



# Wabun Sun

Volume #2

Published by Wabun Tribal Council

Issue #4

## Wahgoshig Healing Lodge - A Community Effort

WAHGOSHIG FN, ONT. - The leadership and the people of Wahgoshig First Nation are looking forward to the completion of the new Kigewigwan Wahgoshig Healing Lodge. Construction of the new facility was started in the spring of 2000. The healing lodge consists of two log buildings that are situated on Lake Wahgoshig, nine kilometres outside the community and within the First Nation territory. The new healing lodge, which is named Kigewigwan means 'healing dwelling'.

Wahgoshig First Nation provided its own funds and also received financial assistance from Casino Rama, which is owned and operated by the Mnjikaning First Nation in southern Ontario, to build the new facility. In addition, Mamo - Wicchi - Hewin Employment & Training (MAMO) also assisted by funding a training program in log home construction for five First Nation members.

June Black, Project Coordinator for the Kigewigwan Wahgoshig Healing Lodge, explained that final interior work

still has to be completed as well as the development of a curriculum program to be used once the lodge is opened.

"Although the actual lodge facility has been constructed, it still needs some finishing work. We are also developing a program for the lodge once it is in use. The program we are developing will incorporate traditional healing practices and ceremonies. Even during this development stage myself and other people who are creating this program are utilizing traditional healers from inside and outside the community to help us develop a well rounded program for our people," said Black.

She explained that many people from the community helped make this project possible. First Nation Chief Paul McKenzie and his Council were very supportive of the lodge's development. The ongoing development of the lodge is also being assisted and guided by a healing committee which includes Lorena Singer-Chokomoolin, Betty Singer, Myrande Trembley, Christine Widifield and Liz Babin.

Black, who is a member



**KIGE WIGIWAM THE NEW WAHGOSHIG HEALING LODGE IN THE COMMUNITY OF WAHGOSHIG FIRST NATION. WABUN TRIBAL COUNCIL IS VERY PROUD OF ALL THE HARD WORK DONE BY THE COMMUNITY TO PRODUCE THE FACILITY.**

of Wahgoshig FN, is involved in almost every aspect of the development of the lodge. She started in the spring of 2000 and worked with Liz Babin, Band Manager for the First Nation to provide some recommendations for the construction of the new lodge. One of these recommendations was to construct two separate buildings. The first building being a main lodge for group sessions and healing circles and the second lodge to be used as a ten bed residential area

with a kitchen and dining room. The two lodges were built in an upright log style of construction.

"The lodge will be used for Aboriginal people from on and off the First Nation. The community is very happy to see our healing lodge near completion and everyone is looking forward to seeing it used to help our people," said Black.

Chris Sackaney, Assistant Economic Development Officer for Wahgoshig First Nation initiated

the request for MAMO's assistance in the training of community members in log home construction. He also provided ongoing monitoring and assistance for this training during the construction.

"There are several people from the community who have helped make the training portion of this project possible including Jacques Lapage, Finance Officer and Councillor Paul Chokomoolin. These people

Continued on Page 2

## Home And Community Care Program Launched By Wabun Health

Wabun Health Services is implementing a new program to provide assistance to elders and special needs patients in Wabun's six communities. The new program is called the Home and Community Care program.

One of the main issues that the new program will address is caring for elders who need special care by allowing them to live at home instead of away from the community. Jean Lemieux, Health Director for Wabun Health Services feels that this is a positive step towards caring for Wabun's elders in their communities.

"Elders who live in their own communities will have a better quality of life. This service is well overdue and will allow our elders to reside at home longer to be with their community. Caring for elders is very important and everyone is happy to see this program started to do this. The next step in continuing this trend is to provide actual long term care facilities in each of our First Nations,"

said Lemieux.

Discussions with the federal government and First Nations to develop this program began in 1997 to address the needs of Native communities. A joint working group developed out of these discussions under the Continuing Care Framework to recognize culturally appropriate continuing care services for First Nations. This initiative is now a federally funded program by Health Canada.

