

WABUN

Volume Sixteen Issue Two

Sun



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REFLECTIONS



**Jason
Batisse**
Executive
Director

Twenty years or so ago not many of us knew much about negotiating agreements with resource developers in mining, forestry or hydro electric projects. Today our Wabun Tribal Council Chiefs, their councils, Elders, executive and staff are known right across Canada and even internationally for our success in setting up and negotiating good agreements.

None of this was easy and involved years of research, education and everyone involved had to embark on a vast learning curve. Of course, Shawn Batisse our former director had a lot to do with laying the groundwork for developing the frame work and logistics involved in so many agreements over the past couple of decades. I am so proud to have served with all of our Wabun Chiefs over the years who had to learn a lot about working with government ministries, organizations, legal representatives, financial consultants, facilitators and corporations to negotiate and sign Exploration Agreements (EA) and Impact Benefit Agreements (IBA). We have negotiated and signed some of the very best agreements in the country for our Wabun members and the proof is in the pudding. Our Wabun First Nations have experienced unparalleled growth and success. Over the years we have developed businesses opportunities as a result of our negotiated agreements, our Wabun members have been training for employment and so many of our people have been hired on and have well paying and stable jobs.

As a result of our work in this area and the connections, network-

ing and good faith developed between our Wabun First Nations and many of the country's leading resource development companies, we are enjoying a new level of recognition, trust and accommodation. Just recently and for the first time ever, we signed an IBA with Kirkland Lake Gold related to their Taylor, Macassa and Holloway Mines which have been in operation for years. This well thought out and detailed IBA involving Matachewan First Nation and Wahgoshig First Nation was produced in record time and signed at Canada's premiere mining venue during the Prospectors and Developers Association Conference (PDAC) in March 2017.

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This success story has to do with trust, familiarity and the benefit of our First Nations having a history now in terms of negotiating good and fair agreements. When I met Anthony Makuch, the new CEO of Kirkland Lake Gold in an airport last year we got to chatting and I reminded him that none of our First Nations had yet benefited from any agreements regarding long established mines. He suggested that he would look into an Impact Benefit Agreement between KL Gold in Kirkland Lake and nearby Matachewan FN as well as Wahgoshig FN.

This was an historic decision and one that could only have been made by someone with a proven track record in negotiating with First Nations. This was a moment in time that demonstrated formally the goodwill, trust and confidence First Nations and a resource developer

could evolve to. Kudos to Tony Makuch and KL Gold for taking the initiative and making history to some extent in recognizing local First Nations and reaching out to them to accommodate for years of lost potential. There is no going back and we are all going to reap the rewards of being good to each other, sharing and doing it all while remembering our commitment to the environment.

I give thanks to all the good people who sat on the IBA committee with me including: Chief Alex Batisse Matachewan FN, Kayla Schram, Matachewan FN, Stephanie LaBelle, Mineral Development Advisor, Wabun Tribal Council; Chief Bear Babin, Wahgoshig FN; Ken Peterson, Consultant for Wahgoshig FN; Brian Gelinas, Wahgoshig FN and of course for Kirkland Lake Gold Anthony (Tony) Makuch President / CEO and Alasdair Federico, Executive Vice President.

Anyone in our Wabun communities who wants to work, be trained for work or develop business opportunities has that opportunity. I see our people gainfully employed and our communities developing all kinds of housing, infrastructure and better quality of life resulting in comfort for our Elders and hope for our youth. We are doing all this in a province which has one of the most demanding environmental and conservation demands when it comes to resource development initiatives. We, as natural stewards of the land, are involved at all levels in making sure that development takes place with environment and conservation concerns addressed.

I believe we are entering a golden age and a new dawn in terms of making life better for our people in working with resource development on our lands. We have learned and continue to discover new and better ways to participate in sound and balanced developments. We won't satisfy 100 percent of the people all of the time but we will do our best make good things happen for us all in the best way possible.

HEALTH MATTERS

In this issue you see stories about our Elders and our youth. Here at Wabun Health we have always been very aware that our Elders are the backbone of our First Nations with the knowledge of our language, traditions and culture while our youth are our hope for the future. We have been running special projects and gatherings for our Elders and youth for many years now and this has resulted in healthier, more progressive and stronger communities.

This spring, an Elder symposium, 'Youth Of Yesterday', was held in Sudbury. This major event drew Elders from our Wabun family of First Nations and featured all kinds of beneficial information in workshops, entertainment and social interaction. I was very impressed with all of the good work produced by the symposium committee and I want to give my thanks to Jennifer Constant who spearheaded the idea for the event. As well thanks to committee members: Eileen Boissoneau, Juanita Luke, Tina Minarik, Julie McKay and Faye Naveau. I am so proud of our Wabun First Nations staff and volunteers for producing such a worthwhile and important event for our Elders and we look forward to the next one.

I have been so fortunate over the years to have always been in touch with our Wabun Elders and so many others that I have met on journey here as the Wabun Health Director. Elders have provided me with guidance, teachings and traditional as well as cultural knowledge. I am grateful to all of them for helping me grow and I make an effort to pass on their knowledge in the work that I do here for Wabun.

