



MATAWA MESSENGER

The Power of Unity, The Dignity of Difference

L^ob LJ-ΔΓΔΓ-Δ^o ΓΡΡ-τCL^ob bJ^oV<b^o-J^ob^o



Photo: (L to R) David Paul Achneepineskum - Matawa CEO, John Hannam - City of Thunder Bay City Clerk, Acting Mayor Linda Rydholm, Darius Ferris -Matawa Board President, Danielle Yellowhead - former Matawa Learning Centre Student and Joel De Peuter - City of Thunder Bay Manager of Realty Services

Matawa Granted City of Thunder Bay's Former Grandview Lodge for Student Care and Accommodation Centre

On August 29, officials from the City of Thunder Bay and Matawa First Nations Management were pleased to officially sign a Letter of Intent to move forward with granting Grandview Lodge, a former long-term care facility, to Matawa First Nations Management following a deputation to City Council on August 28. The City's surplus facility will be used to establish a Matawa Student Education and Care and Centre, a goal the Matawa First Nations identified in 2010.

The Centre is in line with key recommendations from the Seven Youth Inquest including: a schooling system that considers the unique circumstances of the students; holistic supports and services, safe and secure housing for students and increased after hours care programs.

The Matawa Education Department will be dealing with the preliminary design of the facility, property transfer and funding applications during the months of September, October and November. They will moving in both Matawa Education and KKETS from January - April 2018. Renovations are slated to be completed by September 2019 when the centre will be ready for use.

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2017 AGM

Welcome New Staff and
more....



CONGRATULATIONS Matawa Post Secondary GRADUATES 2017

AROLAND FIRST NATION			
1	Destiny Gagnon	Early Childhood Education	Oshki/Cambrian College
2	John Gagnon Sr	Native Language	Lakehead University
3	Katrina Magiskan	Early Childhood Education	Oshki/Cambrian College
4	Ayla Spyrka	Native Access	Lakehead University
5	Aaron Therriault	Police Foundation	Confederation College
GINOOGAMING FIRST NATION			
1	Marina Deroy	General Arts & Science	Confederation College
2	Gina Dore	Early Childhood Education	Oshki/Cambrian College
3	Tracey Dore	Early Childhood Education	Oshki/Cambrian College
4	Bridget Echum-Legarde	Native Child & Family Worker	Confederation College
5	Cassandra Echum	Business Fundamentals	Oshki/Confederation College
6	Kelly Esquat	Police Foundation	Sheridan College
7	Courtney Pennock	HBA Political Science/Pre Law	Lakehead University
8	John Pyykka	Welding Techniques	Confederation College
9	Eric Ritch	BA Electrical Engineering	Lakehead University
10	Jarvis Ritch	Community Integration	Confederation College
11	Allan Wennigwans	General Arts & Science	Confederation College
LONG LAKE #58 FIRST NATION			
1	Autumn Barbeau	BA Nursing	University College of the North
2	Brook Barbeau	BA Interior Design	Vancouver Island University
3	Brandon Britt	Political Science	Lakehead University
4	Laurie Deperry	Social Service Worker – NS	Oshki/Sault College
5	April Jessie Krieger	Native Child & Family Worker	Confederation College
6	Carl Levesque	Business Accounting	Confederation College
7	Chelsea Luxton	BA Nursing	Lakehead University
8	Dyllon Longpeter	Justice and Public Safety	Native Education College
9	Marissa O'Nabigan	Early Childhood Education	Oshki/Sault College
10	Faye Shebagabow	Social Service Worker – NS	Oshki/Sault College
11	Sierra Taylor	Personal Support Worker	Confederation College
12	Charles Wesley	General Arts & Science	Confederation College
NESKANTAGA FIRST NATION			
1	Breanne LeClair	General Arts & Science	Confederation College
WEBEQUIE FIRST NATION			
1	Rachel Fiddler	Aboriginal Finance/Economic	Oshki/Confederation
2	Brianna Jacob	College Access	Confederation College
3	Valoria Rody	Pre-Health	Cambrian College
4	Janelle Shewaybick	Motive Power Technician	Confederation College
5	Sharmaine Suganaqueb	College Access	Confederation College
6	Glen Wabasse	Aboriginal Finance/Economic	Oshki/Confederation

2016/2017 Post Secondary Graduation & Rotary Awards Banquet Recipients!



