



"Living with Us"... page 16



# MATAWA MESSENGER

The Power of Unity, The Dignity of Difference

L'ab Li-ΔPΔTΔ<sup>a</sup> PPT<sup>a</sup>CL<sup>a</sup> bJY<b<sup>a</sup>Y<sup>a</sup>b

## Matawa Health Co-op Assists in COVID-19 Vaccination of Member First Nations On and Off-Reserve Starting with Vulnerable Members



*Pictured from L, Top R and Bottom R: Kerri Koski - RN, Allison Palmer - RN and Jaimie Petri - Privacy EMR Coordinator*

After 1 year of the COVID-19 global pandemic and the fatigue that came with it, members of Matawa First Nations both on and off-reserve, are having a glimmer of hope that things will eventually get back to normal. The hope came from the Moderna and Pfizer mRNA vaccines, which were approved for use in Canada in late December. With the approval of two AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines in February 2021 and the Johnson & Johnson vaccine in early March 2021, more vaccines became available.

At the beginning of February 2021, Operation Remote Immunity (which was a provincial exercise in providing the Moderna vaccine) began in Matawa remote communities of Neskantaga, Nibinamik, Webequie, Marten Falls and Eabametoong First Nations. MHC's Dr. Cathering Golding had an opportunity to assist in Operation Remote Immunity.

On March 3 and 4, 2021 the Matawa Health Co-operative (MHC) hosted their 1st COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Thunder Bay. The clinic was an opportunity for high-risk Matawa First Nation members who reside in Thunder Bay to receive their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine.

The clinic operated on an 'appointment-only' basis with prioritization first being made for vulnerable Matawa members especially for those who are +60 years, transient, homeless, precariously housed and/or having mental health and addictions issues.

The clinic was made possible with the assistance of the Thunder Bay District Health Unit as part of MHC's mandate to provide/augment health services that are tailored to individual community's needs and address mental health and addictions, diabetes and chronic diseases amongst Matawa membership. Since COVID-19 immunization became available in Canada in December, Matawa First Nations leadership have been calling for immunization of their members both in road-access communities and in the urban population. Having the medical staff, training and infrastructure in place, MHC were able to move quickly for the urban Matawa population in Thunder Bay starting with the most vulnerable when Indigenous adults became prioritized. The MHC administered over 170 vaccinations during their first clinic and followed through with having additional clinics in Thunder Bay after the first one.

MHC also held a vaccination clinic administering the Pfizer vaccine again in Aroland First Nation on March 9, 2021. The people of Matawa were grateful for the kindness, professionalism, and dedication put forward by MHC nurses who worked these clinics: Nick Kwiatkowski, Chelsea Luxton, Allison Palmer, Kerri Koski, Justin Chapdelaine, Pierette McLeod and Kelly Kabatay. Kitchi meegwetch to them and we lift them all up in our prayers for continued strength and endurance as they nurse during the pandemic.



