



P A N D E M I C C H R I S T M A S 2 0 2 0

Christmas Made Brighter for Awashishewiigihiwaywin Families



Awawishewiigihiwaywin is a new program established by the Matawa Chiefs Council. It works with Matawa families in Thunder Bay who have child welfare involvement or are at risk of. It also assists Matawa First Nations on child welfare issues including advocacy around Customary Care Agreements and Kinship Agreements. The program services approximately 132 Matawa families providing advocacy, life skills, parenting, food security, budgeting and housing supports. Many children benefit from the program. They are staffed by a Program Manager and approximately 8 staff members.

For the past number of years Matawa staff have donated gift bags to another Christmas campaign in the city of Thunder Bay. This year, and going forward, they were in a position to re-direct their charitable efforts towards Awashishewiigihiwaywin families. Many are on social assistance and struggle to cover even basic needs.

In total, 125 gift bags were distributed. These bags are for children who still reside with parents or are with an alternate family members regardless of 'in care' child protection status. Gift bags contained toys, personal articles appropriate for the recipient's age/gender. In addition, Awashishewiigihiwaywin included milk and turkey vouchers as well as grocery gift cards to their families. Throughout the year, Matawa staff are happy to contribute to charitable events throughout the city of Thunder Bay, for (the Matawa First Nations' registered charity) the Gathering of Rivers for Community Care and (Matawa Education's charity) Matawa First Nations Education Authority - Achieving the Dream (search for them on www.canadahelps.org).

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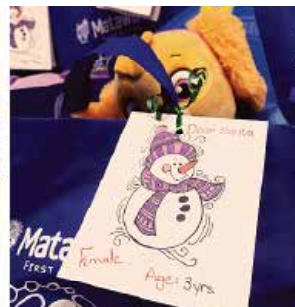
Four Rivers Climate Change Adaptation Tips

Canadian Rangers in Matawa

Diabetes Awareness, Safe Sobering Site Safety Approach and Harm Reduction

RP&J Community Infrastructure Dev't and PPE Procurement

Welcome New Staff and
more....





Merry Christmas!!



CREE

*Kee-wah-chee-yay-mee-tee(n) ay
mah-koo-shay kee-shee-kah(k)*

OJI-CREE

Mino Makohshe kiishikaa

OJIBWAY

Mino-magoshegiizhigan



Kii-magoshegiizhigak ni-da-goonanag ni-da-shi-gani-nanag, niinawind ni-misesag, ayaa-ge nishii-menshag. Mii-ye dash eshi-nibaayang.

Story by Nancy Ritch

At Christmas time, we hang up our stockings, my older siblings and my younger siblings, then we would go to sleep.



aroaha Love
family
whanau
gift
koha atu
Santa
Hana Koko
tree
Rakau Pohutukawa
Christmas
Kirihimete

Na Aroha Watene (N.Z)



Kee-wah-chee-yay-mee-tee(n) ay mah-koo-shay kee-shee-kah(k)
Suzan Sandau

**Ashuy kehgat
daniminahniwaan**



**Season's Greetings to all
from Lois Whitehead**

The Pohutukawa (Por -hoo- too- kah-wah)

**This tree is native to New Zealand and is
New Zealand's very own Christmas Tree.**

Ashuy miinwa gawabima Santa Claus!



From Tracy Spence



The RED flowers blossom in December.

Ngä mihi o te Kirihimete ki a koutou.

Nä Mike Graham

Four Rivers Group Climate Change Adaptation Tips

**Follow this new Climate Change
Adaptation Tip (CCAT) series
to learn new ways you can
help reduce the impacts
of climate change!**

CCAT #1

Rethink Your Wrapping!

This year, try wrapping holiday gifts in recycled materials! You can repurpose a cereal box or coffee can, or really get creative with the sleeve of an old sweater. The possibilities are endless!

Submit a photo of your
recycled gift wrap to
our Facebook page
and you will be entered
into our DRAW!