Elementary Categories

- | | |
|--|--|
| Junior Kindergarten to Grade 2 (Narrative/Story Book, \$400) | Grade 1/2 Class - Johnny Therriault Memorial School
Aroland First Nation |
| Junior Kindergarten to Grade 2 (Native Language, \$400) | Senior Kindergarten Class - Johnny Therriault Memorial School
Aroland First Nation |
| Grade 3 - 5 (Community Story) | Grade 1 Class, Simon Jacob Memorial School
Webequie First Nation |
| --- | |
| iPad Recipient | Grade 3 Class - Simon Jacob Memorial School
Webequie First Nation |
| iPod Recipient | Derlyn Mataswagun (Grade 4) - Johnny Therriault Memorial School
Aroland First Nation |
| Grade 6 - 8 (Current Issue/Persuasive Letter) | |
| --- | |
| iPad Recipient | Karissa Atlookan (Grade 8) - Johnny Therriault Memorial School
Aroland First Nation |
| iPod Recipient | Dawson Gilbeau (Grade 8) - Johnny Therriault Memorial School
Aroland First Nation |



Elementary/Secondary Categories

- | | |
|---|---|
| Grades 6-12 (Creative Writing, \$500) | Deseree Wesley (Grade 6), Henry Coaster Memorial School
Marten Falls First Nation |
| Grades 6-12 (Persuasive Writing, \$500) | Karis Waboose (Grade 8), Migizi Wazisin Long Lake #58 First Nation |
| Matawa Learning Centre Award (\$500) | Nathan Achneepineskum
Marten Falls First Nation |

Post Secondary Categories

- | | |
|--|--|
| College Bursary (\$1000) | Jessica Caron, Constance Lake First Nation
Canadore College |
| University Bursary (\$1000) | Lucille Atlookan, Eabametoong First Nation
Lakehead University |
| Continuing Post Secondary Education Bursary (\$1000) | Autumn Barbeau, Long Lake #58 First Nation
University College of the North |

Academic Excellence Categories

- | |
|---|
| Marina Deroy, Ginoogaming First Nation |
| Gina Dore, Ginoogaming First Nation |



Matawa Community Environmental Planning Workshop



Guest speakers, Government representatives and Matawa First Nations Management staff joined an afternoon panel discussion to answer community questions and listen to comments/concerns.

Four Rivers compiled community member feedback on the comments from this Workshop, a smaller meeting with DFO and TC held in July, as well as communications surrounding the review for the past year into a feedback document that was submitted to the Federal Government on August 28th. Thank you to everyone who came out and made your voice heard, and for a week of inspiring environmental conversations!

A big thank you goes out to all who attended the Matawa Community Environmental Planning Workshop from August 22-24, 2017 at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay. The event was open to all Matawa First Nation communities, with a successful turnout of over 40 community members throughout the three-day event.

Four Rivers Team

Four Rivers partnered with 5 Matawa member First Nations and Matawa's Regional Framework Department to secure funding to host this gathering to discuss how the federal government undertakes environmental assessments and reviews. For the past year, the Government of Canada has been gathering feedback on how to improve their assessment processes (under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA), National Energy Board (NEB), Department of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) and Transport Canada (TC)). They released a Discussion Paper of their findings and were seeking feedback on the proposed changes and (more importantly) how these changes could be implemented on the ground.



This Workshop was also an opportunity to follow-up on the capacity building gained at the Matawa Community Environmental Planning Conference that we hosted back in October 2015. This year's interactive workshop provided an avenue for Matawa communities to share their feedback on the Discussion Paper and brainstorm as a group, a collective vision for a better assessment process for projects in your homelands.

Workshop highlights included: a keynote address by the Hon. Bob Rae, Matawa Lead Negotiator, Regional Framework Agreement; a presentation from Shaunna Morgan Siegers of the Indigenous Leadership Initiative, an Indigenous-led effort to empower Indigenous governments, communities and Nations to honour and fulfill our cultural responsibility to the land; and several local and regional environmental presentations including current EAs in the region, assessment alternatives, and environmental regulatory reviews.