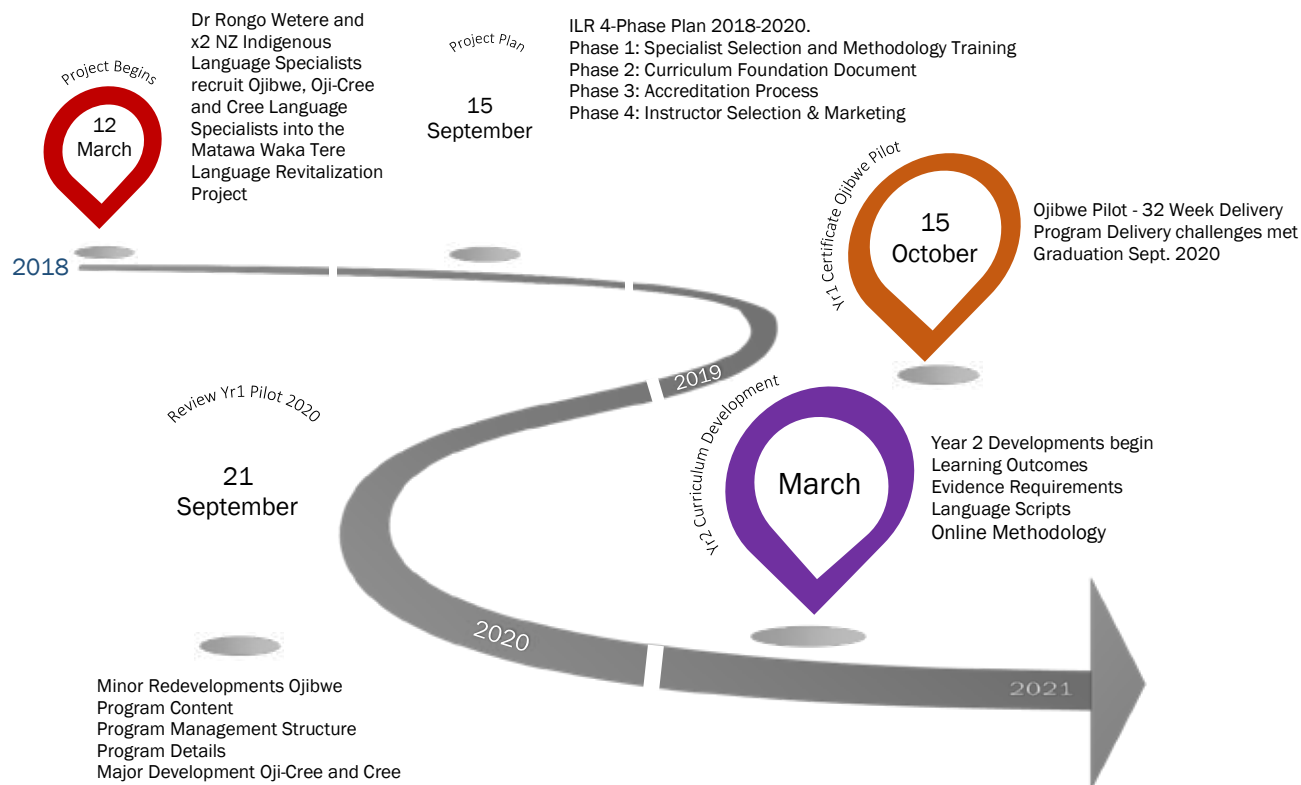
### IN THIS ISSUE:

Language Revitalization  
Post Secondary Deadlines  
Rapid Lynx Construction  
Update  
MHC COVID Services,  
Coping with Pandemic  
Stress, Wellness Series  
Canadian Rangers

Welcome New Staff and  
more....



## Matawa Waka Tere – Indigenous Language Revitalization (ILR) Project Timeline Ojibwe; Cree; Oji-Cree 2018 - 2021



Oct milestone 2018 pg 8-9

<http://www.matawa.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Oct-2018-Messenger-Web-Version.pdf>

March milestone 2019 pg12

<http://www.matawa.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Web-Version-MM-Mar-2019.pdf>

Dec milestone 2019 pg8-9

<http://www.matawa.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/MM-for-Proof.pdf>

Oct milestone 2020 pg1-3

<http://www.matawa.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Oct-2020-Messenger-Final-For-Proofing.pdf>

MWT Yr1 Ojibwe Pilot 2020 - Student Testimonials

[https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=vjU6pD\\_Edb4](https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=vjU6pD_Edb4)

### Useful Phrases

#### OJIBWE

Mino **ga giton** - *Talk nicely*

**Gego noochigo ikitoken** - *Don't say anything bad*

**Koyak naa-ga-chi-tis-so-yok** - *look after yourselves well*

**Gaa-goni- sa-gan- owe- akosiwin** - *This sickness is dangerous*

#### OJI-CREE

Mino **gagitoon** - *Talk nicely*

**Kwaniin machi ihkitoken** - *Don't say anything bad*

**Koyak naagachitosoyook** - *look after yourselves well*

**Gagonisagan owe akosiwin** - *This sickness is dangerous*

# Acknowledge Indigenous Language Champions Among Us

“Every year is the year of the [Indigenous] languages” said Lawrence Therriault during a Matawa Waka Tere Language Revitalization Project team challenge on finding ways to encourage everyone to speak the language and with limited resources. Two key messages that resonated with the team this past January from the online Symposium on Indigenous Languages: Building on Strengths and Successes related to Bill C-91, were ‘Money can’t buy everything’ and ‘Acknowledge Our Language Champions’. We understand that these messages can be actioned by everyone in order to revitalize and maintain the dignity of our languages and as we work together in unity.

