



"Living with Us"... page 20



# MATAWA MESSENGER

The Power of Unity, The Dignity of Difference

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## Patrick Patabon Family of Long Lake #58 First Nation Carry on Cultural Practice of 'Paying it Forward' During Pandemic



Patrick Patabon (after he shaved his COVID hair" as a fundraiser)

Patrick Patabon, 58, a Councillor and NNADAP Worker from Long Lake #58 First Nation has not let the global pandemic stop him and his family in organizing fundraising events for members of his community in need. The tradition of organizing fundraisers goes back 17 years starting with the first New Year's Eve Fireworks Show, that, today, gets enjoyed each year by members of the municipality of Greenstone.

Doing this as a family, with his wife Valerie, his daughter Dakota and more recently his 6 year-old granddaughter Elizabeth, Patabon says it is their way of giving back when they were helped in the past including when their 5 year-old grandson needed cancer treatment in southern Ontario in 2005. Neighbouring communities, and members of Greenstone helped out at that time.

This journey together has allowed them to organize about 30 fundraising events so far and they do them on their own time

time and at their own expense. They've purchased iPods, bikes, laptops, gaming systems, camping gear as some examples. Some of the things they've fundraised for included:

- Helping out families needing groceries at the end of the month when financial resources are depleted
- Helping out a young person needing help with the costs of orthodontics
- Helping families with funeral costs
- Helping families who want to practice traditional activities by providing them with gas, minnows, snacks

A more recent event included a 'shave my COVID-hair' event which took place on April 22, 2021. At that time, Patrick and his family, were able to fundraise over \$790 in donations for a young family who's child was in the Children's Hospital in London, Ontario. Understanding the challenges of needing to be in southern Ontario himself and the impact it has on families financially, emotionally and spiritually, Patrick's family came up with the idea of cutting his unusually long hair (due to the lockdown and closure of services due to the COVID-19 pandemic). His youngest granddaughter had the honour of shaving his hair live on Facebook. The Patabon family was overwhelmed with donations that came in across the country, and anonymously. They were happy to support this family in need who despite being supported with government assistance during their child's treatment, the Patrick Patabon family felt that added support in the way Indigenous People have been doing it as a way of 'paying it forward' would also help.

Patrick was also a guest speaker at the Matawa Co-op's 'Reclaiming and Strengthening Our Health Care' Health Forum which took place from February 4 - 6, 2020. He provided his personal perspective on western vs. traditional medicine.



### IN THIS ISSUE:

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Biimadeswin- VQRP+ Program, Mental Wellness Team  
RP&J - PPE, Continuing Our Conversation  
Four Rivers - Environmental Monitoring,  
MDISO Journal

Welcome New Staff and more....





## **YEAR-ROUND INCOME TAX FILING ASSISTANCE (TAX YEAR 2020)**

As you may be aware, some good things about filing an income tax return are:

- To apply for the GST and the Canada Child Benefit
- To be eligible for government programs, benefits, and services
- To establish your contribution room for a Tax-Free Savings Account
- To get a refund of excess tax, CPP or EI withheld from your income
- To receive federal or provincial “refundable” credits
- To establish Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) contribution room
- To establish and/or carry forward tuition, education and textbook amounts
- To automatically renew the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) - for seniors who are receiving it

Matawa, in partnership with the Canada Revenue Agency, Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, began (in May 2021) offering tax filing assistance year-round to individuals and families who meet the following criteria:

- Matawa community members (verified via status card)
- Individuals and/or families with a modest working income
- Have a simple tax situation
- Have benefits, such as Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, disability insurance, employment insurance, and social assistance as the main or only source of income
- Are a Youth or Student

If you meet any of these criteria and require assistance to have your income tax return prepared and filed, then this service is for you.

Please ensure you obtain the following so that you can have an income tax return prepared and filed:

- You have paper or electronic copies of your 2020 tax information slips, i.e., T4, T4A, T2202, etc.

For further details and to set-up an initial interview and appointment please e-mail Lloyd Wabigwan, CPA, CMA, at [lwabigwan@matawa.on.ca](mailto:lwabigwan@matawa.on.ca) or call 807-344-4575 to leave a message with your name and contact information.



POWERED BY THE MINDS AT CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

### STOP NOW and PLAN:

A short video to help explain how the SNAP program works: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXnCY6wOJug>

### What is SNAP?

- The stop now and plan program is an evidence-based, award winning prevention model program developed in Canada by the Child Development Institute
- SNAP helps children, youth and their families learn self-control and problem-solving skills along with strategies to manage their emotions
- SNAP students learn to calm down and reflect before reacting and to seek out positive solutions to their problems related to antisocial and disruptive behaviours

### Matawa SNAP for Schools:

- SNAP for schools is designed for elementary school aged children (6-11) and uses a whole school approach to keep children in school and out of trouble
- Participants are children who teachers identify as struggling in the school environment and who display behaviours that interfere with learning
- As part of the whole school approach, school personnel are trained and then work alongside the classroom teachers to provide 12 weekly 40-minute SNAP sessions
- The school based sessions use interactive techniques to teach and practice impulse control, anger management and decision-making skills

- SNAP also provides mental health pathways for children with mental health concerns. Children will be referred to local and appropriate supportive services, such as Community Social and Health Services, Tikinagan Child and Family Preventative Services, Nodin Child and Family Counselling Services