Friend us on
Facebook:
FourRivers Matawa



Canadian Rangers Ready to Assist in All First Nations in Matawa

By Peter Moon

The Canadian Army officer commanding the Canadian Rangers in Northern Ontario is “extremely happy” with the Rangers in all of the nine Matawa First Nations. “The Rangers are Canada’s military presence in Canada’s North,” said Lieutenant-Colonel Shane McArthur. “I am extremely happy with the performance of the Rangers in the Matawa area.”

The Rangers are part-time army reservists. There are approximately 5,000 in more than 200 remote and isolated communities across the Canadian North. They speak 26 languages and dialects. In Northern Ontario there are more than 700 Rangers in 29 First Nations.

“There’s no doubt in my mind that you are going to make a difference in your community,” Colonel McArthur said last October when he swore in new Rangers at the opening of a new patrol in Aroland. On the same trip, from his headquarters at Canadian Forces Base Borden, near Barrie, he opened a second patrol in Long Lake # 58 and new detachments, which are sub components of a patrol, in Ginoogaming and Marten Falls.

“I could see the new Canadian Rangers had the same pride as our soldiers in the Canadian Army,” he said. “They had the same smiles on their faces and showed the same pride as they were sworn in. These new Rangers are going to be directly helping their communities. I am proud of them.”

Within weeks several new Rangers from the four communities were involved in a major Canadian Army exercise in the Geraldton area. They received praise from senior army officers for their roles as guides and teachers as they taught their traditional on-the-land skills to soldiers from Southern Ontario.

The Rangers are a specialized component of the Canadian Army who possess intimate knowledge of their local territories and are trained to provide a range of services for the people in their patrol areas, including various types of humanitarian assistance. They are trained to conduct search and rescue missions and participate in evacuations and other local emergencies.

With their traditional and distinctive red sweaters, camouflage combat pants, and army boots, they are easily recognized when they are in uniform.

The Rangers also operate the army’s Junior Canadian Ranger program. The program emphasizes safety on the land and

water and in personal lifestyles for boys and girls aged 12 to 18. There are Junior Ranger patrols in Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Nibinamik, Neskantaga, and Webequie.

There are plans to expand the program in the spring of 2021 into Aroland, Long Lake # 58, Ginoogaming, and Marten Falls.



Lieutenant-Colonel Shane McArthur commands the Canadian Rangers of Northern Ontario.

Photo credit: Sergeant Peter Moon





Pictured are members of the Aroland Canadian Ranger patrol doing their annual requalification shoot with the Ranger C-19 rifle. Photo credit: Master Warrant Officer Fergus O'Connor



Canadian Rangers participate in a search and rescue exercise. Photo credit: Sergeant Peter Moon



New Canadian Rangers form a traditional circle during the swearing-in ceremony for the new patrol in Long Lake # 58 First Nation in 2019. Photo credit: Sergeant Peter Moon



DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

NOVEMBER was Diabetes Awareness Month. According to Diabetes Canada *“Indigenous people living in Canada are among the highest -risk population for diabetes and related complications.”* Effective prevention strategies are essential to help prevent the development of Type 2 diabetes. Here are some self management goals to set if you are currently living with diabetes:

Individualized goal setting	
Potential Self-management Goals	Examples
Eat healthier	See a dietitian to help develop a healthy eating plan.
Be more active	Increase physical activity with the goal of getting to 150 minutes aerobic activity/week and resistance exercise 2-3 times/week. Choose physical activity that meets preferences/needs.
Lose weight	Use strategies (e.g., reduce calories or portions) to lose 5-10% of initial weight.
Take medication regularly	Taking medication will help to improve symptoms and take control of your life. Consider using a pillbox or setting a timer.
Avoid hypoglycemia	Recognize the signs of hypoglycemia and take action to prevent it.
Check blood glucose	Establish a routine and act accordingly.
Check feet	Do a daily self-check and follow-up with a health-care provider if anything is abnormal.
Manage stress	Screen for distress (depressive and anxious symptoms) by interview or a standardized questionnaire (e.g. PHQ-9 www.phqscreeners.com).
Reduce or stop smoking	Identify barriers to quitting and develop a plan to address each of these.

