lac Seul departments and local companies.

Lac Seul's community garden a success

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

The community garden that Keisha Necan and Patrick King started this year in Lac Seul was a success with a variety of vegetables produced, ranging from beans to zucchini.

"We personally have been doing our own garden for three years now and really fell in love with it when we got to experience it," says Necan, noting that they started gardening after receiving a free garden box with some soil from a Lac Seul program. "That was our very first time and we really fell in love with it."

Necan, who is originally from Moosonee but now resides in Lac Seul's Frenchman's Head community, says she started the community garden after signing up for Nishnawbe Aski Nation's free community garden starter kits program.

"I thought I want to try, I'm on maternity leave right now so I have a lot of time, to get the kids involved at the school because I'm a child and youth mental health school counsellor here in Lac Seul for all three schools," Necan says. "NAN was able to donate many shovels and tools and gloves and a wheelbarrow, hoses, a bunch of seeds."

Necan says some of the

departments in Lac Seul also helped out by paying for lumber, soil and other supplies to build the community garden, and Perron Contracting in Sioux Lookout donated a truck load of soil.

"We actually planted the day of June 22 (with) all of our seeds and transplants," Necan says. "Fresh Market (Foods) in Sioux Lookout donated some veggies as well from their greenhouse, so we got a lot of help and support from the surrounding communities as well as Lac Seul."

Necan says Lac Seul Chief Clifford Bull visited them when King began building the 12

community garden boxes with his father Roy Strang.

"We've had many green and yellow beans that I've distributed to many people already," Necan says, noting that they planted in the community garden boxes a couple of weeks after planting their own personal garden. "We have lots of tomatoes growing right now, we've had many zucchinis that I was able to give away, cucumbers and onions and lettuce. Potatoes and carrots are still out there growing, and corn."

Necan says it has been "really nice" to be able to drop off vegetables to some of the families and Elders in the community.

"Sometimes we'll leave (vegetables) at the community band office so that staff members can grab some veggies too," Necan says. "It also brings a lot of peace and comfort just being up in the garden as well — it really makes the community look nice. Next summer I hope to expand it with more common vegetables that First Nations are accustomed to like potatoes, carrots, onions."

Lac Seul Chief Clifford Bull says it is important to have gardens to grow food in the community.

"Back in my grandfather's days, I would see people have gardens in the community, and

I think this is what the government wanted us to become, farmers and be self sustaining," Bull says. "I remember potatoes being planted, people had cellars. It's important to do that, and it has to do with food security as well. We know the cost of living has gone very high and buying food is expensive now, and I'm glad these two young people have taken on the initiative to plant the garden and plant their own crops and feed the community."

Bull says Necan's plans to expand the community garden next year is "a great idea."

"Chief and council totally support them," Bull says.

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Health

SLFNHA highlights Bringing Children Home at AGM

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

The creation of a Survivors Working Circle for the Bringing Our Children Home Initiative was highlighted on Sept. 8 at the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority Annual General Meeting.

James Cutfeet, director of operations at Bringing Our Children Home, says the Survivors Working Circle was created to provide guidance on how the initiative will move forward with Bringing Our Children Home, with the first Survivors Working Circle gathering held on June 10 with 10 attendees.

"During this first session we started to see which protocols we would need to focus on," Cutfeet says. "We began to understand that Bringing Our Children Home meant more than just searching for unmarked graves, it means bringing home a child within each survivor that was lost when taken from the community. It means reclaiming what was taken from us by the residential school system, our culture, our language, our parenting."

Cutfeet says the Bringing Our Children Home Initiative, which is led by Lac Seul on behalf of 33 First Nations with Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority and Northern Nishnawbe Education Council as partners, has received \$2,480,482 from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern

Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), \$1.1 million from Indigenous Affairs Ontario and \$551,600 from First Nations Inuit Health Branch for a total of \$4.1 million in year-one funding. Cutfeet adds that CIRNAC has also committed \$2.4 million in year-two funding for the Bringing Our Children Home Initiative.

"Since we started late in the initiative, it didn't kick in until November and any activities we were unable to do we moved into the second year," Cutfeet says. "So there was surplus (funding) that was transferred to the second year."

Cutfeet says the second Survivors Working Circle gathering was held on July 4-8 with 21 attendees.

"This was when we started exploring more about the importance of mental health supports and started discussing what protocols would be needed for the initiative to do its work in a good way," Cutfeet says. "This session identified five major thematic and significant areas of interest: truth, healing, searches, reclamation and reconciliation."

Cutfeet says the third Survivors Working Circle gathering was held on July 25-29 with 23 attendees with a focus on developing the five guiding protocols.

"During this session the survivors discussed in-depth what is needed now and into the future to bring our children home," Cutfeet says. "On Aug. 12, 2022 the guiding proto-

cols document was produced with the help and contributions from the three Survivors Working Circle gatherings. The protocols are not static, we will continue to work on them as the initiative progresses. New protocols will be added as they are needed or required by the survivors."