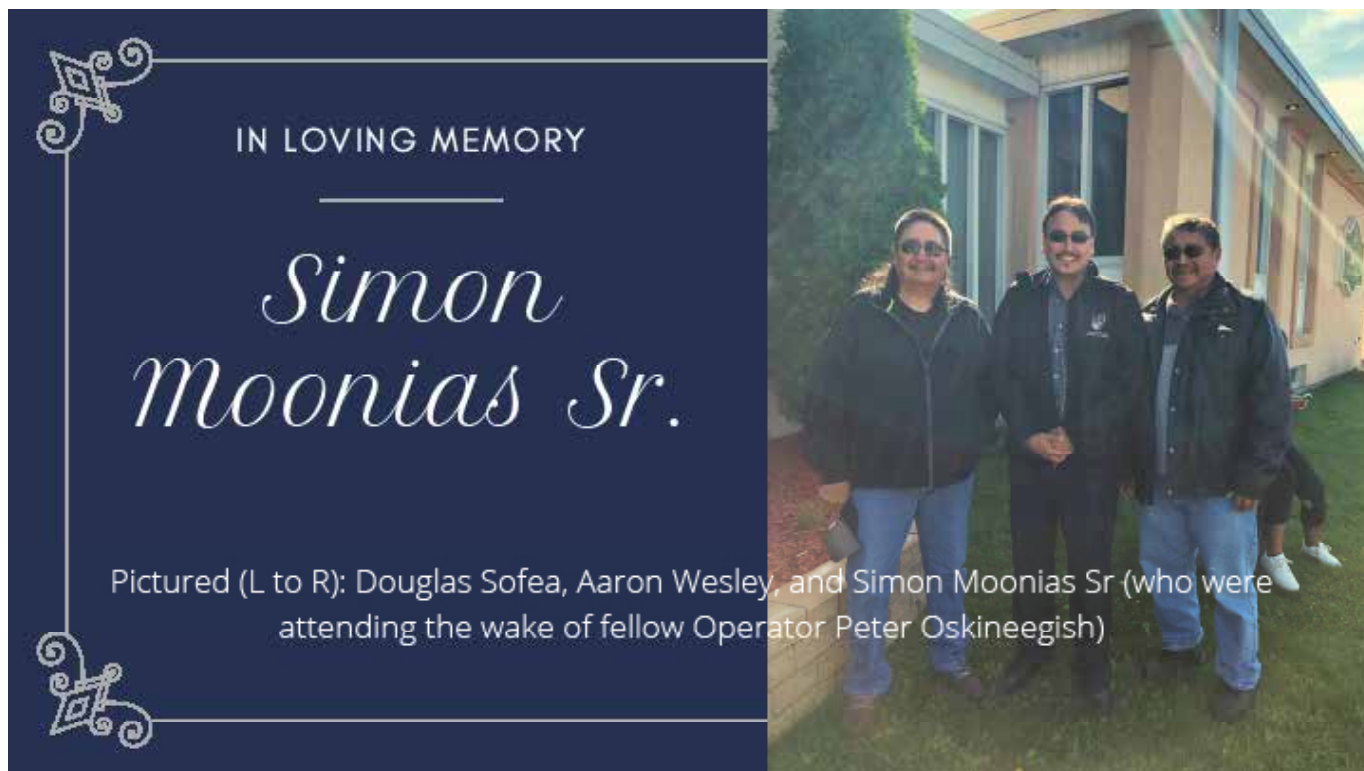
### Matawa SNAP Schools for 2021/2022:

- Webequie First Nation - Simon Jacob Memorial Education Centre
- Eabametoong First Nation - John C Yesno Education Centre

If you have any questions regarding our SNAP programs, please contact:







Matawa First Nations Management is saddened by the recent passing of Simon Moonias Sr. Simon was the long time Water and Wastewater Operator for Eabametoong First Nation. Simon had a wealth of knowledge in operations and maintenance of water and wastewater systems. He was best known for his diligent record keeping and ensuring his maintenance activities were achieved throughout the year. He was also a mentor to other younger operators in Eabametoong and always stressed the importance of professionalism within the job. Simon was also respected by his peers. He was known to the other Operators from other communities because of his participation in Operator Training. Matawa Technical Services, as well as his fellow Water and Wastewater Operators, are going to miss Simon. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Eabametoong and to his friends and family.



## Matawa Mental Wellness Team

### TRADITIONAL HEALING SERVICES FOR ALL MATAWA COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Mental Wellness Team & Crisis Support Services provide a rapid-response to Matawa First Nations communities, families or individuals when they experience crisis. The services include grief/trauma counselling, cultural support and care coordination. The MWT&CS Program's approach is to provide service with a balance of clinical and traditional cultural practices.

**The MWT&CS Program offers remote Traditional Specialist services.**

For more information  
Contact | 807-738-0983



Know the signs, save a life  
be overdose aware!



## **FREE HARM REDUCTION SUPPLIES AVAILABLE**

- NALOXONE KITS**
- SAFER STEROID USE KITS**
- SAFER SNORTING KITS**
- SAFER SMOKING KITS**
- SHARPS CONTAINERS**

**807-632-0639**

Supplies distributed by Matawa Safe Sobering Site  
200 Lillie Street N, Thunder Bay ON



**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  
106.7 FM in Timmins

**Upcoming Shows:**

June 8 and 22  
July 6 and 20  
September 14 and 28  
October 12 and 26  
November 9 and 23



The 19th Annual First Nations Housing Conference (FNHC) has completed another instalment in its ongoing effort to bring knowledge and networking opportunities to delegates involved in First Nations Housing.