“It is important for the generation of young children to know our language...best to start them at a young age. Even ourselves, when we meet as leaders we should be speaking Anishnawbemowin. As leaders we speak here about Anishnawbemowin - we need to speak our language in these gatherings so people could hear, listen to put into action. We need to do our best to talk our language when we meet”

CHIEF DOROTHY TOWEDO, AROLAND FIRST NATION  
MFNM - AGM SEPTEMBER 2020

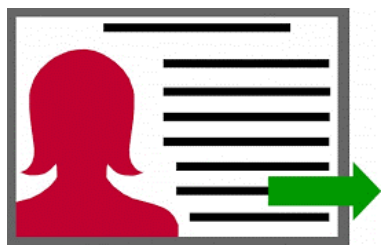
Here are a few words and ideas to help celebrate and support Language Champions  
**Bakinaagewinini Bakinaagewike Ishigiishiwewin – Male and Female Language Champions**  
**Ogichida Ogichidaakwe Ishigiishiwewin – Male and Female Language Champions**

## 1. Identify language champions in the community

Ojibwe/Oji-Cree/Cree	Translation
Kichiayaa/kichiaah/ Kee-chee-yah	Elder
Niigaani/Ogimakaan	Chief
Mindimoyea	Wise old woman
Manidou	Wise old man
Gookomus/Googoo/Gogo	Grandmother
Koo-koo(m)	
Joomish/Mishoomis/Dodo	Grandfather
Moo-shoo(m)	
Anishinaabemowin	Native or Indigenous
Ishigiishiwewin Kikinomagewin	Language-dialect
	Instructor or teacher
Mama/Doodom/	Mom
Nee-kah-wee	
Tata/ Dada	Dad
Noo-tah-wee	

## 2. Support Language Champion

- Address them by their spirit name
- Acknowledge them with a card
- Share food with them and discuss a word to describe **language Champion**
- Let them speak in the language no matter what the occasion or event is
- Let them share names of places in the territory (over non-native names), including rivers and lakes
- play bingo with them in the language
- Give them a shout out on the radio station or via 2-way black radio
- Listen to Short Story telling in the language
- Send a picture and profile of a language champion from your community to feature in upcoming Matawa Messengers by the end of May, 2021



Send by email: [ltherriault@matawa.on.ca](mailto:ltherriault@matawa.on.ca)  
or send A4 size by post  
C/O MWT Language Revitalization Project  
Matawa Education Department  
200 Lillie Street  
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4Y8



**FRIEND US ON FACEBOOK!**

> **FOURRIVERS MATAWA** <



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

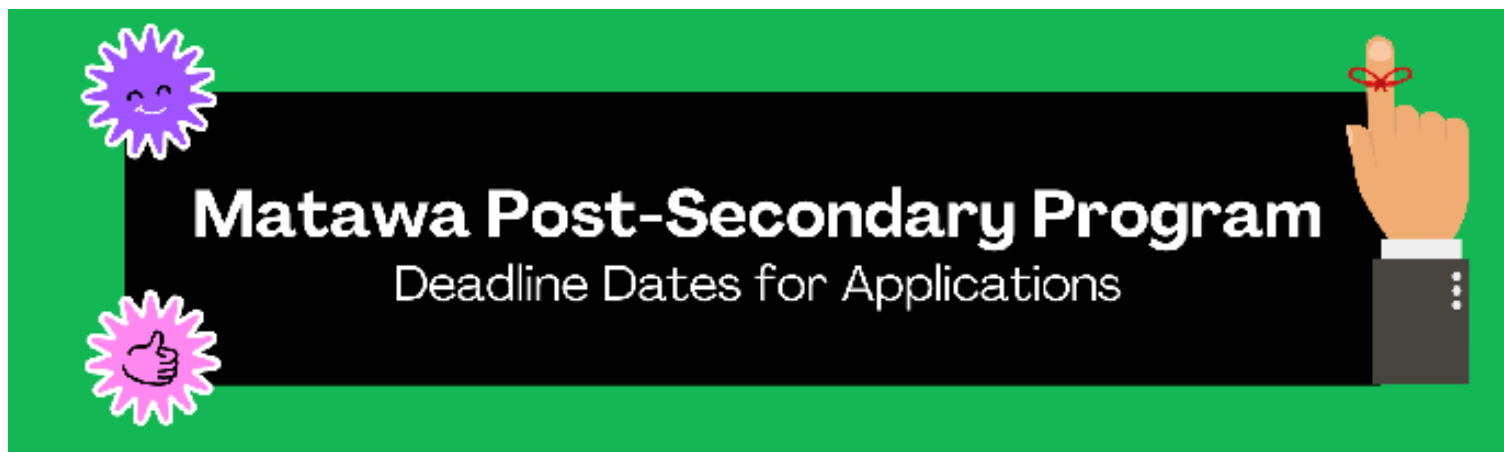
Updates will be posted about upcoming  
VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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

"SEE" you soon!