Igniting the 8th Fire

Ginoogaming and Long Lake # 58 First Nations recently held a jointly-run youth conference at the Ginoogaming Pow-wow grounds. Based on the teachings of the recent Healing Walk from Ginoogaming First Nation to Thunder Bay to raise awareness of issues concerning our communities, youth took part in meaningful discussions and workshops discussing health, traditional teachings, natural sciences, and Indigenous history.

The gathering began with a sunrise ceremony, and opened with a pipe ceremony and local youth drum Peter Challifoux. Feathers of Hope was present to work with the youth, as was Ron Kanutski and the Pow-wow Rangers. An evening event with Natasha Fisher and Joshua Deperry drew a large and enthusiastic crowd. The final day consisted of water teachings and traditional medicine, with Four Rivers activities to learn about the land and water from a scientific point of view. The event closed with a communal feast and a staff vs youth baseball exhibition game.

The goal of this gathering was to teach our youth their history and their heritage, inspire pride in our culture, and to take advantage of the world of opportunities available to them. This was a truly unique event for over 100 youth from several neighboring First Nations. This was the first gathering of its kind and was a successful first event, hopefully to be repeated for many years to come.



Photo Credits: Sterling Finlayson

**TUNE IN EVERY 2ND TUESDAY
FROM 4:00 - 4:30 EST
(3:00 - 3:30 CST)**

www.wawataynews.ca/radio
89.9 FM in Sioux Lookout
106.7 FM in Timmins
BellTV Channel 962

UPCOMING SHOWS

September 12 and 26
October 10 and 24
November 7 and 21
December 5 and 19



Nibinamik Crisis: Making the Best of a Bad Situation

By: Shelly Boudreau, Quality Assurance Coordinator, Matawa First Nations Management

While in Kapuskasing during their recent evacuation, some of the members of Nibinamik First Nation were able to take their minds off their community for a short while and enjoy some recreational activities.

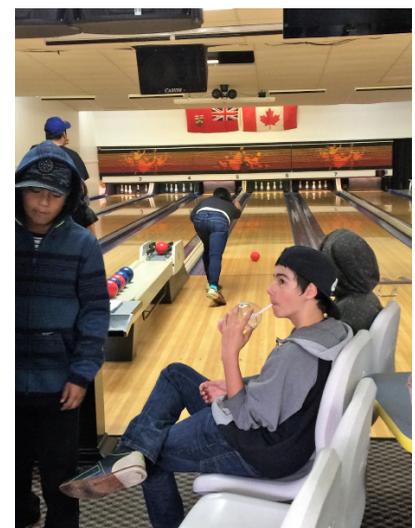
Family bowling was a huge hit with all who participated. Some of the younger girls were very excited to be there as they had never tried the sport before. While there were many gutter balls, there were also many strikes and spares to be celebrated.

The Township of Kapuskasing provided the gymnasium of an unused school for the youth to use nightly. We played volleyball with a beach ball and shot some hoops. A creative activity thought up by the youth themselves was to see how many times in a row they could jump on a pogo stick without falling off. The record was well over 100 bounces and it was very entertaining to witness.

Since the power was out for a better part of the Sunday, we arranged some outdoor games and activities to keep the children busy. There was a scavenger hunt, ball toss, bubble blowing and of course water balloons. Prizes were given to all who participated and the attendance prizes of iTunes gift cards which were donated by O'Briens Classic Grill (who provided the food services to the evacuees) were awarded to 3 lucky winners.

Casually speaking with the youth, I learned that some were having a great time during the evacuation from their home community of Nibinamik First Nation. Others however, were saddened to miss their annual Summer Festival which had to be postponed due to the forest fire which was threatening their community.

While this experience was scary, stressful and traumatic for most of the evacuees, it was great to see the smiles and hear the laughter of the children and youth who got to spend a short period of time making the best of a bad situation.



Spirit Walkers Complete Healing Walk For All First Nation Communities



From June 25 - July 1, Spirit Walkers completed a 320 km Healing Walk starting at the Keemeshomnishnanak Monument from Ginoogaming First Nation to Fort William First Nation. Concluding it at the pow wow with an Honour Song.