Cutfeet says the truth protocol creates a path forward in uncovering, acknowledging and sharing the truth regarding the survivors' experiences at the residential school.

"The protocol also considers the challenges survivors face in sharing their truth," Cutfeet says. "It highlights requirements for consideration around accommodation and planning."

Cutfeet says the searches protocol provides guidance for the search of unmarked graves and outlines principles, traditions and procedures that are to be adhered to prior to, during and after the search.

"The reconciliation protocol highlights eight important principles for understanding reconciliation," Cutfeet says. "It also provides eight recommendations for action to help rebuild towards reconciliation, it addresses the harms of Indian residential schools and settler colonialism."

Cutfeet says the reclamation protocol identifies 10 aspects that have been affected, lost or destroyed as a result of the residential schools, including history, physical well-being, mental well-being, religion, spiritu-



James Cutfeet, director of operations at Bringing Our Children Home, speaks about the Bringing Our Children Home Initiative on Sept. 8 at the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority Annual General Meeting.

ality, traditional education and culture.

"The healing protocol details seven protocols," Cutfeet says. "The process of healing needs to consider individual perspectives and journeys — these protocols help define what healing means and what is required within the context of residential schools. Each residential school survivor is at a different point in their journey in healing."

Cutfeet says it is essential to ensure appropriate mental health supports are available for survivors for the initiative to move forward in a good way.

"Survivors are discussing a very dark part of their past," Cutfeet says. "We need to make sure they can do so in a safe protected environment. For many, this is the first time that they have ever been able

to safely discuss their experiences without judgement and with support. Because of this, we have worked diligently to provide mental health supports for survivors, we will continue to work with the governments of Canada and Ontario, we will advocate for resources for the development of long-term mental wellness service."

Cutfeet says they have recruited a psychotherapist, a mental health consultant/trainer and two mental health counsellors.

"The mental health consultant will provide training for community counsellors," Cutfeet says. "The entire mental health team will address the needs of the survivors and provide additional support during the Survivors Working Circle engagements. We are also in

the process of developing the mental health plan, which includes community counselling."

Cutfeet says they have drafted a research management plan and identified 354 archival records from five major archives.

"Two hundred and thirty-six records have been collected, catalogued, analyzed and digitally stored," Cutfeet says. "We have established a database of students based on the records collected and catalogued. The database of students currently holds information on 673 students who attended Pelican Lake residential school between 1941 and 1950. We are now working to secure access to the restricted records from 1950 to 1978."



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Business

Webequie updates supply road progress at open house



Webequie Chief Cornelius Wabasse speaks with the media about the progress of the Webequie Supply Road environmental assessment.

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

Webequie Chief Cornelius Wabasse highlighted some information about the progress of the Webequie Supply Road environmental assessment (EA) during an open house at the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay. The proposed 107 km all-season Webequie Supply Road would connect the Webequie airport to existing mineral exploration activities and proposed mining development in the McFaulds Lake area in the Ring of Fire.

“The proposed supply road is to allow community to ben-

efit from the movement of supplies, tools and people to remote exploration activities and future mining development from Webequie First Nation’s airport,” Wabasse says. “This is the first First Nation-led environmental assessment in Ontario and we are very proud to be able to be part of that. It’s a learning experience as well too for our community and we are hoping for the best for our community by doing this environmental assessment.”

Wabasse says the Webequie Supply Road EA is a First Nation-driven process to consult with public stakeholders and other Indigenous commu-

nities, conduct environmental and other studies and collect other information to help communities make informed decisions on whether or not to build the road.

“Today we are here to share the news that we have completed round one of the Indigenous consultation for the environmental assessment,” Wabasse says.

“There are three rounds and the first round has focused on technical studies as well as consultation with 22 First Nations and other stakeholders,”

cont’d on next page...

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Education

Lakehead Public Schools host painting workshops

Rick Garrick
Wawatay News

Aroland artist Shelby Gagnon led a woodland style painting workshop for Lakehead Public Schools students at Fort William Historical Park (FWHP) in Thunder Bay. The workshop was part of Lakehead Public Schools' week-long Mino Bimaadiziwin program that originally began in 2015.

"Before starting the workshop I talked about the 13 moons and started getting the kids' ideas of looking at land, looking at medicine and looking at what the land provides," Gagnon says. "In my practice I like to paint woodland style, so I kind of tied in nicely with looking at 13 moons and looking at woodland style, looking at spirit and holistic health and well-being. Now everyone is inside drawing their references, thinking about the colours that they feel connected to."

Gagnon says some of the youth were painting on canvas and others were painting on the drums they made earlier during the Mino Bimaadiziwin program at FWHP.

"They've been having a great time," Gagnon says. "They're so creative and excited about getting the colours on the canvas. They're just going for the paints right away, thinking about ideas, telling me stories of families and what they've harvested or looking at animals that represent their clans and just having a good time."