**fourrivers.group**



The program provides assistance on behalf of the following First Nations: Aroland, Ginoogaming, Long Lake #58, Neskan-taga and Webequie. The MPSP provides financial assistance to eligible students towards the cost of their post secondary education.

ALL STUDENTS, continuing and new, are required to submit a new application each term, according to the following deadline dates:

- May 15th - Fall Term September to December
- May 15th - Fall Winter Terms September to April
- November 1st - Winter Term January to April
- March 31st - Spring & Summer Terms May to August

FOR APPLICATIONS please contact the Matawa Post Secondary Office 1-807-768-3300 / 1-888-283-9747



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

[www.wawataynews.ca/radio](http://www.wawataynews.ca/radio) | 89.9 FM in Sioux Lookout

**Upcoming Shows:**

April 13 and 27  
May 11 and 25  
June 8 and 22  
July 6 and 20

# Four Rivers Group Climate Change Adaptation Tips

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

CCAT #2

## **Plan your spring garden!**

Even growing a few vegetables in your own garden can help alleviate climate impacts associated with transporting food long distances. It's also a way to enjoy time outdoors!

Submit a photo of your draft garden plan to our Facebook page and we will send you a pack of seeds for your garden!



Friend us on  
Facebook:  
FourRivers Matawa



## Rapid Lynx Construction Update

*Map illustrates how much optic cable has been placed*



*Note: The green line is a visual of how much fibre optic cable has been installed and the red lines are where the fibre still needs to be installed in the next construction season (summer and fall of 2021)*

During this winter road season our project team will be delivering pre-assembled shelters that are 10 x 20 feet and weighing roughly 7 tons. Each shelter will have an IT work station, racks and storage already installed. Diesel generators will also be included for each unit. Once the shelters arrive in the following communities: Eabametoong, Marten Falls, Neskantaga, Nibinamik, and Webequie they will be placed at a temporary location until this summer when they will be moved and installed to their permanent locations.

Follow us on our Facebook page **Rapid Lynx Telecommunications** or join our group page **Rapid Lynx Broadband Project**.

The construction for the Rapid Lynx broadband project will resume at the end of February or beginning of March depending on the winter road season. Most of the labour work will consist of brush and clear cutting along the areas of where the fibre optic cable will be placed during the summer construction season June – November 2021.

The long-haul construction of placing the fibre optic cable will resume in June 2021 from the Eabametoong boundary heading towards Neskantaga then to Webequie and Nibinamik.

To date there has been 273 976 meters (roughly under 274 km) of fibre optic cable installed.

*Example of what the marker posts look like.*





## Long Lake #58 First Nation Has Hit the Airwaves!

After many years without their own community radio station, Long Lake #58 is now enjoying their own programming for the community – by the community. Music programming as well as critical information about COVID-19 or other emergencies can be quickly communicated to the members through their home radios or their vehicles.

Matawa's Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction department was happy to help leadership get this project going and wish their new team of DJs good luck! Next one to hit the airwaves will be Ginoogaming – coming soon!



## The Need for PPE Continues

With recent outbreaks of COVID-19 in Matawa communities, the need for personal protective equipment (PPE) continues to be a priority, and will remain a concern until this pandemic ends. Matawa's Regional Priorities and Jurisdiction (RP&J) department has been able to contribute much needed PPE throughout the past year, with a major contribution from VIO Volunteers. With the assistance of this 100% volunteer organization, the RP&J department has been able to provide:

- 155,200 masks (including youth and child masks)
- 200 face shields
- 20L of hand sanitizer
- 6 boxes of 100 nitrile gloves
- All items shipped free to communities

The RP&J department, along with VIO Volunteers, will continue to provide Matawa communities with PPE and other supports as long as they are needed.





## Neskantaga First Nation Receives New Septic Truck



On February 1, 2021 Neskantaga First Nation received a 2021 septic truck. It replaces a honey-wagon that was previously used and that contributed to ongoing sewage problems the community was experiencing on an ongoing basis before the community's repatriation (from evacuation due to unsafe water) prior to Christmas 2020.

