



Top 5 News Stories of 2010

CONGRATULATIONS TO LARRY SUTHERLAND FOR HIS WIN AT THE 2011 SPECIAL OLYMPICS ONTARIO WINTER GAMES!

Larry Wins Gold!

Hometown hero does it again



Larry Sutherland has been participating in the Special Olympics for the last twenty-five years and has travelled around the world competing, picking up some major hardware along the way. To date he has more than 100-medals, most of them gold, and was just presented for another victory in his favourite sport being speed skating.

Sutherland has been on a five year hiatus, not competing in the Special Olympics since 2006, but entered back into the competition in Thunder Bay this past January. Larry could be spotted from any seat in the arena- gleaming with pride and excitement.

The Constance Lake First Nation member placed number one in his division, and was presented a gold medal from someone who is very familiar with the rink... Brian Burke, General Manager for the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Elder Jimmy Sutherland says the community is very proud of their champion; "Not every day do you get to spend time with an Olympian."

During an interview in the summer of 2010, Larry explained that his favourite competition to date was the Special Olympics World Winter Games held in Austria in 1993. The event saw 1,600 athletes from more than 50 countries participate in five winter sports. This was the first time the World Winter Games were held outside North America. ■

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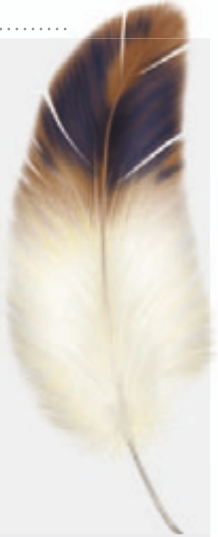
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A Year of Preparation

A Message from Matawa First Nations CEO

I want to extend New Year's greetings to all of the Matawa First Nations membership. As we start a new year there remains much reason for the Matawa people to remain optimistic.

I call 2011 a year of preparation, as there is much work to do in terms of ensuring the Matawa people are prepared for what is to come. As things continue to heat up in the area known as the

Ring of Fire, opportunities are endless for our communities and we must act on pursuing them.

The new Matawa First Nations organization *Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen* will take the lead in the challenge of preparing our membership, working with our people including the youth, to make sure that we have the education and training to participate in this development. Meantime while the Matawa Chiefs, the Matawa Technical Committee and new Matawa staff such as the Ring of Fire Coordinator, will work with Industry and Government on agreements for our communities that include benefits such as revenue sharing, employment,

and protecting the land that we call home.

In the year ahead, Matawa also needs to place focus on the creation of additional entities and partnerships in regards to the possibility of railroad, hydro and all weather roads, coming into our territory that will forever change our way of life on the land.

Throughout 2011, I have also made it one of my number one priorities to ensure Matawa membership is more informed about what is going on in the Matawa First Nations territory, especially in terms of development and mining.

So as we head into the second month of 2011- I say to our people- the days of our First Nations missing out on economic development opportunities are over. Our people will no longer accept living in poverty while other Canadians grow wealthy from our lands.

Matawa First Nations was formed as a tribal council in 1988 and 2011 is a year our communities will focus on returning to our original roots and uniting as one so we can prosper together. ■

Gichi Miigwech,
David Paul Achneepineskum
Chief Executive Officer

YEAR IN REVIEW

2010 was a year of news for Matawa First Nations, making headlines from coast to coast. With stories of tragedy, calls for help, and leadership fighting for what they believe in, the Matawa First Nations were heard.

Top 5 Matawa First Nations News Stories of 2010:



1. Eabametoong First Nation Declares State of Emergency

Eabametoong First Nation declared a State of Emergency on October 21st, 2010, following a series of violent crimes that caused community members to fear for their personal safety.

Since January of 2010, the First Nation has suffered three homicides, several other violent incidents including mutilation of animals and more than forty-seven arsons. Even more cause for concern is that the perpetrators of many of these crimes have been identified as children and youth.