There are some common themes I hear repeatedly from the Elders I

sit with. One important lesson is not to take on worry in something I am dealing with or working on in my life. In time all things work out in one way or another as long as you put the energy into it and there is goodness at the root of it. Worry only gets in the way and it is negative. The Elders remind us that we know instinctively what is right and wrong and that when we are working towards something for our people and communities and we feel it is right then we must give as much of our energy and skills to make things happen.

My favourite times have to do with when I sit quietly with our Elders on the land

Happily I can relate so many teachings to individual Elders I have met from the east coast of Canada to the West. Many Elders who have provided me with guidance over the years have passed yet I feel like they are still around when I remember the knowledge they passed on. I try to make sure their message is repeated and continues to resonate with our people. My mom Vina and my aunts and uncles, neighbours and friends who are Elders from my home First Nation in Matachewan have been helpful along my journey and I thank them for that. Even in a time where I am surrounded by computers, smart phones, deadlines, meetings and such a fast paced life my favourite times have to do with when I sit quietly with our Elders

**Jean
Lemieux**
Health
Director



on the land, around a fire or in their homes. They help me make sense of it all and take the worry and stress out of dealing with all the demands of a modern life. They remind me to not get lost in the details but focus on the big picture and to try to be non judgmental. Also I am reminded of how important our original language is as this is critical to our identity as Aboriginal people.

Our Elders have a huge effect on our well being. I try to remind our Wabun members that the successful and very beneficial Wabun Youth Gathering came out of the dream of Elder Thomas Saunders of Brunswick House First Nation. Just before his passing he urged me to move ahead with the creation of an annual gathering for our youth. We are now getting ready for our 11th Annual Wabun Youth gathering and that came about because of the guidance of one of our most esteemed Elders.

Our Wabun Chiefs and council as well as our Wabun executive has always recognized the guidance and teachings of our Elders and I am so grateful for that. I am very thankful for all the good work Faye Naveau is doing with our Elders and our Wabun youth. We are currently on a path to close the gap between our Elders and youth in programming and ideas that bring our oldest and youngest members together. Perhaps some day soon we will have a gathering devoted to bringing the generations together so that the teachings of wisdom, knowledge in regards to tradition, language and culture can be passed in a moment paused in time. We are heading in that direction.

Front Cover

The front cover features Glen Taylor and Joyce Wright of Brunswick House First Nation during the Youth of Yesterday Elders Symposium which was held in Sudbury April 26 & 27, 2017

*photo courtesy of: Stan Wesley
find on Facebook at 'Stan Wesley National Speaker'*

KL Gold Signs Historic IBA With Matachewan FN And Wahgoshig FN

Wabun Tribal Council was at the forefront in an historic Impact and Benefits Agreement (IBA) signing involving Matachewan First Nation, Wahgoshig First Nation and Kirkland Lake Gold at the Prospectors Developers Association Conference (PDAC) in Toronto, March 7, 2017.



AN HISTORIC SIGNING TOOK PLACE AT THE PROSPECTORS DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE (PDAC) THIS PAST MARCH IN TORONTO WITH THE SIGNING OF AN IMPACT AND BENEFITS AGREEMENT (IBA) BETWEEN KIRKLAND LAKE GOLD AND THE FIRST NATIONS OF MATACHEWAN AND WAHGOSHIG. FROM L-R: ANTHONY (TONY) MAKUCH, CEO, KL GOLD; CHIEF ALEX (SONNY) BATISSE, MATACHEWAN FN; BRIAN GELINAS, WAHGOSHIG FN AND ALASDAIR FEDERICO, EXECUTIVE VP, KL GOLD.

photo by Kayla Schram, Matachewan FN

History was made because it marks the first time First Nations in Northern Ontario have negotiated and signed an IBA with a mining corporation involving existing mines. Normally, IBAs involve new potential mines that are in development and most of the time the IBA comes as a result of an earlier negotiated and signed Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) or Exploration Agreement (EA) between First Nations and the mining corporation moving ahead with exploration and development.

"This major agreement all has to do with the vision, goodwill, trust and past history of everyone involved on the IBA negotiating committee. It is the type of agreement we have been trying to achieve for years," said Jason Batise, Executive Director for Wabun Tribal Council.

The IBA negotiating committee included: Chief Alex (Sonny) Batisse of Matachewan FN, Chief Joel 'Bear' Babin of Wahgoshig FN, Anthony (Tony) Makuch, CEO of Kirkland Lake Gold, Alasdair Federico, Executive Vice President of Corporate

Affairs and Social Responsibility, Kirkland Lake Gold; Jason Batise, Wabun Tribal Council; Stephanie LaBelle, Wabun Tribal Council; Kayla Schram, Matachewan FN; Brian Gelinas, Wahgoshig FN and Ken Peterson, Consulting for Wahgoshig FN.

"This major IBA was one of the most efficient and quickest we have ever put together however that has to do with years of many of the key players working together and negotiating agreements. Tony Makuch has been one of the most progressive and dedicated mining executives we have negotiated with over the years and when he moved last year from Lakeshore Gold to become CEO of Kirkland Lake Gold, I congratulated him when we crossed paths in an airport. I brought up the idea that perhaps there was an opportunity for KL Gold to consider doing an IBA with local First Nations in regards to the company's already existing mines. I followed up with a letter and due to our previous agreements Tony and KL Gold decided to enter into this historic agreement," explained

Jason Batise.