The delivery was made possible from a financial commitment from Indigenous Services Canada as a result of persistence and lobbying from the community and continued efforts from Matawa First Nations Management in supporting First Nations with infrastructures issues. This septic truck will be a key piece of equipment for the operations and maintenance of the wastewater system. It will also be helpful with an ongoing assessment of the main wastewater lift station.

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## Garden Season is Coming!



In a few short months the soil will be thawing and seasons will be changing, which means now's the time to get excited about growing your own food! If you are new to gardening, then planning out your garden plot and purchasing seeds is a good place to start. It doesn't have to be fancy - just a sunny spot, some seeds, compost, water and basic hand tools. You'll be biting into a juicy tomato in no time.

From a nutrition and wellness point of view, the more involved you are with growing, preparing and cooking your food, the better. Foods straight from the land takes some extra effort, but similar to hunting or berry picking as you know, it's worth it. Gardening is a great way to spend time on the land with your family and that extra bit of effort means good exercise for your body. Vegetables, fruits and traditional ways of knowing all have a place in the garden. The ingenious way of growing squash, beans and corn together was proof that Anishinaabe people were skilled gardeners long ago.

The Matawa Health Co-operative's Registered Dietitian and the Matawa Food Security Committee are excited at the possibility of bringing gardening and supplies to communities that are interested. For members living in Thunder Bay, the Four Rivers Group has a large garden you can volunteer at and eat from. If you have a group of people looking to create a community garden plot or have any questions, reach out to the Health Co-operative by calling 807-346-2370 or emailing [ftropea@matawa.on.ca](mailto:ftropea@matawa.on.ca) and we can chat!

For those who want to get started sooner, check out [www.r2hshop.ca](http://www.r2hshop.ca) to order northern climate adapted seeds that will get shipped to your door.



**MATAWA HEALTH CO-OPERATIVE**



**The Matawa Health Co-operative is  
providing COVID-19 assistance through  
telephone support:**

## **Nursing Services:**

**Monday – Friday**

**8:30am - 4:30pm**

**Toll free number:**

**1-833-625-3611**

It might be  
stormy right  
now, but rain  
doesn't last

## **Health Information**

- **Mental Wellness Assistance and Counselling**
- **Community Support and Guidance**
- **Questions about Covid-19**
- **Testing daily from 8:30am – 12:00pm - by appointment only**
- **Urgent care matters – need to talk to a Doctor?**

# Managing Stress During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Challenges we face can be stressful, overwhelming, and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Social distancing is necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but it can make us feel isolated and lonely increasing stress and anxiety.

## Stress can cause:

- Feelings of fear, anger, sadness, worry, or frustration
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares
- Worsening of mental health conditions
- Increased use of tobacco, alcohol and other substances

## HEALTHY WAYS TO COPE WITH STRESS

### Take care of your body by:

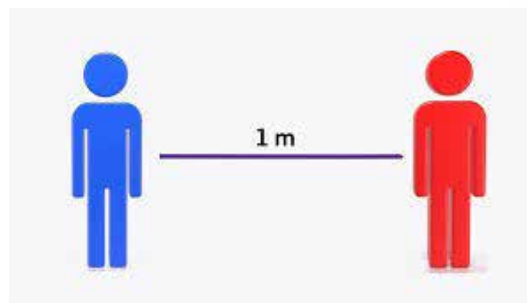
- Taking deep breaths, stretch or meditate
- Exercise regularly
- Get plenty of sleep
- Avoid excessive alcohol, tobacco, and substance use
- Get vaccinated against COVID-19 when available
- **Connect with your community, or faith-based organization** (while social distancing measures are in place, try connecting online, through social media, or by phone or mail)

## Helping Others Cope

Taking care of yourself can better equip you to take care of others. Helping others cope with stress through phone calls or video chats can help you and your loved ones feel less lonely or isolated.



**Wear A Mask**



**Social Distance**



**Wash Your Hands**

Sources: Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

# Matawa Health Co-operative Wellness Web Series

The Matawa Health Cooperative announced a Mental Health and Wellness Web Series with Kendal Netmaker & Corey Wesley. The workshops were 1.5 hrs in length and held on Wednesday evenings. Participants were required to register and prizes were drawn. Question and Answers were included as an interactive piece of the sessions. The sessions and themes that were held:

- Jan 20: Are You Ready?
- Feb 3: Facing Your Challenges-Goal Setting
- Feb 17: Entrepreneurship
- March 3: Self Care
- March 17: Transition into Parenting
- March 31: Traditional Teachings - Self Love

The support and participation for these sessions surpassed expectations, there have been at least 40 registrants each session and over 600 watching live on the Matawa Health Co-operative Facebook page.