This new program is currently in a transition period and will not be in full operation until July or August. Required positions will soon be filled by community employees and training will be carried out to educate everyone involved on how this program will operate. However, the program has already started the implementation phase where hiring of some individuals for employment positions has taken place and some initial work started by Wabun's Community Health Nurses who are identifying and conducting

client assessments for potential elders and patients to receive assistance through this program.

The number of health care workers under this program in each of Wabun's six communities, will be determined by the population of the First Nation. Smaller communities of a population of under 500 people will have the program administered in the First Nation through the Wabun Tribal Council.

The goal of the program is to provide health services to elders and clients who require assistance at home. Case managements and client assessments will take place to determine the type of services that are necessary for a client. This case management and assessment will be carried out by health care workers such as Homecare nurses and Homecare Coordinators to identify elders who require assistance or home care and patients with special needs such as individuals recovering from major surgery. Once the assessment is done, the client's

needs are identified and addressed through the assistance of a Personal Support Worker (PSW) or a Homemaker. The PSW provides basic medical services such as changing bandages from surgeries and administering checkups. The Homemaker will work within the patient's home to assist with day to day chores, such as house cleaning and maintenance. The people who

will fill these two type of positions will also assist clients access other services if they need to.

The program will be administered by Community Health Representatives (CHRs), Community Health Nurses (CHNs), Home Care Coordinators and the Wabun Health Director, who will oversee the program.

## Welcome to Newly Elected Chiefs And Councils

Wabun Tribal Communities of Matachewan First Nation and Mattagami First Nation held elections recently. The new Chief of Matachewan FN is Chief Richard Winickaby and councillors are: Fabian Batise, Gertrude Nolan, Lorne Flood and Dorothy Larkman. The new Chief of Mattagami is Chief Chad Boissoneau and councillors are: Gary Naveau, Melvin Luke, Leonard Naveau and Willis McKay.

"Welcome to our new chiefs and to the new council members. Thanks to all former Chiefs and councillors for all of their good efforts in helping to make Wabun Tribal Council strong," said Shawn Batise, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council.

# Darlene Lafontaine Enjoying Challenges As Financial Advisor

TIMMINS, ONT. - Darlene Lafontaine has been enjoying the challenges in working as Financial Advisor for Wabun Tribal Council for the past few months. She made the move from her previous position as Coordinator of Mamonuskomitowin. That position is now held by Mike Miller.

"I am very happy to have Darlene on board with Wabun Tribal Council. She has brought a lot of expertise and skill to the very challenging position of Financial Advisor. I have worked with her in the past in other challenging areas and I have seen her develop over the years in many demanding positions," said Shawn Batise, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council.

Lafontaine started her new position January 8, 2001 and is responsible for providing financial advice and assistance with financial systems to Wabun Tribal Council's six First Nation communities. She is also assisted in her new duties by Paulette McKay, Bookkeeper.

"I am enjoying my new position and the challenges that it presents. I like being able to visit



the First Nation communities and work with the people in their financial departments," said Lafontaine.

She hopes to assist Wabun's communities develop more efficient financial systems to benefit the communities and the Tribal Council.

"My goal in this position is to provide advice and assistance to create or enhance effective financial systems for Wabun's communities. This will allow the First Nations to be able to provide quick and easy reports for funding agencies or give their leadership up to date and timely financial information to make management decisions. Basically, I want to help the communities to refine and

enhance their financial systems and work with their staffs to do this," said Lafontaine.

She has a personal goal of advancing her own knowledge in finances and hopes to attend part time post-secondary studies in this area in the near future.

Lafontaine held the position of Coordinator of Mamonuskomitowin from January 1999 to January 2001.

"I wish the two Local Delivery Mechanisms (LDMs) well and I have the utmost faith that they will continue to provide their services to the communities they serve. I am still playing a part in the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement process which Mamonuskomitowin is under and I am close by to provide assistance and advice to the new coordinator. I am happy to say that I was able to achieve my goals at Mamonuskomitowin, one of them being the completion of a Database Program to provide the two LDMs the ability to keep accurate records of their clients and expenditures," said Lafontaine.

# Wabun Chief Richard Winickaby

MATACHEWAN FN, ONT. - Chief Richard Winickaby is the featured Chief for this issue of Wabun Sun. Chief Winickaby was recently elected to lead his community along with a new Council during an election on March 24, 2001. He will now sit as a member of the board of Directors for Wabun Tribal Council.