Please contact your Matawa Health Cooperative Diabetes Team for education on diabetes screening, prevention and ways to reduce your risk or manage your diabetes at
1-833-625-3611

Moving Forward on Community Infrastructure Development

Matawa's Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction (RP&J) department has been busy laying the foundation to allow Matawa member communities to build and own their own infrastructure. The past few months have been spent planning and coordinating with Matawa Chiefs and the new MOU partners (EPCOR, OPG, PCL and Enterprise) to gather the information needed to move this work forward.



An initial community infrastructure inventory has been created, and is being expanded and prioritized. The recent water crisis in Neskantaga reinforces the need for communities to have modern, operational and adequate systems that meet the needs of today and tomorrow. Community infrastructure needs will continue to be driven by individual communities, but can yield huge cost-savings as well with economies of scale... For example, if you build 5 schools instead of just one, there is time and money saved by doing that.

Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction department "Information Binders" have been circulated to every Matawa community, (as well as an electronic version) which include:

- RP&J briefing & political notes
- Enterprise & companies' concept papers
- Other documents & information
- "Planting the Seeds of Development" Powerpoint and community information



The end goal of this community infrastructure work is to implement the UNITY DECLARATION to have *"self-sufficient, self-governing peoples within a healthy, thriving culture, living in our homelands that shall sustain us for all time."* Mamow-Wecheekapawetahteewiin, July 13, 2011.

Watershed Partners Work Continues Despite Pandemic

The Matawa Regional Priorities and Jurisdiction department have been assisting our communities on a unique journey of community-led collaborative design decision-making. Our communities have enjoyed and supported our Matawa/Watershed community-led process, which has been flexible in order to allow the work to continue through the Covid-19 pandemic. Together, our Matawa team and Watershed have been doing outreach to Chiefs, members and program managers.

Watershed Partners has been working with Matawa First Nations Management over the last 2 years on Community Decision Making. Before the pandemic, we were progressing in a stable fashion, however the pandemic has created challenges in engagement. We continue to work together - using the tools we have to connect to also document the challenges and successes around communication within the Matawa organization since Covid-19. This added layer of information will help in creating a solid decision-making process, led by the communities, to take Matawa members and their communities forward to a stronger future.



Have Yourself a Merry little Christmas

Let Your heart be light...

...from the Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction department.



Cedar Trees

There are many different species of these trees, which have a high percentage of vitamin C. This species of tree is found in wet, swampy areas and not in dry areas very often. There is a difference between male and female of this species, where the female tree has seedlings that are found at the ends of the branches and the males do not. Branches can be picked seasonally. The cedar grows up to 30 feet high and anywhere from 10-15 feet wide.

Harvesting can be done all year round. Female trees are picked in the fall when the seeds have fallen. Spring harvest is done during the time when the sap begins to run. The wood of the cedar has a white-yellowish colour with pink stripes that run horizontally. After picking branches, spread them out to dry, then put into paper bags. Liquids are put into glass jars for storage in a dry area.

Traditional Tea: Take branches about 4-6 inches long and put into a pot filled with a litre of water. Bring to a boil, then let simmer for 4-7 minutes. Drain liquid into glass jar and drink 1 cup twice a day for chest congestion, colds, and fevers until completed.

Bath: Take the greens from the branches, measure 4 cups of greens and add them to a



pot of 6 litres of water and bring to a boil. Simmer for 4-7 minutes. Then strain liquid into bath water for relaxation and better skin.

Oil may be extracted from wood, branches, and seedlings by placing these into water. Bring to a boil and the oil from the tree will come to the surface. Skim oil from surface and put into glass jars. Oil may be used as a moisturizer or put into humidifier to purify the air.

Cedar can also be used for smudging by using dried or ground greens.

USES:

- Cedar bath
- Chest congestion
- Colds
- Fevers
- Oil moisturizer
- Shingles
- Smudging
- Vapour



*content credit: Raphael Moses "Holistic Adventures"

* disclaimer: do not drink cedar tea while pregnant

Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction Dept Procurement of COVID-19 PPE

Matawa's Regional Priorities and Jurisdiction department has procured an additional 2000 child/youth masks, 400 Face Shields and 2 skids of hand sanitizer and approached the MOU partners to support VIO volunteers for "Back to School Fundraiser" for children/youth masks.