Kendal Netmaker and Corey Wesley facilitated the Mental Wellness Web Series. Kendal and Corey may be familiar names to members of Matawa First Nations as they co-facilitated the Matawa Health Forum in February 2020. The Matawa Health Cooperative is thankful to have individuals of this calibre share valuable information and experience to the Matawa membership.

Kendal Netmaker is one of Canada's leading entrepreneurs and speakers, from Sweetgrass First Nation, SK. He was raised by a single mother who cared for Kendal and his three younger sisters while growing up in poverty and few chances for opportunity. In grade 5, Kendal's life changed forever when his best friend from South Africa helped him to play soccer by paying for his soccer fees and driving him to games/practices. This act of kindness opened up a whole other world for him that he would have never otherwise experienced. Two years later, when the family was relocating, they gave Kendal's family their car; it was a life-changing gift that helped his mother access all kinds of basic necessities that had previously been difficult – and meant that Kendal and his sisters could now take part in after school sports.

The incredible generosity of his childhood friend's family inspired Kendal to give back when he launched his company, Neechie Gear® – a lifestyle apparel brand that empowers youth through sports. A percentage of all Neechie Gear® profits go toward funding underprivileged youth to take part in sports. While finishing two degrees from the University of Saskatchewan, Kendal worked on growing the brand, which was founded out of Kendal's small, one-bedroom apartment. After graduation, Kendal opened several stores while sharing his story as a keynote speaker. The brand is now sold to consumers across North America through exclusive retail partners and online. To date, Kendal has founded and invested in 5 businesses, authored a book called 'Driven To Succeed' and has won over 25 business awards, including runner-up at the YBI Global Entrepreneur of the Year & one of Canada's Top 40 Under 40®. Kendal speaks professionally to thousands of people each year on resilience, leadership and the power of telling your story. He lives with his wife and two children in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, where he continues to run his company and provide executive leadership coaching to organizations. Kendal is on a mission to empower entrepreneurs and leaders around the globe by demonstrating that regardless of where you come from and what you have gone through in your life, you have the power to enact change. Become who you were born to be!

Corey Wesley is a member of Constance Lake First Nation, is married with 4 children. In 2017, Corey published his kettlebell research in the International Journal of Sport Science. Corey has been dedicated to kettlebell training since 2008 when he was first certified through Agatsu, and then became an RKC certified instructor under Pavel Tsatouline in 2011. Through his methods, he has helped countless athletes become successful and reach the highest levels. His vision is to spread the power of strength, mobility and self-mastery to all who seek lifelong health, wellness and continuous improvement. His mission statement is helping others, to recognize their greatness. His focus is on hockey players who want to play at the next level!!! Participants have commented:

- "The facilitators are engaging, knowledgeable and I can relate to what they are talking about"
- "The workshop on goal setting helped me to see that I can move forward, even during a Pandemic"
- "It feels like they are talking to me"
- "Good session, I like SMART goals and outcome vs. behavioural goals"
- "I feel like I can ask any question"

We would like to thank everyone who joined us for the Matawa Mental Wellness Web Series and hope that the individuals, families and staff who took part enjoyed the sessions, learned to build their mental wellness and have found resources.





# Canadian Rangers Brave Frigid Cold to Assist a First Nation in Crisis

By: Peter Moon

A small group of Canadian Rangers who responded to a First Nation's call for military assistance in a Covid-19 crisis made a huge impression on the small Ojibway community.

"We're sad to see them leave," said Sheri Taylor, a Ginoogaming First Nation band councillor and health director. "It's been a great experience working with them."

On January 31 the community reported nine active cases of COVID19. It asked for military assistance and the Canadian Armed Forces authorized the use of Canadian Rangers, who are part-time army reservists, to aid the distressed community and its exhausted health workers.

Six Rangers and two full-time members of the Canadian Army were dispatched to provide the community with assistance for 10 days. "We assessed the situation and came up with a strategy," said Warrant Officer Carl Wolfe, a Ranger army instructor. "We said we're going to give the community the best ten days that we can and we would make as much difference as we could in those ten days and, regardless, we'd know we'd put forward our best effort."