"I am happy to congratulate Chief Winickaby on his recent election in Matachewan First Nation. I look forward to working with the new Chief and his council. I also want to thank past Chief Elenore Hendrix for all of her efforts on behalf of her community," said Shawn Batise, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council.

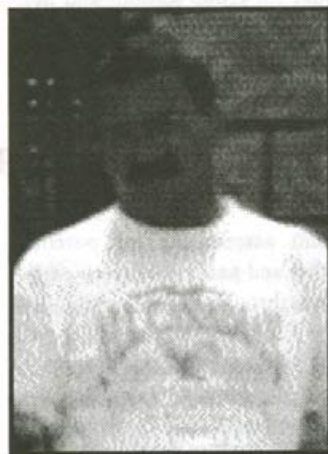
Chief Winickaby is currently in the second year of a three year Contact North Aboriginal Resource Technician program with Sault College in Sault Ste. Marie. Chief Winickaby is an experienced miner and has been employed in

many positions over 11 years with several underground mines in northern Ontario.

In the summer of 2000, he was involved in a tree planting and precommercial thinning program and for the duration of the summer he was employed as a foreman to train ten First Nation individuals in this forestry field. Chief Winickaby is hopeful that the tree planting/thinning program will continue this summer to provide employment for people in his community.

Newly elected Chief Winickaby and his Council look forward to the challenges of providing new opportunities for their community. Chief Winickaby explained that one of his goals for the community is to specifically work towards developing more and improved employment opportunities for the people of Matachewan First Nation.

"Since we are starting as a new leadership for this term we want to take this initial period to



get to know our surroundings and the policies we will need to follow. It will take some time before we can get started on what we want to achieve for our people. We also want to thank the past Chief Elenore Hendrix and her Council for the work they did for our community and we hope to do as well as they did for our people," said Chief Winickaby.

He is also happy to report that Matachewan First Nation is in the final stages of construction of a new First Nation administration office in the community. The new building will be open by mid summer this year.

Chief Winickaby is a First Nation Ojibway and a member of Matachewan First Nation.

# Reflections

by Shawn Batise, Executive Director



In this issue of Wabun Sun I would like to make some comments about the changes that the federal government is intending to make with the First Nations Governance Act. Basically, what we are seeing here is action by the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada on behalf of the federal government to tinker with the Indian Act.

Most of the First Nation leadership in Canada want the people to know that the legislation that is being put forth, which is entitled First Nations Governance Act, is misleading. The whole process is in fact unfair to First Nation people as First Nation leadership have not been consulted in the production of the draft legislation for the First Nation Governance Act. As a matter of fact there was no Aboriginal people on the committee that drafted this new legislation.

This is a critical situation considering that these changes will affect the everyday lives of our people. With so much at stake you would think that the federal government would want to produce any new legislation, as important as this, with full consultation and input from First Nation leadership right across the country. In fact, that has not been done and more to the point the Minister is pushing this legislation for approval in a very tight time frame.

All First Nation leadership across the country, except for Saskatchewan, are opposed to the First Nation Governance Act. We believe that the government is respond-

ing with a knee jerk reaction to a developing right wing presence on the Canadian political scene. This is supposedly being done to satisfy the Canadian mainstream view that First Nations need to be more accountable. I am not saying that we don't have our problems but when I look at federal and provincial non-Native governments and large corporations right across this country I don't see them doing a heck of a lot better job in managing their finances then we are in our First Nations. The economy of the political right favours the very rich and powerful no matter what kind of deficits they might run or unjust practices in terms of affect on our people and mother earth.

Although the government is claiming to offer consultation to First Nation people through a website, call centre and public meetings, the fact is that First Nation leaders have not been included in this process with the development of this legislation. The government wants to wrap up all so called consultation with the idea of pushing through the First Nation Governance Act in April 2002. This is disappointing as once again our First Nation leadership has been left out of the loop and the Minister for all intensive purposes is developing important legislation as he sees fit to better our lives. This has an all too familiar ring to it.