Hosted this year by Long Lake #58 First Nation, it brought spiritual focus and attention to the many different issues facing Indigenous Peoples. Each day, walkers prayed and brought attention to the following issues: Drugs/Alcohol Addictions, Cancer, Missing Women/Men, Residential School/Day School Survivors/Descendants, Suicide, Land Water & Air, Racism.



Main organizers of the event included Allen Towegishig of Long Lake #58 First Nation and Cecil Mendowegan of Ginoogaming First Nation.

Meegwetch to all who participated and everyone who made the journey a success!



MATAWA FIRST NATIONS MANAGEMENT

2017 SUMMER STUDENTS



On August 23, Matawa staff took some time to say farewell to our summer students. We thank them for their service and dedication and wish them well in their educational endeavours!

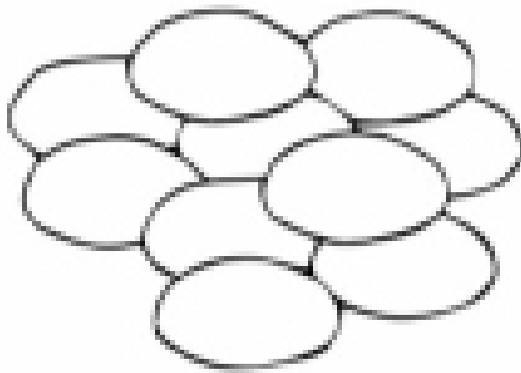
Pictured (L to R): Lucille Atlookan, Arissa Towegishig, Autumnrain Spade, Creanne Ledger, Deandra Sakanee and Klarissa Sakanee.

Missing from picture are: Charmaine Yellowhead, Jill Magiskan and Cyanne Sandau.

FOUR RIVERS

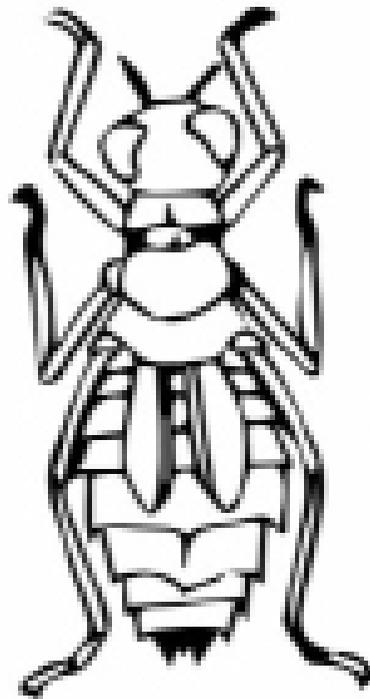
Colouring Page!