This year, the conference had a different look to it as it was held virtually due to the pandemic on April 13-15, 2021. Even though it was virtual, the event still had over 200 people in attendance during the 3-day event. There were 15 Matawa First Nation members in attendance. Formerly known as the Northern Housing Conference, this was the fifth year that delegates from across the nation were invited to share in this event. The Conference attracted First Nation housing professionals from Quebec, Manitoba, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and all over Ontario.

The theme for the conference, which included a trade show and the 14th Annual Builders Challenge, was "Building Healthy Homes." This year, there were three streams for workshops: technical, administrative and leadership. Some of the workshops for this year's event included:

Knowing your HRV & How to Maintain it, Housing Policy, Housing Databases, Maintaining your Home, Introduction to Cellulose, Planning for Fire Safety, Housing and Environmental Public Health, Home Heating and Health Living through Energy Efficiency, just to name a few.

Over 20 exhibitors also participated in a one-day Tradeshow that featured consultants, housing suppliers and contractors from throughout Ontario and Manitoba.

During the tradeshow on Wednesday, the Builders Challenge took place. This year's Builders Challenge focused on Decks. Again, it was a little different this year being a virtual event. A pre-recorded video of the work that was done by the crew for each section and our special guest Jon Eakes and Andrew Culham of the conference working group followed up by providing comments and important information. The four sections included; Groundwork (footings, post and beams), Deck/Ramp framing, Decking and Ramp Surface, and Stairs & Railing.

This year we included Pow Wow Aerobics by Dallas Arcand and a Comedy Show by Deric Starlight to break things up in between sessions on Tuesday and Thursday.

This annual event was organized by working group members from 11 Tribal Council from Ontario. The main focus of the conference is to address issues and challenges in First Nations Housing. At the same time, it is important for delegates to network with others and bring useful information back home to share. We hope to get back to an in-person conference for the 2022 event!

Further information is available online at the conference's website. [www.firstnationshousingconference.com](http://www.firstnationshousingconference.com)

For further information contact:

Saverio Rizzo  
Housing Inspector / Coordinator  
Matawa First Nations Management  
\* FNHC Working Group Member



# Matawa Education & Rotary Club Bursary

DEADLINE DATE FOR ALL APPLICANTS: Oct 1 – 4:30 p.m.

## Criteria

- This Bursary fund is for Matawa First Nations Community Members attending Elementary, Secondary, Post-secondary, Adult Education, Training, Apprenticeship, or Trades Programs.
- Applicants are to complete the application form and attached required documentation.
- The goal of these awards is to promote excellence in literacy, language, leadership, personal achievements and applicants who demonstrate determination, commitment with education and career goals.

The Bowmanville Rotary Club and Matawa Education Department have been partners for over twelve years. This long-standing partnership that was built in 2008 and has since supported the promotion of literacy, language and the overall success of students in all of the Matawa communities from Kindergarten to Post Secondary, including Adult Education.

Each year our students' achievements are celebrated during an award ceremony in Thunder Bay. The last couple years have proven to be challenging due to the World-wide pandemic that has left us all in a place of uncertainty. However, this is not going to deter us from continuing to support our students and recognize their achievements, even during these difficult times, THE SHOW MUST GO ON! This year, our students will be honoured via a virtual award ceremony (date to be announced in the near future).

Our new application deadline for the 2021 bursary award submissions is Friday October 1, 2021. Any submissions that were entered for the 2020 year will also be considered in this years' contest.

In addition, we will be adding a new category in each grouping of grades that honours Languages Heroes from the Matawa communities. This years' award title is "The 2021 Suzan Sandau Language Award", and our plan is to continue to recognize a new Language Hero from our communities with each passing year.

As well, we will be drawing the names of two participating schools whose students make submissions for the bursary. The winning will be awarded with a schools-wide lunch feast

on a day of their choosing. This years' applications will be sent to school administrators and band offices on Tuesday May 25th so be on the lookout! The application will also be available on social media, please see the Matawa Facebook page after May 25th.

As always, we are looking forward to all of your submission. Miigwetch and stay safe,

Georgette O'Nabigon & Kelly Soulias

For more information or to obtain an application package, please contact:

