



Wabun Sun

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History Of Mattagami FN Is Progressive

Mattagami First Nation (FN) is situated on ancient Native land that has long been home to the Ojibway and OjiCree people from the Mattagami River and Mattagami Lake areas and as far as the Moose River head waters on the James Bay coast. Mattagami FN is located about 20 kilometres north-east of Gogama and is accessible by road five kilometres from Highway 144.

Elder Andrew Luke, a member of Mattagami FN, has been part of the community all his life and remembers a time when his people led a way of life that was closer to the land. Originally, Mattagami FN was located on the opposite shore of Mattagami Lake from where the current community is situated today. Elder Luke remembers growing up in this original community with his family.

"It was a very difficult and rough way of life back then. Living off the land by hunting and trapping was our only way of survival. We were also a remote community in those days and had

no direct connection to the rest of the world. It was normal to have to move around by canoe and portage our boats on land to travel during the summer months," said Elder Luke.

The old community was located in a small area on the shore of Mattagami Lake. Elder Luke explained that several members of the community built log cabins to shelter their families. The community was moved in the early 1950s to gain better access to the developing road system. New homes were constructed on the second site.

"The old community was not very big. People built their own homes and we even had our own school building which was constructed by local members. Several years later most of these buildings were salvaged when we left and used in the construction of a community hall for our people in the new location of Mattagami First Nation," said Elder Luke.

He added that members of the old community lived a very traditional lifestyle that was



A COMMUNITY COMPLEX IS AN ACHIEVEMENT IN MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION THAT CAME ABOUT THROUGH THE HARD WORK AND DEDICATION OF PAST AND PRESENT LOCAL LEADERS. THE COMPLEX HOUSES ADMINISTRATION AND ALL COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FEATURES A 10,000 SQUARE FOOT HALL/GYMNASIUM. A GRAND OPENING WAS HELD IN JUNE 1996.

close to the land. Most families spent time in the community during the warmer months and in the winter time left to live on their traditional hunting grounds. Back then, few people stayed in the community for the whole year. He explained that his family left the community in the fall and usually came back from their hunting and trapping grounds in the spring. During the winter, Elder Luke, his parents James and Mary Luke and two brothers Philip and Harry lived in an area called the Grassy River, between Mattagami FN and the city of Timmins. They had a small cabin in this area. Later on after the new community was established, Elder Andrew Luke added that their sister Alice was born.

"My parents were very traditional people and that way of life did not change much when I grew up. During the signing of the Treaty #9 my grandparents

were here in Mattagami but they were originally from the James Bay coast on the Moosonee River. Once they were included in the Treaty #9, they settled here and since then our family has lived on Mattagami Lake," said Elder Andrew Luke.

In the summer of 1906, Treaty Commissioners made their way to Mattagami Lake to have the Treaty #9 document signed. After having visited members of Matachewan First Nation north of Lake Temiskaming to sign the treaty there, the Commissioners travelled south and then by train to the Biscotasing rail stop just southwest of Mattagami Lake to access the communities of Mattagami and Flying Post in the north. The Commissioners arrived at the community on Lake Mattagami on July 7, 1906. Joseph Miller, who was in charge of this post at the time

acted as interpreter during the reading of the treaty document. After a short conversation once the treaty was read, Joseph Shemeket, a representative of the people announced to the Commissioners that they would sign the document. The first payments under the treaty were made to local members and an election was held in which Andrew Luke was elected as the first recognized Chief of Mattagami under the new treaty. He was an ancestor to Elder Andrew Luke. A flag and a copy of the treaty were presented to the new Chief for everyone to see.

On July 7, 1906, Mattagami members Andrew Luke, who signed with a simple 'X' and Joseph Shemeket, Thomas Chicken and James Nevue who wrote their names in syllabics signed the treaty in Mattagami. The name Naveau
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ELDER ANDREW LUKE



CHIEF CHAD BOISSONEAU

Elder Alex Black Of Wahgoshig FN Recalls Life On The Land

Elder Alex Black of Wahgoshig First Nation is the featured Elder of the Issue for this issue of Wabun Sun. He is originally from Lowbush, an old community on the Canadian National Railway, on the north shore of Lake Abitibi. Elder Black explained that this was once a thriving community that was home to many people. As a

young boy, he attended primary school in this community for a short time. Lowbush was part of the traditional lands of the First Nation people in the Abitibi Lake area.

"There were a lot of people in Lowbush while I was growing up there. Now no one is there, just a few abandoned houses alongside the CNR track. I visit

there once in a while to see all the old places I know and sometimes people still go there for gatherings," said Elder Black.

He was born and raised in this community and explained that this is where he learned how to live on the land with his father, Alex Black Sr. During the summers, his family mainly lived in Lowbush and in the wintertime

they spent time on the land hunting and trapping in the area now known as Wahgoshig First Nation.

"Wahgoshig has not been around as a community for long but our family was always here anyway. This was our trapping grounds. When I was a young man I walked long distances to do my trapping on the

land. I wish I could do this again but now that I am older I can not do as much as I once did," said Elder Black.