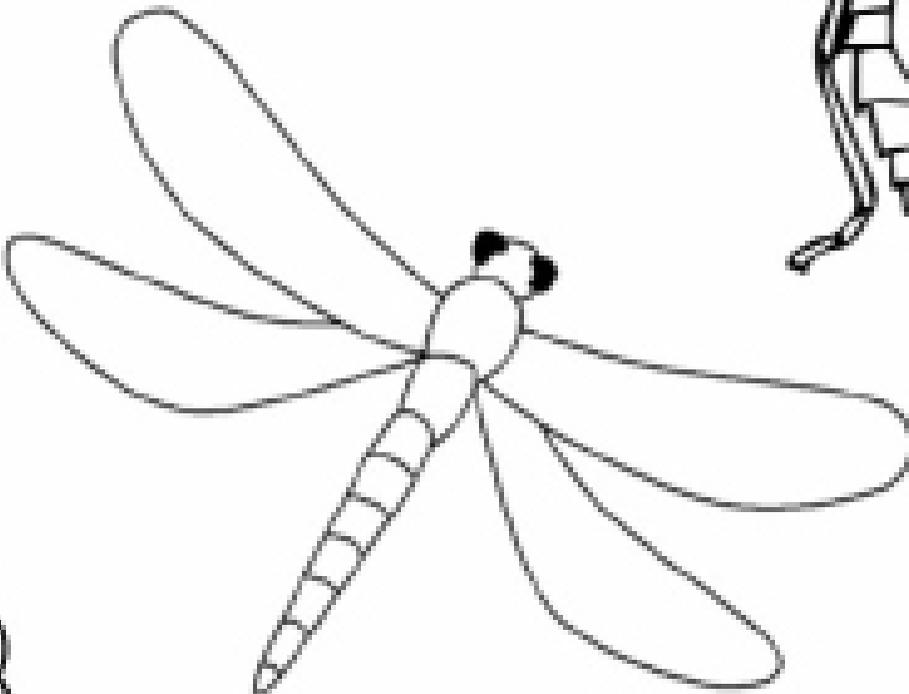


1

Dragonfly Life Cycle



2



3

RFA Community Visits

The Matawa Regional Framework Agreement (RFA) Team has been busy visiting communities to provide support and assistance with the Regional Framework TPA reporting and to do some basic financial training. Lead negotiator Bob Rae has recently travelled with them to Webequie, Marten Falls and then to Nibinamik to give updates on the progress of the RFA discussions and to answer questions from the community members. The RFA Team also visited Long Lake 58 and Gi-noogaming to help with the RFA TPA reporting. The RFA Team hopes to spend time in all 9 Matawa communities before Christmas to continue working with the Regional Framework community teams.



The RFA Team flying over the Ring of Fire leaving Marten Falls on the way to Webequie (Kathy Brady, Tina Gordon, Holly Pyhtila, Bob Rae and Rosanna Peever).



Bob Rae being interviewed by Marten Falls journalism student Joshua Baxter.



Dry conditions on the Albany River in Marten Falls – Aug. 30 2017.



Marten Falls Community RFA Meeting Aug. 30, 2017.



Webequie RFA rep/MJWG member Gordon Wabasse, Matawa RF Manager Kathy Brady and Matawa Lead Negotiator Bob Rae on the shore of Winisk Lake in Webequie.



Beautiful Webequie sunrise – Aug. 31, 2017.

2ND ANNUAL MATAWA FIRST NATIONS MANAGEMENT

POWER TO THE PEOPLE ENERGY CONFERENCE

FIRST NATION SUCCESS STORIES

WOMEN IN ENERGY

TRANSMISSION

FINANCING

RENEWABLE ENERGY READINESS

PROCEEDS FROM SPONSORSHIP
DRIVE WILL GO RENEWABLE
ENERGY PLANNING IN THE
MATAWA COMMUNITIES

November, 6th & 7th, 2017
Nor' Wester Hotel
Thunder Bay, Ontario

For More Information Contact:
Jonathan Neegan, Project Coordinator
 Email: jneegan@matawa.on.ca
 Phone: (807) 344-4575

PROJECT SPONSOR:

Matawa First Nations Health Staff Receive Aboriginal Focusing-Oriented Therapy (A.F.O.T.) and Complex Trauma Certification

On September 8, a number of health staff from the communities of Constance Lake and Webequie First Nations celebrated the completion of the A.F.O.T and Complex Trauma certification training. On this day, Diane Andrews/Wesley (Constance Lake) and Levi Sofea (Webequie), Selena Wabasse (Webequie) and Bob Wabasse (Webequie) received certification.

4 other graduates outside of Matawa included: Martin Scott (Attawapiskat), Roselyn Koostachin (Attawapiskat), Margaret Bannon (Fort William), and Tannis Smith (Red Rock Indian Band).

The one-year certification program they completed started last year in September. It was offered by Aboriginal Peoples Training Programs in partnership with the Justice Institute of B.C. (JIBC).

The training was an advanced 21-day, 7 course program that uses focusing-oriented therapy as a safe and effective method of working with clients who experience complex trauma. It is particularly helpful to counsellors and therapists who work with residential school survivors, addictions, and survivors of sexual, physical, emotional abuse, and suicide.

Graduates would like to acknowledge and thank **Nuna Logistics Ltd.** who offered the use of their facility in Thunder Bay



Photo: (L to R): Levi Sofea, Selena Wabasse, Diane Andrews/Wesley, and Bob Wabasse

for the training throughout the year. Meegwetch to Matawa staff for their assistance in organizing their celebration and to **Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education and Training Institute** for the gowns on graduation day.