Anika Guthrie, Indigenous education lead at Lakehead

Public Schools, says this was the first Mino Bimaadiziwin program held since the COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2000.

"The goal really is about reconnecting with who they are as Indigenous people and understanding what that means for how we walk a good path," Guthrie says. "And how we can use what we learned to go back to our schools and be leaders and contribute to our community in a good way."

Guthrie says they begin their days with a traditional opening and had circles every morning.

"The first day we really focus on traditions and culture and understanding from the Anishinabek perspective who we were prior to contact," Guthrie says. "On day two in the circle in the morning we look a lot at the truth of that history and the relationship between Indigenous people and settlers here in Canada and what that's looked like."

Guthrie says they connected that with some of the grief and loss that Indigenous people experience in their communities and families on day three.

"Just this morning (Aug. 25), we talked a little more about how we live in balance and the role of drugs and alcohol and what that can do to our communities and our families, ourselves," Guthrie says.

Guthrie says they also did a swim test at the Canada Games Complex, went canoeing at the Kingfisher Outdoor Education Centre and harvested black spruce roots for their birch bark



Aroland artist Shelby Gagnon speaks with a group of Lakehead Public Schools students during a woodland style painting workshop she delivered during Lakehead Public Schools' week-long Mino Bimaadiziwin program at Fort William Historical Park.

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

basket project.

Alexa Sagutcheway, a mentor with the Mino Bimaadiziwin program, says the students made their own hand drums and would later make their own drumsticks and do a drum birthing ceremony during the

program.

"I've really seen a lot of the kids grow and become more confident in themselves over the past few days," Sagutcheway says. "I've also seen them learn about their own culture. I'm glad that we are able to

make that space where they can learn such an important part of their identity."

Sagutcheway says the program is "really special" to her as she attended it when she was a student.

"So to come back as a men-

tor and to help guide these kids in the direction that the camp guided me in and to help them grow in the way that it helped me grow is really special," Sagutcheway says. "I'm glad I can be a part of their journey in this way."

107 km long supply road to connect airport and mineral activity

from page 18

"...so we have made progress in engaging with First Nations and also other communities. Over the past five months we've offered comprehensive engagement opportunities to all 22 First Nations. Some examples include weekly virtual information sessions, we have offered meetings, workshops, open houses and other face-to-face meeting opportunities with chiefs and councils, community (citizens), First Nations staff and advisors at any locations."

Wabasse says they have also provided online EA tutorials, newsletters, fact sheets, videos and many other communication systems at the Webequie Supply Road website: www.supply-road.ca.

"Most importantly, we have translated all the information and communication into our language, (Anishinabemowin, Anishiniimowin and Mushkegomowin)," Wabasse says. "Today's public open house in Thunder Bay is to share some of what we have learned through round one, including baseline study information we have collected to date."

Wabasse says they have heard environmental concerns shared by citizens from Webequie and other First Nations during round one.

"People are naturally concerned about impacts of a road on wildlife, waterways and habitats," Wabasse says. "They are also concerned about how we contain and monitor potential contaminants, there are many questions about how and when



Webequie Chief Cornelius Wabasse speaks about the progress of the Webequie Supply Road environmental assessment during an open house at the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay.

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

the road will be constructed. We have also heard hope and optimism from the opportunities of a road — people want to know more about potential employment, business opportunities and what work needs to be done to get ready for these new economic opportunities."

Wabasse says he, his community and council also share concerns about environmental impacts from the Webequie Supply Road.

"That is why we are leading this process so that we can gain all the information needed to make informed decisions for

our communities, not just for Webequie but for other communities as well," Wabasse says. "So we need to see participation from other communities so we can all work together moving forward."

Wabasse says they are now moving to round two of the

consultation process, which is scheduled to be completed by the end of September 2023.

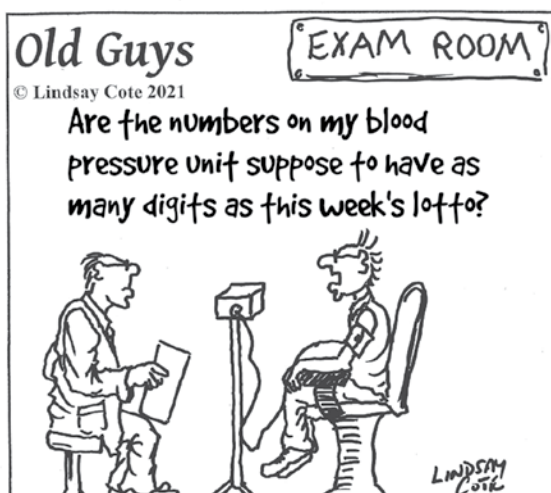
"We will continue to offer additional engagement opportunities for all the 22 First Nations over the next year and we will continue to advance our technical and environmen-

tal studies," Wabasse says. "On behalf of chief and council and Webequie First Nation (citizens), we look forward to continuing to share information and receive feedback."

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