The team did just that, according to Councillor Taylor.

"They were a friendly bunch of guys," she said, "and they did a lot of good for our community. They were willing to do whatever we needed them to do. They weren't fussy about anything. They were there. Despite the temperatures (which dropped into the low minus 40s) they braved the elements. The cold meant nothing to them."

Among other tasks, the Rangers delivered food and other items to residents who were restricted to their homes because of the COVID lockdown.

The number of Covid cases dropped from nine to one and with the assistance of the Rangers over the 10-day period of their mission the community was able to recover from its exhaustion and resume running its affairs again.

Ranger Curtis Waboose, one of the Ranger team, was from nearby Long Lake No. 58 First Nation, which is also in lockdown. "The best thing was delivering stuff for the kids," he said. "We gave them extra milk and cereal. The Elders were happy to see us. We cleared the snow from the paths to their homes."

Lieutenant-Colonel Shane McArthur, the Canadian Army officer who commands the Rangers in Northern Ontario, said: "Our Rangers did a fantastic job and provided great service to a community that needed help. It just goes to show we can react and help out when we are needed."

*Sergeant Peter Moon is the public affairs ranger for the 3rd Canadian Ranger Patrol Group at Canadian Forces Base Borden.*



Community member Tracy Dore receives a box of COVID emergency supplies from Ranger Jody Grenier.

Photo Credit: Warrant Officer Carl Wolfe



Rangers Jody Grenier and Curtis Waboose deliver food to homes in Ginoogaming in bitter cold temperatures.

Photo Credit: Warrant Officer Carl Wolfe

# Matawa First Nations Management Welcomes New Staff

## Health Co-operative

### Community Health Nurse, Chelsea Luxton



Hello my name is Chelsea Luxton I am a Registered Nurse from Long Lake 58. I graduated from Lakehead University in 2017. I just recently started as a Community Health Nurse with Matawa Health Co-operative. I also work casually at TBRHSC in Hemodialysis. I enjoy working and building strong professional relationship with my clients. I have always wanted to work with and help my fellow Indigenous people, so this job is a dream come true. When I am not working, I enjoy spending time with my family and my 2 very busy boys. I am very excited to learn and grow here at Matawa Health Co-operative.

## Health Co-operative

### Medical Receptionist, Lorraine Keough



My name is Lorraine Keough. I have been hired as the Medical Receptionist with the Matawa Health Co-operative. I am an Ojibway from Pic Mobert First Nation. I've recently moved here to Thunder Bay from Marathon, Ont. I am a mother to two grown girls; whom I cherish dearly and am where I am in life because of them! I'm

very excited to be part of the Matawa First Nations Management team! I look forward to meeting you all in the very near future!

## Health Co-operative

### Privacy EMR Coordinator, Jaimie Petri



Hello, My name is Jaimie Petri. I am born and raised in Thunder Bay and live with my husband and our 2 two children. I enjoy the outdoors, camping and spending time with our family pet. I am the new Privacy and EMR Coordinator with the Matawa Health Co-operative. I have

roughly 6 years experience working in a Health care clinic setting and working on various electronic medical records systems. I am excited and grateful for this opportunity to learn and grow with the Matawa Health Co-operative. I look forward to working with you all.

## Education

### Education Systems Navigator, Jennifer Hall



Jen is a graduate of Lakehead University with a degree in Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Arts majoring in history. Jen started her career working for Lakehead Public Schools supporting Indigenous youth as an Aboriginal Achievement Tutor at Churchill and Westgate C.V.I.

After working with the Lakehead Public Schools she moved into a position with the Youth Inclusion Program where she developed youth programming and created safe youth spaces in the Limbrick/Vale and Windsor/Picton/Blucher neighbourhoods. Outside of work Jen loves being active and outdoors. During the summer months she spends most of her time out at camp, off the grid, fishing and spending time with family.

## Four Rivers

### Geomatics intern, Amanda Misnakoshkang



Hello, Boozhoo. My name is Amanda Misnakoshkang, and I am a band member of Long Lake #58. I was raised in the city of Thunder Bay and always felt a longing for my community and the Ojibwa culture. That is why I made a promise to myself that when I graduated university, I would

find my way back, perhaps not physically but I would gain that sense of home. In 2020 I graduated from Lakehead University with a bachelor's in environmental studies and Geography. It was a difficult feat juggling university, and my 3 amazing children while amid a pandemic. But I did it! I was hired as a Geomatics intern with Four Rivers Environmental Service Group where I now get to put my knowledge to good use and be a steward for the environment for my community and all the Matawa First Nations. I am very excited to learn more about our communities and to be part of a team that cares about our land, water and the wildlife in this area. Miigwetch for the opportunity to find that part of my history I have always wondered about.