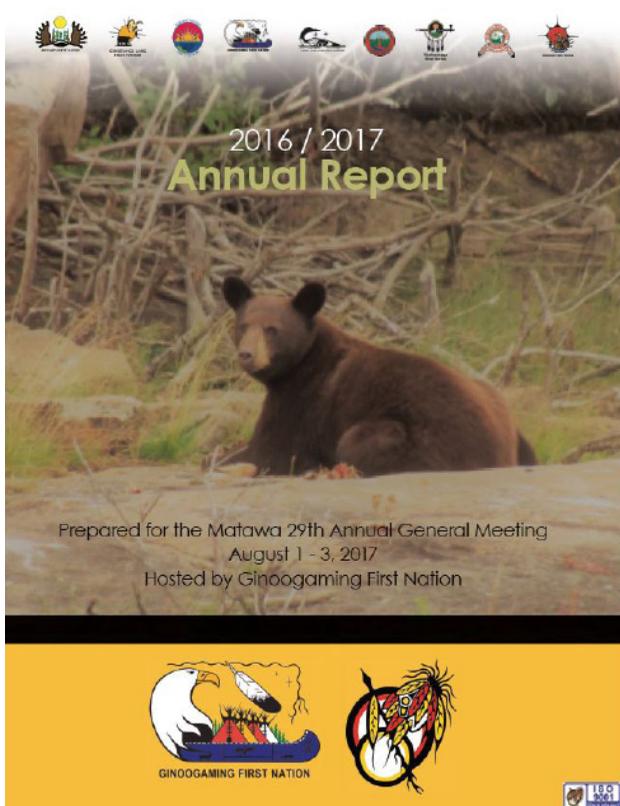
More information on the training can be obtained by contacting Dennis Windego, Program Coordinator/Trainer - Aboriginal Peoples Training Programs at: dwindego@msn.com or by calling (819) 855-6633. On behalf of Matawa First Nations Management, congratulations to all!



AGM HIGHLIGHTS

From August 1 - 3, Chiefs and Elder/Women/Youth delegations from the 9 Matawa First Nations came together in Ginoogaming First Nation. They met to make decisions on corporate business holding a Board of Directors (BOD) meeting on August 1 which included an election of Officers. Some highlights included:

- Darius Ferris (Constance Lake) re-elected BOD President, Frank Onabigon (Long Lake #58) re-elected BOD Vice President and Charlie Okees (Eabametoong) re-elected BOD Secretary/Treasurer
- Robert Moonias (Marten Falls) newly elected board member
- Acceptance of Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services and Matawa audits
- Acceptance of Matawa First Nations Management Department Reports, including the Matawa Non-Profit Housing Corporation, Matawa First Nations Property Inc., Matawa Project Management Group and Gathering of Rivers for Community Care
- Appointment of auditors
- Decision to host next AGM in Nibinamik First Nation from July 31 - August 2, 2018



This report, along with the Chiefs Council Report and the 2017 Audit, is available to download at: www.matawa.on.ca under 'Download Reports'



They also held a Chiefs Council meeting on August 2 - 3. Some highlights included:

- Presentation by Natasha Sugarhead of the Nibinamik First Nation Youth Council addressing suicide (see picture on page 12 - middle picture on the left)
- Acknowledgement and Travelling Ceremonies for Clarence Neshinapaise of Eabametoong First Nation for his Walk for Suicide and Awareness (see picture on page 13 - bottom picture on the right)
- Presentation by and discussion with Hon. Patty Hajdu, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour and MP Thunder Bay-Superior North
- Presentation by and discussions with Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum, Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Regional Chief Isadore Day, Chiefs of Ontario
- Presentation by Hon. Bob Rae, Regional Framework Agreement Lead Negotiator
- Presentation by Chief Bruce Achneepineskum, Marten Falls First Nation called 'A Vision of a Sustainable, Thriving Community in the North'
- Presentation by Carol Achneepineskum, Executive Director, Kiiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services
- Open discussion on community concerns

MEEGWETCH TO EVERYONE IN GINOOGAMING FIRST NATION FOR THEIR GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY!