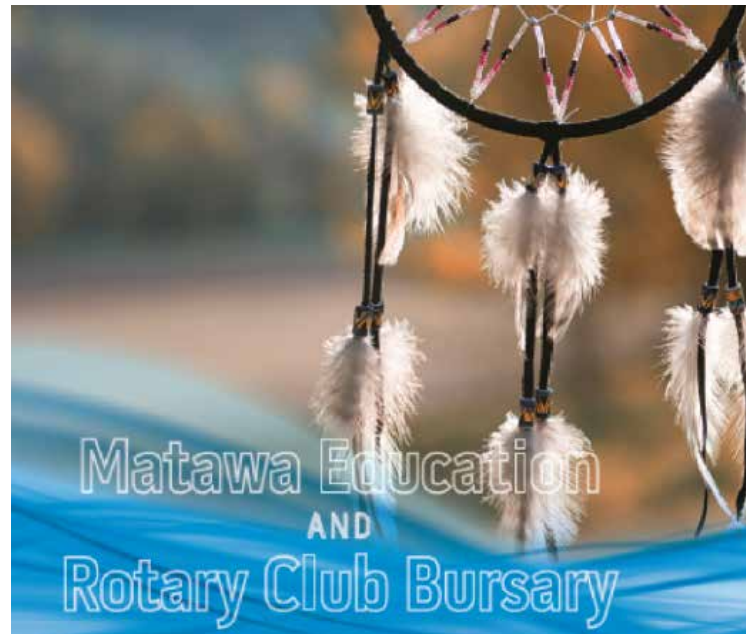
Matawa Education Dept.

Tel: 807.768.3300

Toll-Free: 1.888.283.9747 | Fax: 1.807.768.3301

Georgette O'Nabigon email: gonabigon@matawa.on.ca |

Kelly Soulias email: ksoulias@matawa.on.ca



## Four Rivers - Community Environmental Monitoring

While you haven't seen us in your community lately due to current public health measures, Four Rivers has been working virtually with leadership and lands and resources staff to access the Matawa homelands to continue environmental monitoring efforts. Check out what we have been up to and how you can get involved!

### WATER QUALITY, FISH AND FISH HABITAT

#### What We've Been Doing

This past spring, we spent some time on the ice in the homelands of Constance Lake and Ginoogaming First Nations. The water sure was cold! Here is what we did:

- Surface water sampling
- Measurements of lake ice quality
- Water quality profiles

#### New and Expanded Opportunities

Funding: Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Indigenous Habitat Participation Program (IHPP)

Who is involved: Matawa First Nations Management, Constance Lake First Nation, Eabametoong First Nation, Ginoogaming First Nation, Long Lake #58 First Nation, and Webequie First Nation. Our support falls includes:

1. Regional programming
  - o Regional training provided to all Matawa member communities
    - Canadian Aquatic Biomonitoring Network (CABIN) certification for monitoring water bugs
    - Monitoring training in fish biology, sampling methods, other field techniques
  - o Webinars
2. Community specific programming (funding provided to CLFN, EFN, GFN, LL58, WFN)
  - o Part-time positions
  - o Community engagement and local knowledge collection
  - o Community participation in Fish and Fish Habitat Surveys

#### How to Get Involved

If you're interested in learning more about fish and their habitat, please reach out to your Lands and Resources department on how you can get involved with either the entire project, or simply to participate in the Fish and Fish Habitat Survey. You can also reach out to Erin Desjardins, Stewardship Intern at Four Rivers at edesjardins@fourrivers.group or 807-629-9797 to learn more about the projects!

### BIRDS AND BATS

#### What We've Been Doing

This past fall and spring, we spent some time in the homelands of Aroland and Ginoogaming First Nations. We also trained two community members in Eabametoong First Nation. Here is what we did:

- Driving transects for bat species at risk monitoring in Ginoogaming First Nation
- Song meter deployment in Aroland First Nation to monitor presence of birds, bats and frogs
- Trained two community members in Eabametoong First Nation to deploy ARUs in their homelands

There are a lot of cool species out there! More deployments and driving transects will happen based on community interest and priorities.



### Why are we doing this?

Some species have a more sensitive habitat than others, while some are at risk or endangered. By knowing which species are in the area, communities can help to protect these critters and their homes. This data can then be used to help the Matawa member First Nations with management decisions and empowers the communities to make land use planning decisions.

### Funding and Partnerships

- Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)
- Species at Risk Stewardship Program (SARSP; MOECP)
- Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) - partner

### How to Get Involved

If you're interested in wildlife monitoring and would like to learn more about how you can help, please reach out to Graeme with Four Rivers for more information. He can be reached by email at [gsaukko-sved@fourrivers.group](mailto:gsaukko-sved@fourrivers.group) or by phone at 807-632-9325.

### **We Miss You!**

There are a lot of fun, interesting and exciting things happening in your communities! We miss you all and wish we could work side-by-side with you, however, there are still opportunities for you to get involved, learn a new skill, and receive training from us virtually. We look forward to working with you!





Four Rivers has introduced a new monthly 'Mineral Development Information Support Officer Journal', straight from the pen of Peter Moses! This journal aims to provide some insights into the current state of mining in Northern Ontario, in an effort to spread awareness and build knowledge in the mining sector.

To join our mailing list or to request past journals, please contact [lprior@fourrivers.group](mailto:lprior@fourrivers.group)

## Mineral Development Information Support Officer

# Journal



**fourrivers.group**



**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**



# Matawa Safe Sobering Site Harm Reduction Program

The Matawa Safe Sobering Site is pleased to announce that it has now become an official site for Harm Reduction Supplies Distribution through the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU). In becoming a Harm Reduction Supplies distributor, we give our people the access to safe supplies and safe disposal. This work is extremely important for our community as it instills a sense of self-love by caring for how they use, ensuring their supplies are clean, and disposing of used equipment safely. We offer various safe use kits, naloxone kits and sharps container bins. By providing this service, we are creating a healthier life for those who use as well as families who have a loved one who uses.