The IBA featured a healthy signing bonus, employment, training components and business opportunities. Ongoing financial disbursement on a fiscal basis will be based on the production at the mines. The IBA covers the life of the mines and also has a component to deal with other exploration that happens in the future. Environmental and conservation concerns are also covered.

"I am very happy to see this hugely important IBA signed with KL Gold. This agreement means millions of dollars for our people and on the basis of respect and inclusion through mining operations that have been in place for many years. We are thankful for the dedication and hard work of everyone involved in making this happen and in particular to Jason Batise who has been the lead on many IBAs we have signed over the years," commented Chief Alex Batisse.

He pointed out that Matachewan First Nation has benefited by negotiating with resource developers over the years and that has helped the community grow and prosper with people returning to live and work in the area.

From KL Gold's perspective Federico believes that the IBA is a very positive way forward for all parties concerned.

"This has been a very satisfying and beneficial experience for ourselves and the First Nations involved in negotiating this agreement. Specifically this agreement is related to the Macassa Mine which has been in production since 1933, the smaller Taylor Mine and of course the long operating Holloway Mine. The benefits to the First Nations are substantial and we are very hopeful for the future," explained Federico.

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is an emerging standard in the dialogue on Indigenous Peoples rights and to some degree is becoming part of customary international

law. However, it is not enshrined in Canadian legislation in any way at the moment although Duty To Consult exists based on a 2005 Supreme Court ruling that says the Government of Canada has a duty to consult and where appropriate, accommodate Aboriginal groups when it considers conduct that might adversely impact potential or established Aboriginal or treaty rights. With that as a backdrop resource developers are not obligated to sign agreements with First Nations for development projects on Aboriginal lands although doing so makes it much easier to move ahead with all types of initiatives considering the supreme court ruling. In recent years Wabun Tribal Council has led the way in reaching out to resource developers, bringing them to the table and negotiating agreements. All parties have been reaping the benefits of working together.

"I can tell you that we certainly can not please everyone with our resulting agreements we have negotiated and signed on to over the years. At times I have had to deal with our own people disagreeing with our negotiations but that has not happened often and it has only been voiced by a small minority of our Wabun members. The fact is that we always consult with and take guidance from our Wabun FN Chiefs, Elders and community members. Environmental, conservation, traditional and cultural considerations are always part of any negotiations. Moreover, our environmental and conservation oversight by the Ontario government is one of the most stringent in the country if not the world," explained Jason Batise.

He explained that it takes years for mines, forestry initiatives and hydro projects to actually become a reality as so many environmental and conservation demands must be met.

"I am just very happy to have arrived at a point in time where governments, resource development interests and our own First Nation leadership, executives and Elders are all involved in making good agreements that lead to worthwhile initiatives that allow us all to benefit. Wabun members including my family and friends are all finding work if they want it and many of them are now making a good living. Our youth are being trained and advancing to college and university with things getting better in their home communities and opportunities opening up," said Jason Batise.

Faye Naveau Working Hard For Wabun FNs



Faye Naveau,
Regional Crisis
Coordinator &
Crisis
Intervention
Worker

Faye Naveau Regional Crisis Coordinator for Wabun Tribal Council, has been working towards developing events, workshops and information sessions all geared towards improving the health and wellness of Wabun First Nation members.

"Faye is such a great asset to Wabun Health and her energy, dedication and enthusiasm is providing us with a host of initiatives that are assisting our Elders, youth, parents and our First Nations in general," commented Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director.

Naveau's work takes her on the road to Wabun First Nations on a regular basis and she is often providing workshops in communities throughout northeastern Ontario.

"I like to think of myself as a motivator because I am living proof that a person can go through tough times and come out the other side strong, healthy, enthused about life and enjoying every day. I believe we need more advocates that can help our people by finding out what they need, how to help and learn how to identify and utilize the many resources available to them in this area. We at Wabun Health are here to open doors for our youth, Elders and community members so that everyone has the opportunity to become the best they can be and walk down a healing path," explained Naveau.

Recently, she assisted with the 'Youth Of Yesterday' Elder Symposium held in Sudbury on April 26 and 27. As part of an organizing committee and representing Wabun as the major funder of the event, Naveau also provided a workshop on Elder Abuse, titled 'It's Not Right'. She is also in regular contact with Wabun Elders for guidance to assist them with their

needs. To inquire about an Elder Abuse workshop and information session feel free to contact Naveau.

She is also very involved with assisting and motivating youth in the Wabun First Nations and is the coordinator and main organizer for the annual Wabun Youth Gathering.

She also provides a Baby Sitting Course for Wabun youth and is available to do so on request by the community. This important course covers child caring skills, how to deal with emergencies, basic first aid and building confidence and knowledge in teen baby sitters.

To assist with community well being Naveau also conducts Mens and Womens Wellness Workshops. These workshops involve information and support in terms of covering issues such as anger management, abuse and addictions to name a few.