Matawa Learning Centre Summer Canoe Trip



The Matawa Learning Centre is excited to announce the successful completion of their 2017 Summer Canoe Trip. This adventure ran between July 20th and July 31st along the Winisk River system between the communities of Nibinamik First Nation and Webequie First Nation. Trip participants included eleven students, aged 16-21, from the communities of Marten Falls, Eabametoong, Webequie, and Nibinamik. The students were guided by Matawa Learning Centre staff, local community guides, and Boreal River staff. The instructors for the trip consisted of professional river guides with years of experience to share with the students and ensure a high level of safety and an exceptional learning experience.

Trip participants arrived in Nibinamik on July 20th to begin preparations prior to embarking on their wilderness adventure. Students participated in a healing walk and prayer ceremony, along with learning how to strategically pack for a self-sustained, multi-day canoe trip. The participants departed on their trip from Nibinamik on July 21st. Excitement ran high among the students as they commented that they were paddling a traditional route of their ancestors.

The students were confronted and overcame wilderness challenges on the trip as they developed both personal and leadership skills. The pathway along the Winisk River provided students an opportunity to experience both flat-water and whitewater paddling. Students learned how to track a canoe on flat water and how to safely maneuver a canoe through moderate whitewater conditions. Through their learning experiences on the trip, students earned their Whitewater Safety Level 1 and Paddle Canada Introductory Moving Water certificates. The students enjoyed their time fishing, cleaning fish, and preparing traditional meals for the group. In order to preserve personal learning and experiences encountered along the trip, the students maintained a journal about their connection to the land.

The travelers arrived in Webequie on the evening of July 28th to a welcoming reception from the community. Upon arriving, the students had the opportunity to participate in a sweat lodge along with a traditional feast and ceremony. Given time to reflect on their adventure, the students completed a self-evaluation on their trip performance as successful participants earned a secondary credit in Recreation and Healthy Active Living Leadership granted through the Matawa Learning Centre. Recreation and leisure leadership at the Matawa Learning Centre is a part of the outdoor education and land-based courses offered at the school.

The Matawa Learning Centre would like to extend our sincere thanks to the communities of Nibinamik and Webequie for their gracious support in hosting the participants at the start and finish of the trip along with gathering and transporting canoes. Also, we would like to give a special thank you to course instructor Joey Miller, and the Boreal staff, for making the course a safe and exciting adventure and learning experience for our students. Finally, the Matawa Learning Centre would like to thank the students and their families for taking part in the first summer school outdoor leadership course.



Matawa First Nations Management Welcomes New Staff

Matawa Education

Primary Lead, Katie Hughdie



My name is Katie Hughdie and I am thrilled to be working in the Matawa Education Department as the new Primary Lead! I'm an Ontario Qualified Teacher P/J/I/S, with Specialist Qualifications in Special Education and Guidance. I also have my Principal's Qualifications as well.

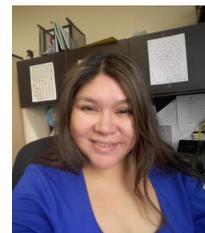
Prior to working for Matawa, I was an Occasional Teacher with Lakehead Public Schools for both the elementary and secondary panels. Before that I lived in Sioux Lookout and worked as the Lead Resource Teacher for the NNEC Support Room in Queen Elizabeth District High School. This was a job I enjoyed very much, I learned a lot and met many wonderful people. The students in our program played a very important role in shaping my Philosophy of Education, and helped me make the teacher I am today. I am very happy to have the chance to work with Northern Students again, and am very much looking forward to working with all the Education Department Staff.

In my free time I work as an artist, specializing in doll making. I use mostly textiles and fibre, but dabble in other mediums as well. I love being creative! I also run regularly and am usually training for my next race (somewhat lackadaisically at times!) My partner Dan and I have 3 young children ages 5, 7 and 9, who keep us very busy!

Thank you to everyone for being so welcoming, and I look forward to meeting you all!

Matawa Education

Mental Health Counsellor, Valerie Shawinimash



Booshoo, Aanii, Hello, everyone. My name is Valerie Shawinimash, I am from Eabametoong FN, aka Fort Hope. I recently started working for Matawa in the Education department as a mental health counsellor. I lived down in Eastern Ontario for almost a decade and I am super happy to be back in Thunder Bay. I am graduate from Laurentian

University where I received my Honours Bachelors of Indigenous Social Work. I am also a graduate from Cambrian College of Applied Arts and Technology from the Social Service Worker program. I look forward to working with the students at MLC this upcoming school year to help support them as they reach for their goals and aspirations. I love what I do and I want to make a difference in the lives of our students and communities. Don't be shy to come say "Hi." Chi' Miigwetch.