Matawa Safe Sobering Site

The Matawa Safe Sobering Site is a service accessible to all Matawa First Nation's Youth from ages 13-21 who are under the influence of alcohol and other substances. We provide a safe, judgement free zone where students can come in, sleep it off and access Mental Health supports, harm reduction strategies and a referral to treatment. The Matawa Safe Sobering Site staff are fully trained to provide care and monitor students while they safely achieve a level of sobriety.

During intake, staff gather as much information as possible to determine eligibility or ineligibility of a student. The intake tools such as; the HACK, sedation and respiration scales determine initial student intoxication, monitor student intoxication, level of sedation, and their number of respirations per minute. This ensures a stable recovery from intoxication.

Staff will then inform students about harm reduction strategies, and gather additional student information that will be used when completing the Discharge and Mental Health referral. The referral is sent to the Mental Wellness Department at the Matawa Education and Care Centre and the Mental Wellness Team creates and implements a plan of care for the student.

The Matawa Safe Sobering Site is open 24 hours, 7 days a week during the school calendar with the exceptions of Christmas and March breaks. Our site is located within the Matawa Education and Care Centre. To access the site call 807-632-0639 – free transportation is available. Additional transportation is available from Matawa On-Call Service nightly between 8:00pm-6:00am, you can reach the On-Call Workers at 807-629-2900 or 807-629-4092.



Matawa Safe Sobering Site Response to COVID-19- Occupational Health and Safety Approach



The Thunder Bay District Health Unit has deemed Matawa Safe Sobering Site a congregate living setting; therefore, the site follows the most up to date Ontario Public Health Congregate Living guidelines.

Occupational health and safety approach to control measures in effect include:

Engineering Controls: Implementation of physical barriers, traffic/movement signs, restricted access, hand sanitizer and maintaining physical distancing.

Administrative controls: Implementation of policies and procedures, education and training.

Continued on next page >>

Personal protective equipment (PPE): Continued use of masks, face shield, gloves and gowns.

As part of our effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19, our staff sanitize all surfaces within the Safe Sobering Site twice per shift, once upon arrival and when the shift is over. Staff will also completely strip the bedrooms down and sanitize the surfaces in the room as well as the bed sheets, pillows and blankets after a student uses them.

Active screening strategies will be conducted daily by staff, either at work or at home staff will monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms and keep a log of any symptoms experienced. Staff must stay home even if they show minimal symptoms.



Harm reduction is a philosophy and set of practices that acknowledge that substance use - be it drugs, cigarettes or alcohol - is a part of life. It aims to reduce the harmful effects of substance use, rather than simply ignoring or condemning it.

Quick tips for reducing harm during COVID-19

1. Practicing good hygiene is the best way to protect against the novel coronavirus and other illnesses in this cold and flu season.
2. Hand washing, social distancing, masking while in public.
3. Don't share pipes, bongs, vapes, cigarettes or joints, drinks, nasal tubes and all injecting equipment, including sterile water, cookers, filters, wipes, ties, etc.
4. Ensure to have a plan if your supplier becomes ill or unavailable.
5. Stock up on clean equipment and naloxone. Get enough to last 3-4 weeks.
6. Don't handle or touch anyone else's drugs or equipment. Prepare and use your own and ensure no one else has touches or uses your drugs or equipment.
7. If you are on an opioid agonist therapy, ask your doctor about extra carries and/or an extended prescription.
8. If you use drugs alone have a friend check up on you or call the overdose prevention line (1-888-853-8542) and someone will stay on the phone with you while you use and will call 911 if you overdose.

Matawa Education YouTube Channel

Over the past few months, the PASS Team in the Matawa Education Department have been working hard to create educational and engaging content for you on our new YouTube Channel!

You can check it out here: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgbLU_Fu7FJ2DHPwNnDNxgA (or search Matawa Education in the YouTube search bar) to see audio copies of our previous radio shows, stories, songs, crafts and cooking demos!

The PASS team is hopeful that families and children could access this content during quarantine or lockdown periods, and that the videos would help keep children interested in reading and literacy, as well as give them inspiration for new activities to do at home.