After the community declared a State of Emergency, the crisis of the remote Northern Ontario First Nation was in newscasts and newspapers all across the country, and the community announced that they were very appreciative of support and assistance they were receiving.

Chief Lewis Nate explains that it will take a very long time for his community to heal. Eabametoong First Nation continues to implement a seven-point action plan that was drafted for the emergency. The seven-point action plan was adopted and passed by the Chief and Council of Eabametoong First Nation. ■

4. Matawa First Nations Fights for Post-Secondary Education at Parliament Hill

In support of National Week of Action for First Nations Education, Matawa First Nations representatives participated in a demonstration taking place on Parliament Hill at the end of September of 2010, joining more than five-hundred people from across the province.

Constance Lake First Nation Chief and Matawa First Nations Education Spokesperson Chief Arthur Moore addressed the crowd in Ottawa. Chief Moore spoke about what he said "should be the number one priority for First Nations and all communities right across Canada- being education. "

The rally was to raise awareness about Indian and Northern Affairs planning and securing Cabinet approval to take back the Post Secondary Student Support Program from the control of First Nations- something that First Nations leadership are strongly against. ■

2. Ring of Fire Blockade

On January 18th, 2010, Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation established a blockade on the landing strips of Kopper and McFaulds Lake, preventing planes used by mining companies to land in the Ring of Fire area.

The First Nations Leadership explained to media that the blockades were put in place to stop the mining companies from wrongfully continuing to explore on the land, but to also draw attention to major concerns; Not only did the Chiefs of the communities feel that the mining companies active in the area were ignoring the First Nation's needs to benefit from development, but they were also looking to speed up the process of an airport being built to end the use of the frozen lakes to prevent further environmental damage.

After two months of protesting, the blockade in the Ring of Fire was extinguished in March.

Both Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation spent a majority of those sixty days negotiating with mining and mineral companies who have been active in the Ring of Fire area, presenting a memorandum of understanding (MOU) outlining community issues and concerns that needed to be met before the blockade was resolved. ■

3. Constance Lake First Nation without water

As of July 28th, 2010, the community of Constance Lake First Nation had been without clean drinking water for over two weeks. A thick layer of algae formed over the lake blocking the main water supply. Constance Lake First Nation then had no choice at that point, but to declare a state of emergency.

Leadership of Constance Lake First Nation demanded urgent action to address the water crisis from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

To date, the First Nation remains under a boil water advisory, and has spent more than 56-thousand dollars of community funding on bottled water. ■

5. Matawa Chiefs enforce deadline date for resources

In August of 2010, Matawa First Nations Chiefs set a serious deadline with the province of Ontario, following a meeting with Ministers Chris Bentley, Michael Gravelle, and Linda Jeffrey . With a goal to secure much needed funding to better prepare their First Nations communities about the initiatives within the Ring of Fire, the Chiefs brought forward a proposal that requested funding in four main areas which included Matawa Technical Support, a community budget to implement eight communications liaison officers, a Ring of Fire Coordinator budget, along with funding for the Matawa First Nations Technical Committee. Matawa Chiefs left the meeting empty handed and disappointed.

A deadline date of September 15th, 2010 was then set by the Chiefs for the province to respond to their request.

To date, funding has been allocated for certain aspects of the proposal, and Chiefs continue to lobby for further action. ■

GO Green 4 Change Wraps Up!

As the Go Green 4 Change Calendar Contest wraps up, the Matawa Environment team is now calculating the amount of greenhouse gas emissions people have pledged to reduce, and it looks like we may come close to our goal of 800 tonnes!! There are 4 easy ways that we can all help fight climate change. They include: planting trees or gardens; eating local or traditional foods; reducing your energy use; and reusing materials.

For more great tips on going green check out the project website- www.matawa.on.ca. Try using our online calculator to see what your current carbon footprint is, and then try calculating it again after you make a small commitment to reducing your greenhouse gas emissions; for example, walking to the store instead of driving – even in the cold!