## Opioid Overdose Risks

Opioids are drugs that are usually used to treat pain, but some people use opioids to get high. Some commonly used opioids include: oxycodone (oxy), fentanyl, methadone, morphine, Percocet's and heroin. Someone is at risk of an opioid overdose if they:

- are taking more than their prescribed dose of opioids
- are taking prescription opioids that were not prescribed to them; could be too strong
- are using any non-opioid street drug (e.g. cocaine) – there have been reports of fentanyl or carfentanyl being mixed into these drugs, either on purpose or by accident
- are using any opioid street drug (e.g. heroin or fentanyl) – someone cannot be sure of its strength, how tolerant they will be, or if it has unknowingly been mixed with fentanyl or carfentanyl
- are mixing your opioids with alcohol or anxiety medications (e.g. Valium, Xanax)
- have overdosed on opioids before
- have stopped using opioids for a while, which has lowered their tolerance

## Opioid Overdose Crisis and the COVID-19 Pandemic

The opioid overdose crisis has increased dramatically from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic with opioid related deaths still on the rise. In the six months following the implementation of the COVID-19 prevention measures (April to September 2020) there were 3,351 apparent opioid toxicity deaths, representing a 74% increase from the six months prior (October 2019 to March 2020 – 1,923 deaths).

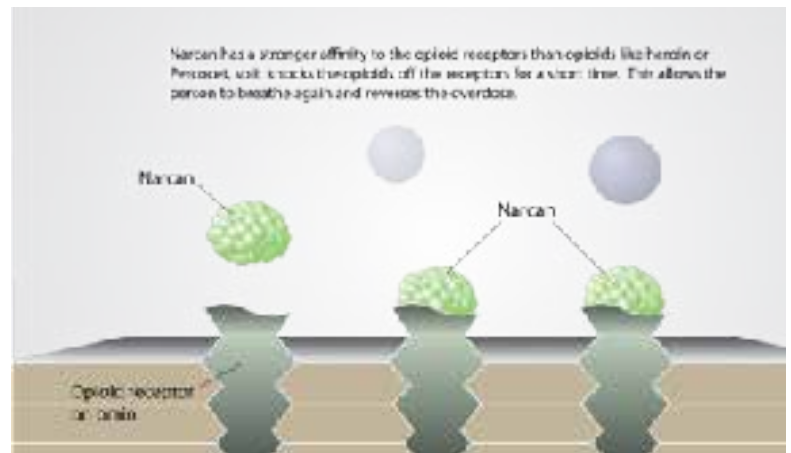
A number of factors have likely contributed to a worsening of the overdose crisis, including the increasingly toxic drug supply, increased feelings of isolation, stress and anxiety and limited availability or accessibility of services for people who use drugs.

If you or a loved one, family member or friend are using please remember to never use alone, start slow and always carry naloxone! Always call 9-1-1 in the event of a possible overdose!



## Naloxone Nasal Spray (Narcan)

Naloxone is used in opioid overdoses to counteract life-threatening depression of the central nervous system and respiratory system, allowing an overdose victim to breathe normally. Naloxone is a non-scheduled (i.e., non-addictive), prescription medication. Naloxone only works if a person has opioids in their system; the medication has no effect if opioids are absent.



## How to administer Naloxone Nasal Spray (Narcan)

### How to Give **Naloxone Nasal Spray**

If you suspect an opioid overdose:

- 1 CALL 911**
- 2 LAY PERSON ON BACK**  
Support neck and tilt head back
- 3 GIVE NALOXONE**  
PEEL the package open and hold the device. Do not press until ready to give naloxone.  
PLACE the tip in the nostril  
PRESS firmly  
  
Naloxone is for the nose. It works, even if the person is not breathing.
- 4 PUT PERSON IN RECOVERY POSITION**  
Hand supports head  
Knee stops body from rolling onto stomach
- 5 MONITOR**  
Give a second dose in 5 minutes if they don't wake up or aren't breathing properly.  
Use a new spray every time.

**Ask your pharmacist for naloxone**

For more information visit: [www.pharmacists.ca/naloxone](http://www.pharmacists.ca/naloxone)

Remember to check the product's expiry date regularly

CANADIAN PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION / ASSOCIATION DES PHARMACIENS DU CANADA



## Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act

The Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act applies to anyone seeking emergency support during an overdose, including the person experiencing an overdose. The Act protects the person who seeks help, whether they stay or leave from the overdose scene before help arrives. The Act also protects anyone else who is at the scene when help arrives.

# Continuing Our Conversation

## Our Journey Continues to Evolve

Our 9 communities came together to declare our unity with the signing and blessing of the Mamo-Weecheehetiwin (Unity Declaration) in 2011. The Unity Declaration is a blessed and sacred document that symbolizes our strength in unity and dignity of difference. The Unity Declaration needs an everlasting home and it is our responsibility to create one for our future generations.

In 2018, a new way of working was introduced to our communities through the Matawa Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction department with support from Watershed Partners' team members. Working together as the 9 Matawa Member First Nations, we have been on a unique journey of community-led collaborative design to revisit and uplift the Unity Declaration. Members across our communities have participated in gatherings, meetings and community visits to talk about how we can make decisions together to strengthen our communities in order to provide a better future for our future generations.