We are currently at work on a Christmas Countdown series that we hope will bring Christmas cheer far and wide.

Please reach out to the PASS Team if you have any ideas for new videos you would like to see! (807) 768 – 3300.

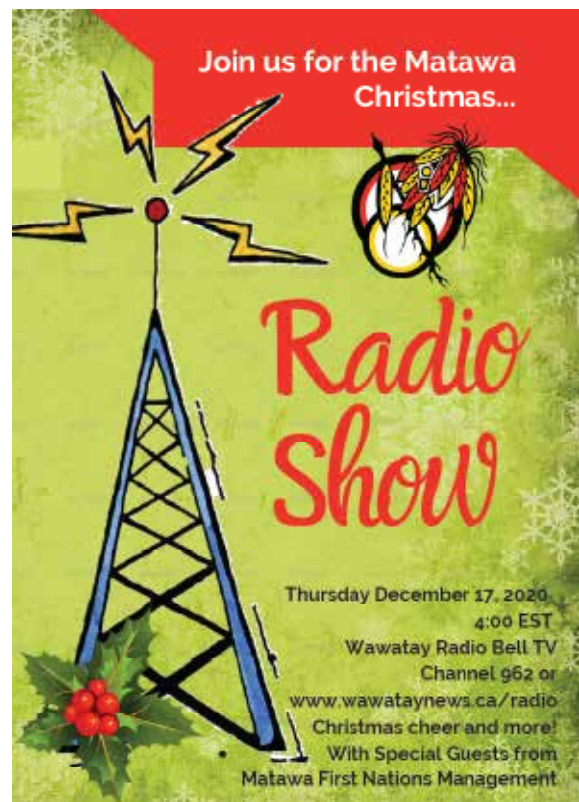


**TUNE IN EVERY 2ND TUESDAY
FROM 4:00 - 4:30 EST
(3:00 - 3:30 CST)**

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

UPCOMING SHOWS

January 5 and 19
February 2 and 16
March 2, 16 and 30



FRIEND US ON FACEBOOK!

> **FOURRIVERS MATAWA** <



Watch for updates on all things ENVIRONMENTAL
on our Facebook account!

Updates will be posted about upcoming
VITRUAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Webinars, virtual gatherings, surveys,
photo contests, videos, and MUCH MORE!

"SEE" you soon!



fourrivers.group

Matawa First Nations Management Welcomes New Staff

Matawa Health Co-operative

Dietician, Farren Tropea



A passionate Registered Dietitian, Farren Tropea is the newest addition to the Matawa Health Co-Operative family. After studying Human Nutrition at the University of Guelph she completed the Dietetic Program at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine in July. She has clinical experience from a place-

ments at Diabetes Health and Mushkiki Health Clinic, community kitchen and program development experience with various non-profit organizations like Roots to Harvest and public health experience at the Thunder Bay Public Health Unit. She spends her time gardening, foraging, cooking, baking and preserving food, so it's safe to say she loves food! She already feels welcomed by the Matawa Community and forming good relationships with the nine Matawa communities is a primary goal for this energetic young lady. With a great group of health professionals at the Health Co-Operative to learn from, she has come to the right place.

Matawa Health Co-operative

Certified Diabetes Educator, Kerri Koski. RN



Boozhoo! I am Kerri Koski, a Registered Nurse and Certified Diabetes Educator with a Bachelors of Nursing degree from Lakehead University. My hometown is Longlac, ON. My long-time passion is diabetes management. As part of my role here at Matawa Health Co-Op, I will continue to support and give advice to clients living with diabetes. My work also focuses on

self-care strategies to prevent, manage and treat diabetes. My experience in diabetes management will allow me to provide the necessary needs to continue improving health outcomes for First Nations people living with diabetes. I love to include social and cultural contexts of each community in my my plan of care for each unique individual. I truly believe that the context of culture plays an important role for providing culturally competent care. In spare time, I enjoy yoga, nature, being with family and in the company of my two dogs (Bobbi Love and Stevie Nicks).