I am a great believer in making sure that our people have as much information as possible in terms of what the federal government does to affect our lives. It is important that at the very least we know where we stand on an ongoing basis. If there are any further developments in this area I will let you know as soon as possible.

# Wahgoshig Healing Lodge

Continued from Page 1

helped by keeping the training on track and assisting me as I monitored the progress of the trainees," said Sackaney.

The Wahgoshig FN trainees were trained by and also worked with a group of experienced log homebuilders from Chapleau Cree FN. In addition, access to the lodge is by a road that was constructed by another MAMO funded project in Heavy Equipment training.

"It has taken a lot of work and dedication by members of our community to finally see it this far. Our community received a lot of assistance to make this project possible including the training of our people by MAMO to construct road access to the site of the new lodge. This is something that the community has wanted for a long time. We greatly appreciate the help we received to make this project possible," said Sackaney.

## Mattagami FN Food Bank Makes Life Easier For People

MATTAGAMI FN, Ont. - The Mattagami First Nation Food Bank is starting its second year of providing support to needy families in the community. The food bank is a service that began in the late spring of 2000 and was initially created to provide food items to families in need.

The service was initiated by past Chief Joyce Luke and her First Nation Council and was started by the Social Services Department of the First Nation. Chief Chad Boissonneau and his Council who were recently elected in April 2001 are also supportive of this community initiative.

Pamela Gaudreau, Social Services Administrator for Mattagami explained that the program is a community driven project that includes volunteers who help keep the food bank operating.

"Our goal is to provide assistance to families in need so that we can help build a positive

environment for our children. The people really enjoy this service and consider it a helping hand to make life a little easier," said Gaudreau.

Recently Margaret Naveau, Band Administrator for the First Nation contacted Council Fire, a Native organization in Toronto, to ask for assistance in developing the community food bank. With the help of Reva Jewel, Executive Director of Council Fire, the food bank started receiving assistance and donations for the Mattagami FN food bank.

This service is provided for Mattagami FN members living on or off the First Nation. The food bank is located in the community and is open on Mondays from 10 to 11 am; Wednesdays from 1 to 2 pm and on Thursdays from 10 to 11 am. For more information about the food bank you can contact Pamela Gaudreau at 705-894-2072.



**A FOODBANK HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED IN MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION AS A SERVICE TO FAMILIES IN NEED.**

## Wabun Scholarship Fund Awarded

Wabun Tribal Council has announced the recipients of its annual Scholarship Fund. This year's winners were: Russell Evans, a Matachewan First Nation member who was awarded \$1,000 by sponsor, Wabun Tribal Council First Nation Development Corporation; Richard Wincikabay

of Matachewan First Nation who was awarded \$200. by sponsor, First Nation Engineering; Arthur Constant of Mattagami was awarded \$250 sponsored by First Nation Engineering; Jeannine Batisse of Matachewan First Nation who was also awarded \$200. by Bank of

Nova Scotia and Mary Lee Boissonneau of Mattagami First Nation who was awarded \$375 by Wabun Health Services.

"We are very proud of all of the recipients of this year's scholarship fund and we wish them all the best in their education

and career efforts. We also encourage others to put their names forward for consideration for next year's recipients of the fund," said Shawn Batisse, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council.

Applicants for consideration for fund assistance must send a letter to the Attention of

Scholarship Fund, Shawn Batisse, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council. The letter should detail a little about why the applicant feels he or she deserves this scholarship. The applicant must also include a proof of academic performance or transcript.

## Wabun Health Promotes Quit Smoking Incentive



Wabun Health is promoting a smoke free lifestyle to its First Nation communities. This promotion is being done through a program Wabun Health initiated this spring called the Quit Smoking Incentive.

The program was inspired through a new awareness campaign on smoking that was recently launched by the provincial government. This awareness campaign incorporates a quit smoking incentive program that helps smokers stop their habit through a reward system using monetary prizes and gifts.

Therese McLellan, Community Health Nurse for Wabun Health Services suggested the Quit Smoking Incentive program would help Wabun members stop smoking. She presented this concept during a regular meeting with the Wabun Health staff. The Quit Smoking Incentive was well received by the health staff who in turn took the concept back to Wabun's First Nations.