Standing Together Gathering



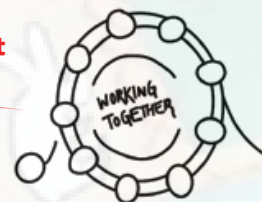
Standing Together Gathering



Mamow Gathering

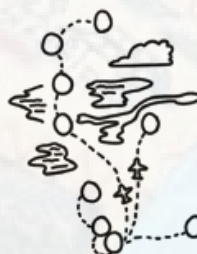
### Opening Event

August 2018



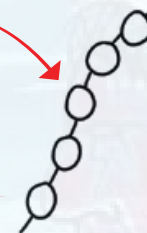
### Community Visits

September - October 2018



### Leadership Alignment

October 2018 - April 2019



### Standing Together Gathering

May 3-5, 2019



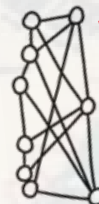
### Phase 2 Opening

August 23-24, 2019



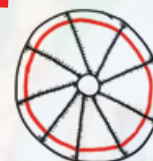
### Mamow Community Coordinators Training and Check-ins

September - November 2019



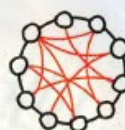
### Mamow Gathering

January 2020



### Revisiting Knowledge Gathered

February 2020 - Present





## Our Focus for 2021

Acknowledging the importance of building strong foundations for Matawa communities and the Tribal Council to guide decisions, we are focusing our efforts to work upstream and build capacity for regional decision making.

For 2021, we'll be working across three major community-directed priorities, including a special focus on supporting our youth.



**Ensure voices and interests of communities are guiding decisions to advance the region towards self-determination**



**Empower Matawa Youth, who will continue to lead Matawa towards the realization of the Unity Declaration**



**Support the Tribal Council to continue to adapt to meet emerging needs of communities**

## Engaging our Youth

Throughout the year, we will be inviting our youth to share their voice and get involved in shaping the future of their communities.

## Our Inspiration

**Gathering Youth Stories (ages 30 and under)**

What inspires you?  
Who inspires you?  
How do you inspire others?

Share your stories and ideas by drawing a picture, writing, taking a photo or recording your voice.

To learn more, reach out to Rosanna Peever by phone at **1-800-463-2249** (ask for extension **3661**) or by email at **[rpeever@matawa.on.ca](mailto:rpeever@matawa.on.ca)**.

More details to be announced!



**\$5,000 in prizes to be won**

The **Matawa Waka Tere – Indigenous Language Revitalization Project** started the *Diploma Year 2 Indigenous Language Curriculum* in March for Ojibwe and Ojicree, with Cree developments currently on hold. After running a successful *Certificate Year 1 Ojibwe Pilot* class from October 2019 to July 2020 despite COVID-19 and funding challenges, the language Specialists for Ojibwe and Ojicree continue with redevelopments of Year 1 student resources that will be completed by September 2021. The Year 1 redevelopments ensure that the Student Language Practicum Workbook activities and Instructor class room weekly lessons are more succinct for successful student engagement while continuing their learning at home. Meanwhile, the language specialists look forward to engaging with community ‘language champions’ or ‘knowledge keepers’ in June and or July about developing content for the Diploma Year 2 Indigenous language Curriculum.

**Ojibwe-ayemijigewin - Prayer in Ojibwe**

*By Nancy Ritch - Indigenous Language Specialist (Ojibwe)*

**Gishe-manito**

*Dear Lord*

**Natamawishinam owe ga-wii-oshitooyang oshki-kikinoomagewin**

*Help us create this new learning curriculum*

**Niizhin Biboon Kikinoomagewi-mazina'igan**

*Year 2 Learning curriculum*

**Chi-mashkawi-bimaadiziyang, chi-mashkawendamang**

*To have strength, to have strong minds*

**Natamawishinaam koyak chi-tootamang gii-anokiiyang**

*Help us, do right while working*

**Naagachiishinam chi-minoseg gakina kaawitotamang**

*Watch over us, to achieve everything we aim to do*

**Wiichiishinaam chi-minobimaadiziyang andaso giizhigak**

*Help us, with good health everyday*

**Chi-gashkitoyang owe ga-wii-kikinomaageyang Anishinaabemowin**

*To achieve the teachings of the language*

**Agaa-chi-wanitooyang ni-dizhigiiziwewininan, ga-be'ii chi-noondakog omaa Akiing**

*So, we will not lose our language, to be able to hear it on this Earth*

**Miigwech Gishe-manito**

*Thank you, Lord*

Acknowledging ‘**Language Champions**’ amongst us

I learned my language from my community, I heard it at community gatherings out in the bush.

I learned my language from my grandmother, I heard it on our Sunday visits.

I learned my language from my family, I heard it through conversation.

I learned my language from my first teachers, I heard it in my home, every day.

My parents are my first teachers. Miigwech.

*By Tracy Spence - Indigenous Language Specialist (Ojicree)*



Photo of Webequie First Nations Community taken by Leon Shewaybick

## More PPE is on its Way!



Item	Quantity (Units)
KN95 masks	100,000
Isolation gowns (with latex)	10,000
Nitrile gloves – M	5,000
Nitrile gloves – L	10,000
Nitrile gloves – XL	5,000
Face shields	5,000
Disinfectant wipes	1,686
Disinfectant solution	1,000
Disinfectant spray	314



The Regional Priorities & Jurisdiction department would like to send a big shout out to Claudine Santos (again!) with VIO Volunteers for helping arrange another huge shipment of PPE for the Matawa communities.