Matawa Education

Mental Health Counsellor, Paul Francis Jr.



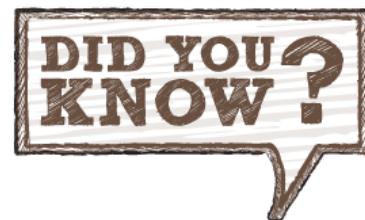
Boozhoo. Paul nindizhinkaaz, Shkode nindigoo, Makwa nindoodem, Mnidoo Mnis nindoonjibaa, Anemkii Wikwed nindaa, I was born and raised here in Thunder Bay but my roots are on Manitoulin Island, I am also registered to Wiikwemikong Unceded Territory. I graduated from Confederation College in the Native Child Family Worker, then continued to Lakehead University and graduated with a BA in Political Science. Currently, I am finishing up my last year in Master of Indigenous Social Work with Wilfred Lauier. I strongly believe in education and our Anishnabweg cultural ways and spend most of my time dedicated to those things. I strive to live a drug and alcohol free lifestyle and make our ceremonies a foundation for my life. I have a young family with my son Royal (3yrs), daughter Harlow (11months) and my partner Kyla. I joined the Matawa Learning Centre team last January and look forward to the upcoming school year, with many exciting new initiatives at the Learning Centre.

Four Rivers

Administrative Assistant, Jasmine Baxter



Boozhoo everyone. My name is Jasmine Baxter (Achneepineskum) and I am from Marten Falls First Nation aka Ogoki Post. I am the Administrative Assistant for the Four Rivers department here at Matawa, where I will maintain the Four Rivers hub, so if you need any information about Four Rivers projects and what we offer, feel free to give me a call. My background is mainly in administration and social work as I am a recent graduate of the Native Child & Family Service program from Confederation College. Furthermore, I am glad to be part of the Matawa team and be of service to our community members. Miigwetch, Jasmine.



The Matawa Messenger gets published and delivered to the 9 Matawa communities 4 times/year? It also gets published online. If you have a community story to share, send them in to Matawa Communications. We are always looking for stories :)

Living with Us... DRAGONFLIES



Ecdysis - By Loz (L. B. Tettenborn) - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=7352494>



Nymph - By Totodu74 - Own work, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=7614766>

Dragonflies are found throughout the Matawa region, and throughout the world on every continent except Antarctica. They are one of the oldest insect orders to evolve and fossils of their ancestors have been found as far back as 325 million years ago! Today's dragonflies are small, they will only grow to a maximum of around 10cm long. Fossils of their ancestors have been found as big as 2 feet long! Dragonflies are very important predator species as adult dragonflies feed mainly on other insects, particularly mosquitos and other biting flies. A single adult dragonfly can eat anywhere from 30 to hundreds of mosquitos every day!

Did you know that dragonflies don't always fly? They lay their eggs near, or under water, often on plants. When the eggs hatch, the young dragonflies (called nymphs) live in the water and are commonly found in lakes, rivers and wetlands. They are as voracious a predator as an adult, and a fully grown nymph (which can be up to 2 years old) will hunt and eat anything from swimming insects to tadpoles, and even small fish!

How do they go from the land to the water? As the young dragonfly nymphs get older and bigger, they start to change and develop wings on their backs that are protected by a cover called a wing-pad. Once they are fully grown, they climb out of the water, and they split their outside layer of skin open, this lets their long abdomen expand outward, and they fill their brand new wings full of air before shedding their old skin and flying away to start eating mosquitos.

Do you see dragonflies in your community? We hope so! They are a sign of a healthy water system, and will keep the bug population down. Adult dragonflies don't bite humans, and are great to have around!



Matawa First Nations | 233 S. Court Street | Thunder Bay, ON P7B 2X9 | Tel: 807.344.4575 | Fax: 807.344.2977 | Toll Free: 1.800.463.2249