McLellan explained that the six month Wabun program is similar to the provincial one as it uses monetary prizes in the form of gift certificates for various stores. Individuals who take part in the program as a part of a group stop smoking through the help of peer support. On completion of the first month smoke free their names are put into a draw. The winner of this draw wins a single prize of a gift certificate paid for by Wabun Health. This draw concept continues into future months with one draw a month. The program continues into successive months with increasing prize amounts at each

draw. Only those who did not smoke during the month in between draws qualify to have their name submitted in the draw. Only those people who started in the first month of the program can participate in the ongoing draws.

"This is a good program to help people quit smoking. It is set up using an honour system but the participants also pair themselves with a friend to help them stay off smoking and provide support and encouragement. When a participant wins a prize at the end of each month we also recognize the friend and award them with a monetary prize of \$20. We want to recognize those who help us beat our addictions because no one can do it alone," said McLellan.

She also noted that the medical community is supportive of this trend to stop smoking. An example of this is the fact that Zyban, a pharmaceutical product to help an individual stop smoking, is now covered through non-insured health benefits.

McLellan mainly works with the community of Mattagami First Nation and started the program in that community in March, 2001. She signed up 13 people who wanted to take part in the six month Quit Smoking Incentive program.

"Once a person quits with the help of friends and family and is presented the possibility of winning a monetary prize it gives them a start. When they reach the sixth month, they may not win a prize but the incentive was there to give them those six months of no smoking," said McLellan.

The prize awarded during the first month is a \$50 gift certificate of the winner's choice of store. Each month after the prize is increased. The second month is \$75, the third is \$100, the fourth is \$150, the fifth is \$200 and a grand prize of a DVD player is awarded to the draw winner in the sixth month. McLellan said that the program is a form of prevention to help people lead a healthier life.

"I have heard many comments that Wabun's role in paying for the prizes can be expensive. This is true but it is also a fact that a great deal more money is spent on medical costs for people who suffer from complications from years of smoking. Helping people to quit smoking through an incentive program will mean fewer people who will develop medical problems from tobacco use," said McLellan.

She sees this program as a step towards leading a healthier life.

"The people who are part of this program are really excited and feel good about themselves. I see this program as one more way to lead a healthier lifestyle. In the future I want to promote other programs and initiatives such as walking and exercise groups, in addition to programs that promote a healthy diet. These programs are all part of a series of small steps we have to take, to learn to be good to ourselves and our bodies," said McLellan.

# Caring For You - Julie McKay



**JULIE MCKAY IS THE HEALTH CLERK AT WABUN HEALTH. SHE ENJOYS ASSISTING WABUN CLIENTS WORKING AS PART OF THE WABUN TEAM.**

Julie McKay is the featured Wabun Health Staff person for this issue of Wabun Sun. She is one of the two Health Clerks at Wabun Health. McKay started her position July 11, 2000. Her duties include providing services mainly through the Patient Transportation Program to non-Wabun members. She also helps clients who are seeking non-local medical attention with travel and accommodation arrangements. In addition, she assists clients to access non-insured health benefits and advocates for individuals seeking assistance in the Patient Transportation Program.

"I really enjoy the work that I am involved in with Wabun Health. It is a challenging position and there is always something new to learn," said McKay.

Previously, she was employed at Canadian Tire in Timmins for two years in the store's shipping and receiving

department. For a year, she also attended a Business Administration program at the Northern College of Applied Arts and Technology. Recently McKay joined the Wakanagun Housing Board.

As Health Clerk, she is in regular contact with clients from Wabun's First Nation communities.

"It feels really good to be able to see first hand the Wabun Health programs working for our communities. I also enjoy being able to offer assistance to my people and meet with them everyday," said McKay.

She hopes to gain more experience and knowledge in the area of health services and in the future advance to Home And Comore challenging positions in this field.

McKay is a First Nation Oji-Cree and originally from Mattagami FN. Currently she resides in Timmins.

# Community Eagle Staff Completed

MATACHEWAN FN, Ont.- A Gathering, Feast and the presentation of a Community Eagle Staff took place in Matachewan First Nation in the fall of 2000 at the Community Centre. A traditional drum group from North Bay, Indian Summer also performed at the event.