Over 21 pallets of KN95 masks, gowns, gloves, shields and disinfectant arrived the middle of May for the Matawa Health Coop to distribute throughout Matawa where its needed most.

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## VQRP+ Program Overview

The Victims and Vulnerable Persons Division (VVPD) of the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) funds the Victim Quick Response Program+ (VQRP+ or the Program) to support direct victims, their immediate family members, and witnesses in the immediate aftermath of violent crimes by providing short-term financial support with essential expenses in order to lessen the impact of the crime, enhance safety, and meet immediate practical needs arising from the commission of the crime.

VQRP+ is a program of last resort. Financial support is available to help cover the cost of:

- Safety expenses;
- Practical assistance expenses;
- Travel and associated expenses;
- Crime scene clean-up;
- Counselling services, traditional Indigenous health services and associated transportation expenses; and
- Supports for victims with serious injuries and for families of homicide victims.

(Victim Quick Response Program) is a program that is funded under the Ministry of Attorney General. Matawa First Nations is our regions access to this program.

Each First Nation within Matawa has their Victim Services worker, these individuals are the link to the individual at Matawa First Nations who has the means of completing the applications online for quick access to financial support providing they meet the criteria. This also includes those living in the City of Thunder Bay.

For more information, contact Leanne Whitehead at Matawa HSMB at: [lwhitehead@matawa.on.ca](mailto:lwhitehead@matawa.on.ca) or 807-631-1161 cell



# Matawa First Nations Management Welcomes New Staff

## Health Co-operative

### Nurse Practitioner Clinic Lead, Charlie Ross



My first post-secondary education was a Bachelors of Science of Nursing at Lakehead University. I graduated from this with First Class Standing. Later in my health care career, I completed a Masters of Public Health with a Nursing Specialization (and Clinical Leadership and Nurse Practitioner course electives). In 2015, I became

licensed as a Nurse Practitioner and began working at Waasegiizhig Nanaandawe'iyewigamig Health Access Centre. I continued to work there until December 2019, when I moved back to my hometown, Thunder Bay, to be closer to family. Prior to coming to Matawa Health Cooperative, I was working at Norwest Community Health Centre. I also lecture at Lakehead University in the School of Nursing. I have a variety of experience in primary health care in rural and remote areas. Type II diabetes and hypertension are common chronic health issues that were managed in my practice in Kenora but have seen clients for a variety of diverse health issues. I am also a Certified Diabetes Educator, which has been a valuable skill to providing quality health care for the clients I have worked with. I enjoy staying active and being in the outdoors. I like fishing, boating, hiking, and snow machining, to name a few of my past times. I love the beauty that Northwestern Ontario has to offer, and prior to COVID19, I also loved to travel Canada and the world. I look forward to meeting you virtually and once cases of COVID19 drop in our area, I hope I will get to meet you in person as well.

## Health Co-operative

### Community Health Nurse, Noreen Moskotaywenene



Booshoo, my name is Noreen Moskotaywenene and I am a Registered Nurse. I am originally from Bearskin Lake FN. I will be doing Community Health Nursing with the health co-op. I enjoy doing what I do and love working with fellow Indigenous people. I enjoy meeting new people in the places and communities that I've worked with and building on those relationships. I am a mother to 2 sons and a Gookum to a 3 year old little girl! I love the outdoors and especially enjoy fishing and camping.

## Health Co-operative

### Physician, Dr. Jonathan Koo



I am very excited to be joining Matawa Health Co-operative. My medical career has consisted of working in long term care, psychiatry, sports' medicine and various family practice locums. I come to Matawa after working for Anishnawbe Mushkiki for the past 3 years, where I

had an arrangement to provide care to Matawa patients living in Thunder Bay. My educational background includes undergraduate studies at the University of Southern California (Los Angeles, CA), medical school at the University of Calgary (where I was also born), and family medicine residency at the University of a British Columbia. My wife is from Thunder Bay and we have lived here since 2011. I enjoy playing sports, staying active, and spending time with my wife and two children. I look forward to working with my new Matawa family. Don't be afraid to come say hi if you see me around!

## Technical Services

### Manager, Aaron Wesley



My name is Aaron Wesley, I am a member of Constance Lake First Nation, I grew up primarily in Thunder Bay since 1983. I have an Engineering Diploma from Confederation College. I have been employed with Matawa First Nations Technical Services since 2003. It has always been my

goal to work for First Nations people since high school. I have 3 children, Aaron Jr 24, Cayla 17 and Canaan 13. My free time mainly consists of attending hockey practices, games, tournaments etc. I also enjoy fishing, moose hunting, and being outdoors. I understand the importance of upgrading our infrastructure and the role Matawa plays in achieving this, because of this I look forward to working closely with our First Nations in my new capacity.

## Health Co-operative

### Public Health Nurse, Tammy Dube



Hello, I am a Registered Nurse from Longlac. I just recently started as a Public Health Nurse for Matawa Health Co-operative with Ginoogaming First Nations. I enjoy working in the indigenous communities. When I'm not working I enjoy spending time with family and friends and

outdoors fishing and hunting. I am very excited that I was given this opportunity to continue to work with Ginoogaming First Nations and looking forward to grow here at Matawa Health Co-op.