Before the Christmas break, the Matawa Environment team visited all of the schools to give presentations to students. They talked about the science of global warming and the ways the climate continues to change, even though we may not see a lot of these changes happening in Northwestern Ontario. In addition to visiting the Matawa schools, Ecole Gron Morgan and Algonquin Avenue Public School, in Thunder Bay, also participated in workshops. All the students were asked to draw something to do with climate change that would send a message to others about the importance of living green. Their drawings were judged by school and then a winner was selected from each. The following is a list of the students who won, and received a grand prize – a folding bicycle and helmet!

If you know the winners, send them congratulations on their achievement and sharing their message with all of Matawa. Their drawings were put into a Go Green 4 Change Calendar that will be arriving in your community soon- so check them out.

And the winners are... (drum roll please!)

- Carson Achneepineskum, Henry Coaster Memorial School, Marten Falls First Nation
- Regan Ferris, Mamawmatawa Holistic Education Centre, Constance Lake First Nation
- Miranda Gagnon, Johnny Therriault Education Centre, Aroland First Nation
- Maurita Gliddy, Nibinamik Education Centre, Nibinamik First Nation
- Jonah Moonias, Neskantaga Education Centre, Neskantaga First Nation
- Jynessa Suganaqueb, Simon Jacob Memorial Education Centre, Webequie First Nation
- Mason Sugarhead, John C Yesno Education Centre, Eabametoong First Nation
- Brooke Hardy, Niimiki Migizi High School, Ginoogaming First Nation
- Dawson LeGarde, Migizi Wazisin Elementary School, Long Lake #58 First Nation
- Brandon Nate, Matawa Learning Centre, Thunder Bay
- Hilary Kakaychewan, Ecole Gron Morgan, Thunder Bay
- Jared Wabasse-Sprenkle, Algonquin Avenue Public School, Thunder Bay

Matawa First Nations introduces Ring of Fire Coordinator

Matawa First Nations is proud to introduce Raymond Ferris of Constance Lake First Nation, as the new Matawa First Nations Ring of Fire Coordinator. Effective immediately, Ferris will be working on behalf of the nine Matawa First Nations to ensure the communities and their members have the opportunity to participate and benefit from developments in the area.



Ferris has a wealth of experience in the land and resource sector, serving as a former deputy Grand Chief for Nishnawbe Aski Nation, and as Chief of Constance Lake First Nation. Most recently, Ferris worked for Matawa First Nations as the Mining Exploration Advisor and served as the Matawa Board of Director's President for three years.

CEO David Paul Achneepineskum says; "Matawa congratulates Raymond on his new role. This position will be vital to the future of our people and is desperately needed to help coordinate relationships between our First Nations, Government, and Industry. Matawa First Nations are committed to building economic strength and sustainable development in their traditional territory for the benefit of current and future generations, and Raymond will ensure our best interests are put at the forefront during the entire process."

Currently the Ring of Fire area is said to hold some of the richest minerals in Canada. These natural resources are attracting the interest of hundreds of companies who want to explore the land that includes the traditional hunting trapping and fishing territories of Matawa communities. Ferris says; "My first step will be to work with those communities that are most impacted by the possible development- Marten Falls, Neskantaga, and Webequie First Nations. Working together as a group will ensure that necessary policies, protocols and resources are implemented to protect our traditional lands, our land use rights and our way of life."

Close to 100 mining companies have staked claims in the Ring of Fire, but to date there is not one single advanced exploration or mining agreement in place between any of the First Nations and any mining company. Ferris says; "One of my main goals is to get better agreements for the communities. We need to let the industry know that before they advance any activity they need to have an agreement in place with us. Issues like revenue sharing, environmental monitoring- these all need to be included in agreements, and they need to be drafted at the very beginning. I have spent most of my life ensuring the land that my people call home is protected and used for the benefit of First Nations people—I will continue to do so, as the new Matawa First Nations Ring of Fire Coordinator."