The highlight of the event was the presentation of the Community Eagle Staff to Chief Elenore Hendrix of Matachewan FN by a group of traditional people led by Martin Millen, Research Coordinator for Matachewan FN. The ceremony also included the presentation of eagle feathers to the five Wabun communities and to individuals who attended an initial eagle ceremony and feast. The event was organized by Millen, Brenda Bird, Sue Collins, Dorothy Larkman and others from the community.

"It was first suggested that we create a Community Eagle Staff for all of Wabun with representation of all six communities as six feathers on the staff. However we felt that we should use just one feather for Matachewan First Nation and give the other communities an opportunity to take part in the creation of the staff. We

asked an elder at the gathering to present an eagle feather to all the other five communities. Later we will ask the Chiefs if they would like to place their feather on the staff," said Millen.

The golden eagle was the casualty of a trapper's snare and was given to Matachewan FN by the Ministry of Natural Resources. In June 1999 a ceremony and feast was held to honour the eagle. The ceremony was led by Sam Littleowl, an elder from North Dakota who was visiting the area at the time and other elders and spiritual leaders from the community. Certain parts of the bird including the tail and wing feathers were kept for later use in traditional ceremonies and the creation of the community eagle staff. After the ceremony, the eagle was wrapped in cloth and laid on the forest ground outside the community.

"We asked Sam to lead in the ceremonies since he had a lot of knowledge about what was to be done in order to give thanks to the eagle's spirit and the gift of its feathers. He guided us and showed us how we should take the eagle back to the land. There

was a lot of interest from the community and many people came out to participate during this first eagle ceremony and feast," said Millen.

The Community Eagle Staff is a symbolic object that represents the people and is cared for by the community. It is a tall staff with a full circle hoop at the top and decorated in the traditional colours. The Matachewan Community Eagle Staff was made out of local mountain ash by Millen with the assistance of Darryl Murdock, an artist, craftsman and tradition person and Perry Hourrie, who is also a traditional person. Murdock and Hourrie are also originally from Pegasus First Nation in Manitoba.

The Community Eagle staff is one of three traditional eagle staffs that are used by traditional people. The others are the Eagle Staff, which is shaped in a quarter circle hoop and is carried and cared for by a person of stature and the Ceremonial Eagle Staff which is shaped in a half circle hoop and is carried and cared for by two traditional people who are chosen by spiritual leaders or elders.

# Health Matters



**by Jean Lemieux,  
Health Director**

This is my first column for Wabun Sun as your Health Director. I want to thank all those at Wabun Tribal Council, Wabun Health and in all of our communities who have made my transition from Financial Advisor to Health Director an enjoyable experience. These past few months in my new position have been really exciting and busy. I am really enjoying the challenges of the position and it is satisfying to see all the good work being done for our Wabun First Nation members.

I want to thank Jennifer McLeod, our former Health Director for her dedication and efforts over the years in assisting to develop Wabun Health into a sound, innovative and efficient service for our Wabun First Nation members.

We all miss her and wish her well in her new challenges.

Over the past few months I have been meeting with our health care workers and community professionals, elders and members in order to further develop Wabun Health services and programs that meet the demands of our people at the grass roots level. It is extremely important to me that we take our direction from our Chiefs and First Nation councillors as well as the elders and members in general in our communities.

More and more we are developing our services and programs at Wabun Health with First Nation Traditional values as a complement to the western medical system. Our people are telling us that this is a direction they want us to move in and we are more than happy to do so.

In this issue of Wabun Sun you will see a story on the Home and Community Care Program. This is a new program dedicated to caring for the elders and special needs persons in our Wabun communities. This is an important step for us in terms of caring for our people in their own familiar environments as opposed to having to live elsewhere to receive active care.

At Wabun Health we are committed to making life better for all our Wabun members and I encourage you to provide your input to me on any health program or service concerns you might have.

## Wabun Tribal Council

313 Railway Street  
Timmins, Ontario P4N 2P4  
Ph. (705) 268-9066 Fax: (705) 268-8554



## Wabun Sun

Publishing Editor: Shawn Batise  
Editor: Mike McGrath  
Assistant Editor: Xavier Kataquapit