As a certified First Aid Instructor, Naveau conducts a course/workshop on basic first aid including Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillator. This course is becoming popular and will be made available to Wabun First Nations on an ongoing basis.

As a traditional singer and performer Naveau has also participated in women's singing groups and had taught drumming songs to Wabun women singers and drummers, such as the Mattagami Kwe Singers. She is available to teach on request.

To provide for Wabun team training Naveau arranged for a workshop titled 'Moving Forward' by Dennis Fitzpatrick and Sherri-Lyn Hill Pierce, of Native Wind Consulting, which had to do with relapse prevention. Another workshop for the Wabun Health Care Team featured education on family violence, which was hosted by Kanawayhitowin, an Aboriginal initiative to raise awareness on abuse. To keep current and gain knowledge Naveau also attends information sessions and workshops throughout the year as well as important forums related to mental health and addictions. She also regularly attends and takes part in a variety of traditional arts and crafts programs with Aboriginal organizations.

Winter Wisdom Wabun Youth



WABUN YOUTH LEARNED SURVIVAL SKILLS AT A WINTER GATHERING

The Wabun Youth Gathering held a Winter Wisdom Retreat at a wilderness setting at J & L Retreat on Minisnakwa Lake near Gogama. The gathering which featured senior youth from Wabun Tribal Council First Nations was run from February 20 to 24 in the middle of a rare freezing rain storm which tested all participants.

The retreat started with facilitator Byron Edgar, a Traditional Teacher from Ottawa, who instructed the youth on the building of a sweat lodge and teachings involving participation in this ancient cultural practice. During the week Zoe Barrett and Mike VanEgmond of Shared Value Solutions Ltd. of Guelph, Ontario, conducted multi

media teachings and theatre based creative role playing for the youth.

Ron Kanutski, a Social Worker and Cultural Teacher from Lake Helen First Nation conducted a survival program. This involved the construction of a traditional lean-to, building of a signal fire and instruction on how to survive in the cold and snow on the land in an emergency. Workshops on addictions and bullying were also conducted over the week long event. A poem writing contest was staged by Xavier Kataquapit.

"I enjoyed being here and participating in learning new things and I was so excited to find out that I won the poetry contest. I have been writing poems for

some time now and just keeping them to myself so to be honoured for my poetry made me feel very good," explained Koral Saile, Mattagami FN.

Chief Walter Naveau of Mattagami First Nation and his wife Cathy participated in the event which was held near their community.

"It warms my heart to see our youth benefit from traditional teachings here out on the land in a safe and positive environment. I have watched our young people grow over the years and I know that many of the good things happening in their lives has to do with our people returning to our traditional and cultural teachings. I thank our youth, our organizers, facilitators, Elders and chaperones for all the good work they do," commented Chief Naveau.

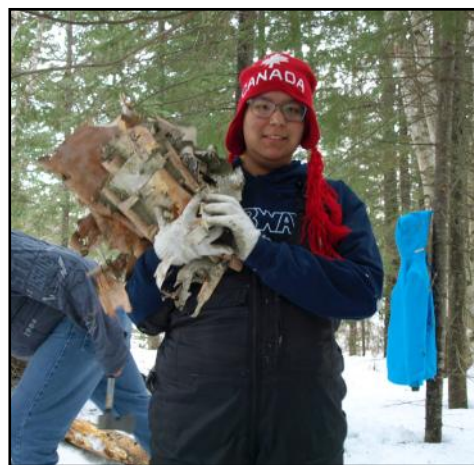
Senior youth participants took part in many workshops and survival teaching sessions and also had the opportunity to work with facilitators one on one for personal issues.

Elders, who led the group in prayers and participated during the week of teachings included Nancy Neshawabin of Brunswick House FN, near Chapleau and Leonard Naveau of Mattagami FN.

"It is good to see our young people being helped to learn about their original traditions and culture. Many of us as Elders recall a hard life growing up on the land years ago and I myself remember at the young age of 12 helping my family out in our logging business. I helped to peel logs that we cut and hauled out of the bush by horse. It is good to be able to share our knowledge



MAX WORME BUILDING A FIRE AT THE WINTER WISDOM GATHERING



TAMIKA NAVEAU COLLECTING WOOD.



MICHAEL LAFRENIER AND ELDER LEONARD NAVEAU.

Gathering Held In Wilderness

with our young people,” explained Elder Neshawabin.

Elder Naveau, has been assisting Wabun youth for many years with traditional and cultural teachings as he is a well regarded gatherer, hunter, trapper and fisherman from his community. He has also been a key figure in instructing and teaching young First Nation people on the operation of heavy equipment and various types of machinery and tools. In addition he is part of the Naveau family of musicians and still plays guitar and sings.

“I like to do what I can for our youth. I see things getting better for them and many are getting good jobs in the mining and forestry areas so they can provide for themselves and their families. It is good to be here this week to see our youth having fun and learning at the same time,” said Elder Naveau, who is also a past Chief and Council member of Mattagami First Nation.

Faye Naveau, Regional Crisis Coordinator for Wabun Health Services, organized the event with the support and direction of the Wabun Chiefs and Wabun Tribal Executive.