## Health Co-operative

### Physician, Dr. Jacinta Oyella



I am a new graduate of Northern Ontario School of Medicine Remote First Nations Family Medicine Stream. I joined Matawa Health Co-operative on April 19th 2021.

A little bit about myself, I immigrated to Canada (Kamloops, BC) from Uganda in East Africa where I completed my Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (MBChB) degree and Master of Medicine, Internal Medicine (MMed) from Makerere University Uganda. In addition, I completed an AIDS International Training & Research Program Fellowship as part of Makerere University-Case Western Reserve University Ohio USA collaboration. Further, I practiced independently providing comprehensive primary health care to various communities and hospitals in Uganda. Before coming to Northern Ontario three years ago, I had significant involvement with First Nations communities in Kamloops, BC where I worked under an educational license with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia as a clinical trainee alongside physician mentors.

In terms of residency practice experience, I trained in comprehensive family practice (clinic plus emergency medicine, ICU, in-patient, women's health, addiction medicine to mention a few) in distributed rural, remote, and urban clinical settings at Dryden, Sioux Lookout, Thunder Bay and fly-in/remote First Nations communities of Eabametoong, Summer Beaver and Big Trout Lake.

Further, I was fortunate to participate in the Operation Remote Immunity with Ornge/NOSM team at Wapekeka, Mishkeegogamang and Eabametoong. These experiences have taught me the importance of collaboration, building relationship, respect, humility to mention a few in providing high quality comprehensive patient-centred primary health care.

Regarding family, I have 3 children who enjoy kayaking, skiing, basketball and soccer. We have enjoyed the abundance of nature of Northern Ontario and the communities. My new found and safest winter activity is snow shoeing. Also, I am an amateur gardener who always get bumper tomatoes harvest.

Thank for the opportunity and I am looking forward to working with the team.

## Health & Social Meno Biimadeswin

### NIHB Navigator, Elizabeth Wapoose



My name is Elizabeth Wapoose and I am from Eabametoong First Nation. I am the NIHB Client Navigator for Matawa First Nations. I started on December 7, 2020 and am presently on a one - year contract. I am fluent in Ojibway and English. I have much personal experience with my own family members navigating through the NIHB system and also have learned much in the last few months. I can be reached at 807 631 – 5829 or via email at ewapoose@matawa.on.ca - because not all issues arise work hours, I am available for emergencies on weekends and/or evenings. Meegwetch!

## Health & Social Meno Biimadeswin

### Social Emergency Co-ordinator, Hilary Fox



Boozhoo, my name is Hilary Fox and I am from Mishkeegogamang First Nation. I was recently hired for the Social Emergency Co-ordinator position for Matawa. I am excited to learn as much as I can in regards to First Nations and their social emergencies in respect to the 5 pillars – prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. My goal is to work together with each community to develop the social side of emergency management for incidents in Matawa FNM. I come from a background of law and security and political science. I have mainly worked for the MNR Provincial Logistics in Thunder Bay and the MNR fire program in Pickle Lake for the past 14 years. My education was received in Pelican Falls, D.F.C, Sault College and Lakehead University. For the past 5 years I have resided in Thunder Bay. I have spent most of time off reserve due to education and job opportunities but I have always planned to bring that knowledge back to where I come from. When I am not working I am spending time with my family, cooking, reading, gardening, walks and native arts (such as beading, dream catchers, painting, moccasins). I look forward to being apart of such a great team and to gain trust from our communities. Meegwetch.

## Living with Us... Phragmites



*Close up comparison of native (left) and invasive (right) phragmites (Photo source: Four Rivers)*

*Four Rivers Group Comparison of native phragmites (left) and invasive phragmites (right) found in Constance Lake First Nation (Photo source: Four Rivers)*

Phragmites, also known as the common reed, is an aquatic grass that can be found along the shores of Canada's freshwater lakes. These wetland ecosystems are a significant part of the environment as they provide great habitat to a large variety of insects, plants, and wildlife. There are two different but closely related varieties of this grass, and it is important to note the differences. The native variety of phragmites (*Phragmites americanus*) stands are no taller than two meters (2 m), have a small flowering top with reddish-brown, flexible stems that are shiny in texture. The leaves are yellow-green and fall off in the fall time. Invasive phragmites can reach up to five meters tall (5 m), and have a larger flowering top with a tan, rigid stem that is rough and dull. The leaves are blueish green and remain on the stem through the winter.

**Did You Know...** Invasive phragmites have been found within the Matawa member First Nation homelands along the highways connecting our road-access communities. Recently (winter 2021) it was confirmed by Four Rivers to be present growing on the shoreline of Constance Lake. Non-native phragmites is a very aggressive invasive species that can dramatically alter the sensitive wetland environment. This variety is believed to have originally come from Eurasia, and was sold as an ornamental plant. Invasive phragmites is identified as one Canada's worst invasive plant species because it can out-compete other plants and vegetation in the area where it becomes established. If you think you have found stand of invasive phragmites species, Four Rivers would like to help track the extent of this species in the homelands. Please contact Graeme Saukko-Sved, Environmental/Geomatics Technician at Four Rivers: [gsaukko-sved@fourrivers.group](mailto:gsaukko-sved@fourrivers.group)



**fourrivers.group**



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