## Four Rivers

### Environmental/Geomatics Technician Graeme Saukko-Sved



Graeme has nine years of experience managing and leading field crews in many types of field surveys including, detailed vegetation inventories, fish inventory, soil and terrain mapping, species at risk, forest inventory, aquatic/ terrestrial habitat mapping and geomatics. He has a strong understanding of terrestrial ecology on the boreal shield and has a wealth of experience in other ecozones across Canada. He is also very proficient with GIS, specializing in data processing, aerial photographic interpretation and cartography. Graeme has worked on a wide variety of large and small-scale projects in the energy, mining, forestry and environmental sectors. Most notably, he utilizes his broad understanding of natural resources combined with his geomatics skills to streamline and innovate project workflows.

## Four Rivers

### Environmental Information Systems Specialist, Dinesh Gunawardena



Hello! My name is Dinesh Gunawardena, and I joined Four Rivers Group in January 2021. I have over two years of experience in the Geomatics and IT Sector. Previously, I was employed at Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen doing GIS and IT related work. I am passionate about spatial data, and have sound knowledge in geo-visualization and cartographic principles. As a skilled GIS technician, I am keen on remote sensor image processing including state-of-art technologies like LiDAR and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems. Previous experience as an administrative assistant and office support person have provided me good interpersonal skills. I enjoy working with and meeting new people. I am excited and grateful for this opportunity to join Matawa First Nations Management.

## Awashishewiigihiwaywiin (Social Services Framework)

### Family Support Worker, Carlee Kwandibens



Aniin Boozhoo, I am Carlee Kwandibens. I am an Anishinaabe-kwe from Waabidowngang (Whitesand). I am a graduate of the Native Child and Family Services program at Confederation College and am pursuing a degree in Indigenous Learning at Lakehead University. I am grateful

for the opportunity to join the Awashishe Wiigihiwaywiin program as a Family Support worker and look forward to meeting everyone.

## Safe Sobering Site

### Addictions Crisis Worker, Joseph Meeseetawageesic



Booshoo. My name is Joseph Meeseetawageesic from Eabametoong. I am the Safe Sobering Site Addictions Crisis Worker. I joined the Safe Sobering Site team in September 2020. I moved to the city of Thunder Bay back in 2015 to pursue an education and employment. I

am currently studying to be an Addictions Counselor at Oshki Wenjack. Being employed at the MECC is wonderful. I am really grateful for the opportunity to join such an amazing team of people. Thank you.

## CONSIDERING YOUR EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND WANT TO KNOW SOME OCCUPATIONS WE HIRE?



- Human Resources
- Mapping
- Geology
- Engineering
- Accounting
- Psychology
- Nursing
- Physician
- Information technology
- Website development
- Graphic design



## Living with Us... Lichen (Wah'kon)



*Photo Source: Four Rivers Group*



*Photo Source: Xavier Sagutch, Eabametoong First Nation*

The forest is such a diverse place, filled with plants, animals, fungi (mushrooms) and some very important organisms called lichen. An interesting and mutual relationship between algae (or cyanobacteria) and a variety of different fungi create this plant-like form that can be found worldwide. The algae part of the lichen photosynthesizes, meaning that it collects energy from the sun, fuelling the fungi part which creates the structure of the lichen. There are three main body types of lichen: foliose (looks like flat leaves), fruticose (looks like tiny leafless branches or beard hair!) and crustose (looks like a thin layer of crust or peeling paint).

**Did You Know...** There are around 15,000 species of lichen found worldwide in all shapes, sizes and colours! Canada is home to 2,500 lichen species, including the fruticose lichen seen blanketing the ground in woodlands often called caribou or reindeer moss. These lichens are a major food source for woodland caribou, especially in the cold winter months when fresh leaves and grasses are scarce. Caribou are specially adapted to consume these lichen, which are a slow-forming organism and are highly vulnerable to human disturbance, putting declining caribou populations further at risk.



[fourrivers.group](http://fourrivers.group)



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