“I want to give my thanks to our Wabun Chiefs and Council members, Jason Batise, Wabun Executive Director and Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director for their continued and steadfast support of our Wabun Youth Gathering. I see our youth moving ahead every year with these gatherings and I know one day in the near future they will be our leaders and managers. It is very satisfying to be part of this process of traditional teachings and healing,” commented Faye Naveau.

Chaperones for the event included: Myra McKay, Darlene Naveau, Tracy Naveau, Kelly Naveau and Sandra Sandrin.

“I congratulate everyone who participated in this winter senior youth gathering and I also want to remind everyone that our youth gatherings were born out of a dream and vision of Elder Thomas Saunders of Brunswick House First Nation. Although he has long passed on, his vision is still alive and full of hope for our future generations of youth with these gatherings,” said Health Director Lemieux.



WINNER OF A POETRY WRITING CONTEST IS KORAL SAILE, MATTAGAMI FN. FROM L-R IS XAVIER KATAQUAPIT, WABUN SUN EDITOR; SAILE AND FAYE NAVEAU, REGIONAL CRISIS COORDINATOR, WABUN HEALTH SERVICES.



WABUN YOUTH LEARNING NEW SKILLS IN THE WILDERNESS FROM L-R ARE: TAMIKA NAVEAU, AALIYAH NAVEAU AND KAILYN MCKAY.



FROM L-R ARE: AUSTIN NAVEAU, MICHAEL LAFRENIER, RON KANUTSKI, FACILITATOR AT WINTER WISDOM GATHERING.

**For more information visit:
www.wabunyouthgathering.com**

Youth Of Yesterday Celebrates Elders

Mattagami First Nation hosted a two day Elders Symposium titled 'Youth of Yesterday' for Wabun First Nation Elders. The event was held in Sudbury on April 26 and 27, 2017 to celebrate and honour Wabun First Nation Elders in an event that also informed and entertained those in attendance.

"Every Elder in our Wabun communities deserves our respect and attention. They are part of a generation that endured many difficulties in our First Nations so now it is important that we give them an opportunity to celebrate and be happy at this point in their lives. These gatherings are an opportunity for them to socialize with new friends and meet up with people they have not had a chance to see in a long time. I noticed that often I would see them laughing together and of course good humour is such an important medicine for our people," said Jennifer Constant, Mattagami First Nation Councillor.

Youth of Yesterday is actually the name of a non-profit initiative founded by Constant. The initiative aims to provide events, programs, services and support to give Elders more opportunities to socialize through informative events, gatherings and meetings. This symposium was originally spearheaded by Constant and Cheryl Naveau, Borden Gold First Nations Coordinator for Wabun Tribal Council and a member of Mattagami First Nation. The event was then developed by a committee which included: Constant, Naveau, Juanita Luke, Executive Director, Mattagami FN; Eileen Boissoneau, Health Director, Mattagami FN; Tina Minarik, Mattagami FN; Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director; Julie McKay, Program Manager, Wabun Health and Faye Naveau, Regional Crisis

*photos by Stan Wesley
on Facebook at 'Stan Wesley National Speaker'*



BEAVERHOUSE FN MEMBERS FROM L-R ARE: ABRAHAM THIVIERGE, CHIEF MARCIA BROWN-MARTEL, TOM WABIE, DARQUISE MCKENZIE, BURT MCKENZIE, FREDA WABIE AND EMMALINE MACPHERSON.

Coordinator & Crisis Intervention Worker, Wabun Health.

The two day gathering included opening and closing prayers by local Elder Hilda Nadjiwon of Atikameksheng FN and traditional drumming by the Black Bull Moose Singers. Special presentations were made by Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director; Mattagami FN Councillor Jennifer Constant, Jason Batisse, Executive Director, Wabun Tribal Council and Brock Pitawanikwat, Assistant Professor with the Department of Indigenous Studies at the University of Sudbury.

Wabun First Nation Chiefs who attended the Symposium were Chief Alex Batisse, Matachewan FN; Chief Murray Ray, Flying Post FN, Chief Kevin Tangie, Brunswick House FN and Chief Marcia Brown-Martel, Beaverhouse FN.

Youth of Yesterday was led by First Nation entertainer and personality, Stan

Wesley, Kaneekaneekahtahk (Master of Ceremonies) for the two day event.

"It is always a wonderful experience to have the opportunity to spend time with our Elders. All too often we think that being with them is a serious affair but at the end of the day, they like to have fun too and I find that our Elders still like to laugh and be silly sometimes. It was a great event and we all had fun," said Wesley.

In addition to leading the two day event, Wesley also provided event photography for the gathering.

"Stan was a great event leader for our Elders. His sense of humour really made our Elders feel comfortable and through his presentations, he was able to get people to have fun and join in plenty of laughter," said Constant.

Musical entertainment was also provided by Matt Naveau, a musician and entrepreneur from Mattagami FN.

Informative presentations and workshops were made by Ron Kanutski, RSW



BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN MEMBERS L-R ARE: LUCY TANGIE, GLADYS TANGIE, MARJORIE TANGIE, LORRAINE TANGIE AND CHRISTINE VENEDAM.



BRUNSWICK HOUSE FN SISTERS GAIL (LACROIX) CONDRATTO AND BEV NOEL.