Matawa Education

On-Call Worker, Amanda Irvine



Hello! My name is Amanda Irvine and I have just started working with Matawa as an on-call worker. I am from Thunder Bay and have lived here my whole life. I am currently in school for Social Service Work at Confederation College, graduating this April. I love to be outside and enjoy the

outdoors, spending time with my friends and family. I am very grateful for the opportunity to work with Matawa, and cannot wait to meet everyone along the way!

Awashishewiigihiwaywiin

Family Support Worker, Jessica Minoletti



Hello, my name is Jessica Minoletti. I have recently joined Awashishe-Wiigihiwaywiin program as a Family Support Worker. I am coming from Keewatinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOB). I am excited to be apart of the Matawa team and I look forward to working and meeting everyone.

Awashishewiigihiwaywiin

Family Support Worker, Ron Frost



Hello, my name is Ron Frost. I was born and raised in Thunder Bay. I have recently joined the Awashishe-Wiigihiwaywiin program as a Family Support Worker. I have 2 years' experience working in Child Welfare as well as 2 years' experience working with high risk youth. I am very grateful for this opportunity and I look forward to being able to support the

families of Matawa First Nations.

Matawa Health Co-operative

Health Promotion Education Planner, Gloria Hendrick-Laliberte



Hello my name is Gloria Hendrick-Laliberte, I am working as the Health Promotion Education Planner with the Matawa Health Cooperative. My husband and I have 2 working adults, 2 cats and a spoiled chocolate lab. We enjoy the outdoors and spending time at our camp. I love to curl, snowshoe, garden, scrapbook and especially love making cards. I look forward to

working with the Matawa First Nations and the team at Matawa Health Cooperative.

Matawa Education

Student Activity Coordinator, Cheyenne McKay



Hello! My name is Cheyanne McKay, this is my first school year at Matawa Education and Care Centre, I am one of the new Student Activity Coordinators. I grew up in Sioux Lookout and Summer Beaver, Ont. but have been living in Thunder Bay the last 5 years! I've always been super adventurous and enjoy being active so this job has been very exciting for me! I look

forward to get to know more of the Matawa community members and am grateful for this opportunity.

Four Rivers Group Colouring Page

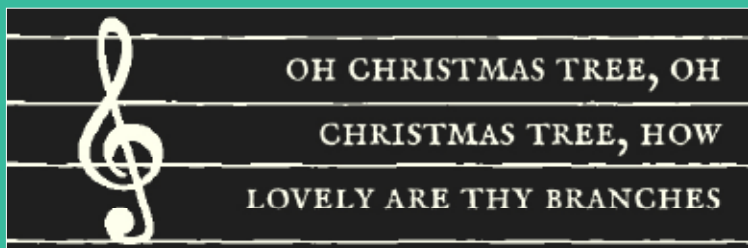


Wishing you a very
merry holiday season!

Living with Us... ZHINGOBAANDAG (Balsam Fir)



Photo Credit: Xavier Sagutch, Eabametoong First Nation



These lines are often sung at Christmas time, and one of our favourite trees for holiday decorating is the Balsam Fir which really does have lovely branches! They sprout shiny, flat, dark green needles, with a distinctive pair of white stripes on the underside. These trees give off a natural fragrance that many enjoy and are often used to line the floors or cover the roof of tents. The Balsam Fir tree can grow up to 30 meters tall, while its root system is rather shallow (they are often seen tipped-over in the bush, providing interesting shelter for forest critters). These trees house and feed many animals year-round, including squirrels and small birds that stay in the north throughout the winter season. Balsam Fir sap and needles can also be used to prepare medicines that are good for our respiratory system and can increase endurance when travelling through the bush.

Did You Know... Both male and female cones grow on the Balsam Fir tree? Female cones are larger and appear purplish in colour, while the male cones are much smaller and look brownish yellow. Starting in the fall, cones drop to the ground and begin the process of becoming new tree seedlings. Four Rivers has recently been involved in several climate change adaptation and awareness projects, and trees are vital to global efforts to combat climate change. Balsam Firs, along with many other tree species, remove excess carbon from the air we all share. For more information on Climate Change Adaption projects in your community, or other Four Rivers initiatives, please contact info@fourrivers.group - friend us on Facebook! *FourRivers Matawa*