In his new role as Ring of Fire Coordinator, Ferris will develop a comprehensive strategy that will respond to short-, medium- and long-term goals. In cooperation with Matawa, Ferris will also implement policies that ensures continuous and effective communication between the communities, government and industry.

Matawa First Nations announced the need for a Ring of Fire Coordinator in October of 2010. ■

Exploring Partnerships First Nation to First Nation for a Prosperous Future: Matawa First Nations Community Governance and Economic Development Conference

First Nations community leadership and members will join governance, business and industry experts, at the 3rd annual Matawa First Nations Community Governance and Economic Development Conference this March. Similar to the previous conferences, the event will continue to link several communities and organizations together to learn and discuss the synchronized development of First Nations Community Governance and Economic Development.

This year's conference is specifically designed to focus on developing and sustaining partnerships with other First Nations and industry – showcasing partnerships at a regional and local level. The agenda also greatly reflects the inclusion of youth, with role models and workshops specific to their needs. Youth advocate and Nashville recording artist Crystal Shawanda is a featured keynote speaker. The nationally renowned country singer is from Wikewemikong- one of the largest First Nation communities in Canada. In 2007 Shawanda signed with RCA Records in Nashville, Tennessee, and over the years has toured with country music sensations Brad Paisley and Reba McEntire. Shawanda has won many Canadian music awards, and currently sits on Nike's N7 board that is responsible for promoting a healthier lifestyle through sport.



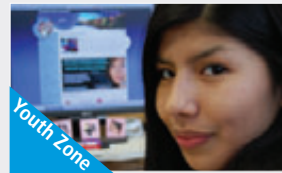
Other speakers include:

- Matawa Ring of Fire Coordinator, Raymond Ferris – discussing developments in the north and what are the expected outcomes for Matawa people
- Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company (CREECO), Rodney Hestor, Business Developer Coordinator- CREECO has the mandate to provide services and economic opportunity - including employment, training and advancement to the Cree Nation with the ultimate goal of attaining self-sufficiency.

The conference will also feature a tradeshow with close to twenty different booths showcasing a variety of interesting companies and organizations.

The Matawa First Nations Governance and Economic Development Conference is scheduled for March 1st and 2nd at the Valhalla Inn in Thunder Bay.

For more information please visit the Matawa First Nations website: www.matawa.on.ca. ■



Dealing with Racism

By Devyn Shebagegit

One of the biggest challenges of living in the city is 'racism'. From my experiences, I learned how to be the bigger person to move forward. I still remember my first time being shouted at by someone in public when I was thirteen. I was walking with my friends too and we were so scared because we thought they would come back to do something else. Now, when I look back at it, I think that was so stupid because who would want to scare such little girls?

Throughout my elementary years, I usually became friends with the aboriginal girls in the class and I have never fully understood this situation. I also think that I had a problem with my identity because I would color my people a 'peach' color instead of a 'brown'. In my high school years, I was once called an 'Eskimo' by a student, some of my friends were involved in a racial issue with another school, and one of the teachers at school thought that I was living in a foster home.

As for the general public, I hear the uncalled for names, getting eggs thrown at me, and in the retail stores, the workers usually keep a close eye. I know many of my friends had experiences like these and may be even worse. I usually deal with these experiences by ignoring it, shouting back at them, and leaving the retail store right away.

Taking part in our traditional ceremonies has taught me pride and given me an understanding of my heritage, and my family has also been a great support, although they experienced some of the same treatment, and my mother has made efforts to teach us not to treat others in such a harsh way, and not to tolerate this sort of treatment at these places where we have a much of a right to be.

However, these experiences make me so mad, but they never let me be ashamed of who I am because I can't let pathetic little things get to me like that, especially from ignorant people. I'm truly proud of being an aboriginal person and those ignorant people can just kiss my flat brown butt. Hahaha! No, I'm kidding. Thanks for reading!