MATACHEWAN FN MEMBERS (STANDING IN BACK L-R): ELAINE DALEY, SUSAN ALTON, RAYMOND LANDRY, MONIQUE LANDRY, JACK LEMIEUX, JEANNETTE GILBERT, GERTRUDE NOLAN, AIME BOUCHER, ELENORE FLOOD, SHAWNA ENAIR AND LORN FLOOD. SEATED IN FRONT L-R ARE: STAN FOX, VINA HENDRIX, LAURINA MCKAY AND MARIE BOUCHER.

and Cultural Teacher from Lake Helen FN; Shaen Gingrich, North East Specialized Geriatric Centre and Faye Naveau, Regional Crisis Coordinator, Wabun Health Services.

Elders were encouraged to express their feelings and concerns during the two day gathering. They were also consulted on input for direction for their First Nations and in particular the youth. A special presentation was held by Flying Post FN member, Randi Ray, Indigenous Community Outreach and Liaison Coordinator Indigenous Student Affairs, Laurentian University. The university also provided Elders with a guided tour of the campus grounds and facilities.

"Events such as this show our Elders how important they are to our communities. It gives them another opportunity to speak and to be heard. Many of the Eld-

ers I spoke to said that they were happy to participate and that it made them feel empowered and reassured because we had asked for their input. Events such as this are important because it gives us a direct connection to our Elders," said Faye Naveau.

Sponsors for the event included: Wabun Tribal Council, Major Drilling International Inc., Gold Corp - Borden Gold, Workforce North, Caron Equipment, Access Mining, Odonaterra Community Environmental Strategies, TransCanada, OK Tire, Dumas Contracting, McCabe Promotional Advertising, Tahoe Resources, Probe Metals Inc., Niiwin G.P. Inc., Gold Corp - Porcupine Gold Mines, Holiday Inn, Immeubles Dion, Debastos & Sons Ltd., IAMGOLD Corporation and Nishnawbe-Aski Police Services.



Randi Ray, a member of Flying Post FN, provided a special presentation on Laurentian University. She is pictured here with Flying Post FN Chief Murray Ray

For more information on the Youth of Yesterday Initiative contact Jennifer Constant - Mattagami First Nation



MATTAGAMI FN MEMBERS (STANDING IN BACK L-R): KATHY PERREAU, TINA MINARIK, EILEEN BOISSONEAU, LEONARD NAVEAU, AGNES NAVEAU, SANDRA LUKE, BERNICE NAVEAU, EDDIE COMMANDO (BACK), LILLIAN THERIAULT (FRONT), DAISY NAVEAU, DOUG THERIAULT, CLARA PRINCE, STEVEN NAVEAU, EVELYN BOISSONEAU, MITCHEL MCKAY, JENNIFER CONSTANT, PAULINE MCKAY, RICHARD GAGNON, WENDY DEBASTOS AND CHERYL NAVEAU. SEATED IN THE MIDDLE FROM L-R ARE: LAWRENCE NAVEAU, MARILYN GAUDREAU, NANCY NAVEAU, MABLE NAVEAU, GLORIA GROULX, VERONICA COMMANDO AND FRANK MCKAY. SEATED IN FRONT L-R ARE: FAYE NAVEAU, KRISTA MCKENZIE, MORRIS NAVEAU, HALINA NAVEAU, JULIE MCKAY AND CAROL GAGNON. MISSING FROM THE PHOTO IS MYRA MCKAY.

Mapping Platform Develops

Wabun Tribal Council is undertaking a project to develop a mapping platform, which will be used by Lands and Resources Departments and leadership in the member First Nations.

The platform will utilize multimedia and mapping technology to effectively document, store, and manage land use and occupancy information, as well as cultural, historic, and environmental values. In doing so, the geographic representation of community information is intended to strengthen the communities internally by supporting environmental governance, and externally by increasing influence over decision-making and resource negotiations.

The Mapping Project is being led by Stephanie LaBelle, Mineral Development Advisor for Wabun Tribal Council. Project Funding was secured from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM) in May 2017.

The three year project sets out to train two members from each First Nation, usually personnel in the Lands Departments, to lead and manage the project in their respective communities, as well as pass on their knowledge of the data collecting process to community members.



Stephanie LaBelle,
Mineral Development Advisor

“Mapping has become progressively crucial in the resource development sector. It’s important for First Nations to document internally land use and occupancy, identify sites of environmental, social and cultural significance, and how members exercise their traditional and treaty rights. This information strengthens resource-governance, as well as enables leadership to be better positioned to negotiate with the resource sector” said LaBelle.

One of the goals of the project was to create an easy to maintain database that would allow community members to input information themselves. After an initial planning and information gathering phase to determine project goals that would best suit the Lands and Resources Coordinators and the needs of their respective First Nations, project leaders worked with Jon Corbett, Professor and Nick Blackwell,

Programmer who are both from the University of British Columbia (UBC) and Jeff Hackett, Research Coordinator, Firelight Group to start development.

“Mapping technologies have advanced. Programs like Google Earth are easy to use, and have made the mapping process more accessible and practical. We know members exercise their traditional and treaty rights every day, and that if we focused on providing the Lands and Resources Coordinators the right skills, knowledge, and tools, they could spearhead community-driven mapping projects” said LaBelle.

Members will also be able to upload information themselves to the platform. The project will include the development of a downloadable cellphone “app”. Together with a secure account for members only, the app will allow individuals to document notes and images taken with their smartphones, which are uploaded to the map as soon as the phone is connected back to the internet.

“Pictures taken with phones are geo-coded and time-stamped. We figured people always have their phone on them, and are always taking pictures, so why not utilize this an opportunity to get community-members involved. For example, if someone goes fishing, and has an impressive catch, they normally take a picture to brag to their friends afterwards. This picture becomes proof of the exercise of treaty rights, as well as land-use and occupancy in the area where the fish was caught. We hope that the app encourages youth to get out on the land. We’re strategizing on games and contests to get members involved and excited” said LaBelle.

At this point, the project as a whole (mapping platform and app) are still being developed, with an anticipated launch-date in early 2018.

Project leaders also want to emphasize that the information gathered from this project will be owned and controlled by the member First Nations of Wabun. Previous mapping projects that had been developed involved third parties that, often, would collect land use information that was not given back to the communities, as well as

didn’t build capacity within the communities.

“This project is meant to provide the communities with a valuable information resource that can be kept and maintained by the First Nations. We want it to be a community-driven process where the Wabun’s member First Nations are involved in its development. This isn’t a “Wabun Project”, but the result of collaboration by a dynamic group of Lands and Resources Coordinators, as well as experts and allies from UBC and Firelight. Everyone is feeling invested in the project and we are all looking forward to building this valuable resource for the First Nations,” commented LaBelle.

In June, Wabun hosted a four day training session in Timmins for resource development staff from its First Nations to educate and inform them on the new Mapping Project. This training provided participants with skills on interviewing techniques, ethics on collecting information and how to conduct proper research.

The training sessions included LaBelle, Jeff Hackett, Research Coordinator, Firelight Group; Jon Corbett, Professor, University of British Columbia (UBC); Nick Blackwell, Programmer, UBC; James Naveau, Mattagami FN; Cathy Yandean, Matachewan FN; Kayla Schram, Matachewan FN; Tania Saunders, Brunswick House FN; Tawnya Robinson, Flying Post FN and Bradley Manila, Flying Post FN.

“In the past, this type of information gathering required highly trained individuals with specialized and expensive equipment. Now with the use of modern technology that just about everyone carries with them, we are able to create a simplified mapping project that utilizes local people and is based on the needs of the community. It is important that community members have more control over this process as there is no one else who knows more about the land than they do,” said LaBelle.

She explained that the Mapping Project will provide regular training sessions over the next three years to train new individuals and add to the knowledge and skills of previous participants. The next training session is set to take place in the fall of 2017.

Janet McKay Joins Wabun

Janet McKay, Wabun Employment and Training Services (WTES) Program Coordinator is the featured staff person for this issue of Wabun Sun. She started her position in March 2017. Her main duties are to assist First Nation clients in accessing and connecting to training and employment programs.



Janet McKay,
Wabun
Employment &
Training Services
Program
Coordinator

"I enjoy working directly with our community members. I help our clients take advantage of opportunities that will help them gain employment for the future," said McKay.

She also assists individuals to access educational and employment programs that help them find jobs. Depending on the size of a program or service that is offered, McKay helps clients through programs in the four categories of Community Initiatives, Individual Initiatives, Regional Initiatives and Youth Initiatives. WTES also provides assistance through smaller individual programs that help with gathering necessary equipment, clothing or accessories which are important to gain or maintain employment. There are also provisions that help clients with travel costs and expenses to move them ahead on career opportunities.

"Depending on the circumstances and situations, we can help our clients to complete their post secondary goals by working with their First Nation. Our assistance programs also include support for individuals to work towards an apprenticeship which not only includes traditional fields like carpenters and mechanics but also careers such as hair stylists or bakers," said McKay.

Her work includes travelling to Wabun First Nations to facilitate informative and educational service sessions that allow her to connect to community members. Part of her work deals running pre-employment and skills training programs for the communities.

"I am still new to everything and everyone at Wabun and our First Nations but I am doing my best to stay in touch with the people involved in em-

ployment and training in the communities. My role is to connect to people and especially our members, so one of my priorities now is to get to know our administrative people in the communities, as well as our clients to demonstrate to them what services and programs we can connect them to," said McKay.

She works under the direction of Darlene Lafontaine, Financial Advisor for Wabun Tribal Council. McKay also provides regular reporting to the Wabun Board of Director made up of the Chiefs of Wabun First Nations.

"Darlene is a great person to work for as she has years of experience in the training and employment sector in respect to First Nation organizations and she has a broad range of knowledge and skill in working with government agencies," said McKay.

She added that it is very rewarding to be able to work with and directly help in the development of First Nation communities.

"I really enjoy my new responsibilities and in being in contact with our First Nation members. It feels good to be able to take an active part in the positive growth of our communities by helping our members gain employment and further their career goals," she McKay.

Originally from Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, she is a member of the Garden River First Nation and is married to Darryl McKay of Mattagami First Nation. She and her husband have three sons Damian, 17; Darwyn, 16 and Brennan who is 13.

She started her post secondary education in the health care field and achieved certification as a Personal Support Worker (PSW) graduating with

honours from this program at Northern College in Timmins. McKay worked for a short time as a PSW but then put aside her career and education to raise her young family.

"I have always valued a good education and I taught our boys to do the same with their career and employment goals. This is why I decided a few years ago to get back into school and work towards an office administrative career. I had to step back from being a full time mom but my family came through with lots of support," said McKay.

Before coming to Wabun, she was a full time student at Northern College where she was working towards a Business Administration Human Resource Management Program. She is continuing her studies on a part time basis and will complete her three year program in two years.

Since making her home in Mattagami FN, McKay said she has grown closer to the land and a traditional lifestyle.

"When I first met Darryl, I was a city girl but over the past several years, I have grown to love being outdoors with my family and friends in Mattagami First Nation. I've gone fishing, hunting and trapping and I enjoy everything that goes along with those activities," said McKay.

She is an active member of Mattagami First Nation where she has volunteered her time for local activities and events. Her family is involved in numerous sports and in the winter season, she enjoys spending time with her sons who play in organized hockey leagues. In the warmer months, she is an avid baseball player and enjoys playing the sport with family and friends.

Wabun Elections

Three Wabun Tribal Council First Nations held elections in the spring of 2017. Elections held in Matachewan First Nation on March 24 returned Alex (Sonny) Batisse as Chief and councillors elected included: Barney Batisse (formerly a Chief), Jason Batisse, Adrian Boucher, Joseph Fox, Helen Jobson and Jean Lemieux.

Mattagami First Nation held an election April 12. Chad Boissoneau, a former Chief and Council member was elected Chief. Councillors elected in-

cluded: Jennifer Constant, Wendy Desbastos, Joseph Naveau, Larry Naveau and Leonard Naveau. Walter Naveau was thanked for his many years in service as Chief for the community and will continue to be a vibrant and dedicated force in Mattagami First Nation.

Flying Post First Nation ran their elections May 27, which saw the return of Chief Murray Ray as head of his community. Councillors elected included: Susan Baril, Robert McLeod, Lynn Ray and Richard Ray.

Wabun FNs Get New Housing

Wabun First Nations are growing with the development of major new housing projects in Brunswick House First Nation and Mattagami First Nation. In 2016, Brunswick House FN brought in eight new homes with three new duplexes being planned this year. Mattagami FN secured funding to build ten new homes with six of them completed so far this year.



Chief Kevin Tangie,
Brunswick
House First
Nation

“Building new homes and maintaining existing homes is an important goal for our community. We have been planning on these new projects for years and now those efforts are paying off,” said Chief Kevin Tangie, Brunswick House FN.

During the development of community infrastructure several years ago, Brunswick House FN administration had set aside several building lots in anticipation of potential housing construction for the future. This land area was put to use in the building of new homes for the community when eight new homes were built with the funding support of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

Chief Tangie explained that this development was made possible after the creation of a new Housing Authority for Brunswick House FN. The new Housing Authority was established to more efficiently manage housing issues in the community and create a local organization that could work with CMHC in developing more housing programs and projects.

Lisa Vanbuskirk was hired as a Housing Manager in the spring of 2017. She will oversee and manage the ongoing programs and projects concerning housing in the community. Wabun Tribal Council staff member, Cheryl Naveau, Borden Gold First Nations Coordinator in the Chapleau area has also worked with the community in a supportive role in these housing projects.

“I am grateful to our Council for taking the time to review these important developments and in wanting to move ahead with these initiatives for the positive growth of our community. Thanks also to our administrative staff as well as Wabun Tribal Council and Cheryl Naveau for making all this possible. Our community is also appreciative of the help that the CMHC has provided for our First Nation,” said Chief Tangie.

In addition to the construction of new homes in Brunswick House FN, renovations for ten housing units are set to take place. The community is anticipating more housing for the future and have set aside several more building lots for future projects.

In Mattagami FN, Tracy Harnack, Public Works & Housing Director explained that there has been a surge in projects and programs dedicated to housing for the community. She added that Gerald Luke, Public Works & Housing in Mattagami FN was also instrumental in creating and developing these projects.

To date, six new homes have been built with four more set for construction this year as well as building projects to renovate existing homes in the community. Harnack explained that additional housing projects are also in the works for future development.

Her office has been working closely with CMHC over the past year to establish new housing and also create programs and services to educate,

support and inform community members on housing related issues.

“There has been a great deal of work from many people in our administration office to make all this happen. We are grateful for the support and direction we have from our Chief and Council and we are also thankful for the patience and feedback we have received from the community. It feels good to see the progress we have made and we are hopeful that as we work together we can bring more positive growth for our community,” said Harnack.

In addition to the housing projects, Mattagami FN has also hired additional staff to deal with the growing workload of managing these initiatives. Kevin Perreault has been employed as Housing Maintenance Worker since 2015; Cheryl McKay and Candice Andress were recently hired in June as Housing Assistants and in July, Sydney Constant was brought on board as a Tenant Relations Officer.



Wabun Sun

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