He is a First Nation Councillor for his community and has served his people in this position for many years. When Wahgoshig FN was established as a permanent community for
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More History Of Mattagami First Nation



AN ALL WOMAN CHIEF AND COUNCIL was elected in 1962 for the first time in Canada in Mattagami First Nation. Pictured are from L-R: Elizabeth Naveau, FN Councillor; Chief Helen Naveau and Irene Naveau, FN Councillor.

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was at that time spelled differently from the way it is today in the community. Commissioners



Willis McKay, FN Councillor

Duncan Campbell Scott, Samuel Stewart and Daniel George MacMartin also signed the document. The event was witnessed by Joseph Miller, Pelham Edgar, A.M.C. Banting and Kenneth Ross.

In 1962, Mattagami FN made history by electing the first all women Chief and Council for their community. Chief Helen Naveau and Councillors Elizabeth Naveau and Irene Naveau served their community for a two year term. Helen Naveau was a prominent leader in her community and was elected again as Chief in 1968 and 1970. In all, she served as an elected community leader for

eight terms. As a historical note, her father Henry Kitchibra was part of an infantry unit that fought at Vimy Ridge during the First World War. In later years, Helen Naveau continued her involvement in local and regional issues and initiatives and served as a board member and advocate specifically with children and youth. Sadly, she passed away at the age of 74 on October 31, 2000.

Later developments of Treaty #9 for Mattagami FN took place during the 1970s, when Norman Naveau took an active role in representing his people. Naveau was appointed by several Chiefs from nearby

First Nations to become vice president of what was known then as the Wabun area of Treaty #9, which represented several First Nations in the eastern part of the province and south of the James Bay coast. The Wabun area of Treaty #9 was one of several areas of representation for different First Nations known as Project Development Areas (PDAs), now known as Tribal Councils. Elder Naveau represented this area for five years.

Willis McKay, First Nation Councillor recalls growing up in the new community of Mattagami FN. Older members of his family continued to practise traditional activities and spent time on the land. When McKay was young there were about 20 residential buildings, a school and a community hall in Mattagami FN. His parents

Simeon and Doris KcKay and his grandparents William and Mary Jane McKay and Sam and Harriet Luke related many stories of life in the old community.

"People still had a strong connection to the land when I was growing up. We were still isolated then. There was a road to Gogama but it was difficult travelling and was not maintained during the winter. People then still used dogsled teams to travel for transportation to Gogama for their groceries and other purchases. We did have our own school but it was only up to grade six and then students had to leave home for Sault Ste. Marie to go to the Shingwauk Residential School for further education," said Councillor McKay.

The community has
CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Reflections



by Shawn Batise,
Executive Director,
Wabun Tribal Council

We as First Nation People are comfortable with the idea that we as a people are the guardians of the land and water. Through the ages we have lived in harmony with our mother earth and in doing so we have managed to survive the most difficult situations. Today, in this modern world, we are more than ever feeling the need to remain committed to our close relationship with the land and the water.

It is with this in mind that I congratulate our First Nation communities of Matachewan, Wahgoshig and Beaverhouse for their efforts in assisting major non Native organizations in a successful bid to stop a company from moving ahead in the first stage of its assessment by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment in regards to the development of a toxic waste incinerator. This development, planned could be situated close to the traditional lands and waterways of our people in Wabun Communities as well as the First Nation People of the Algonquin Nation.

Here is one case where

all of the Chiefs of Wabun and our community members can be proud of our efforts to keep our land and water protected. This is a good example of how our combined strength as Wabun Tribal Council has been directed to protect our mother earth. In situations such as this it is often difficult for a lone community, group or member to stand up to government or private sector interests that are affecting our way of life. Together, and in concert with the Algonquin Nation as well as concerned citizens from the Temiskaming area and local farmers we have toiled to question the plan to develop the toxic waste incinerator. We should all be proud of our combined efforts.

A highlight of our participation in this stand occurred when our call for assistance from the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights was answered in a positive way. The commission agreed to monitor the environmental assessment of the development of this toxic waste incinerator.

There are all kinds of examples over the past few years where we as Wabun communities have had to stand together to make a point. More and more we will see situations develop as negotiations continue with various levels of government and private corporations in terms of developments that affect our way of life. We are open to working with everyone and to participate and benefit from any economic developments we can live with. However, we want to do this without losing our way and abandoning our commitment to the land and the water. Together this is possible.

Feature Elder - Alex Black

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his people in the mid 1980s, he was one of the first people to serve his First Nation as a Councillor. He commented that he was happy to work for his people alongside Wahgoshig's first leader in the new community, Chief Jack Diamond.

Elder Black continues to follow a traditional way of life as much as he can and does some hunting in the surrounding area. He also takes time to teach his sons his people's way of life and instructs them to pass down his knowledge of living on the land.

He believes that an Elder is someone who passes down the local knowledge of his people and educates younger people in the community about their past.

"I help others by talking to them and guiding them so that they do not hurt themselves or others. I think our role as Elders is to help people look after themselves and also take care of others as well. I try to do this by talking to people in our community and to young people," said Elder Black.

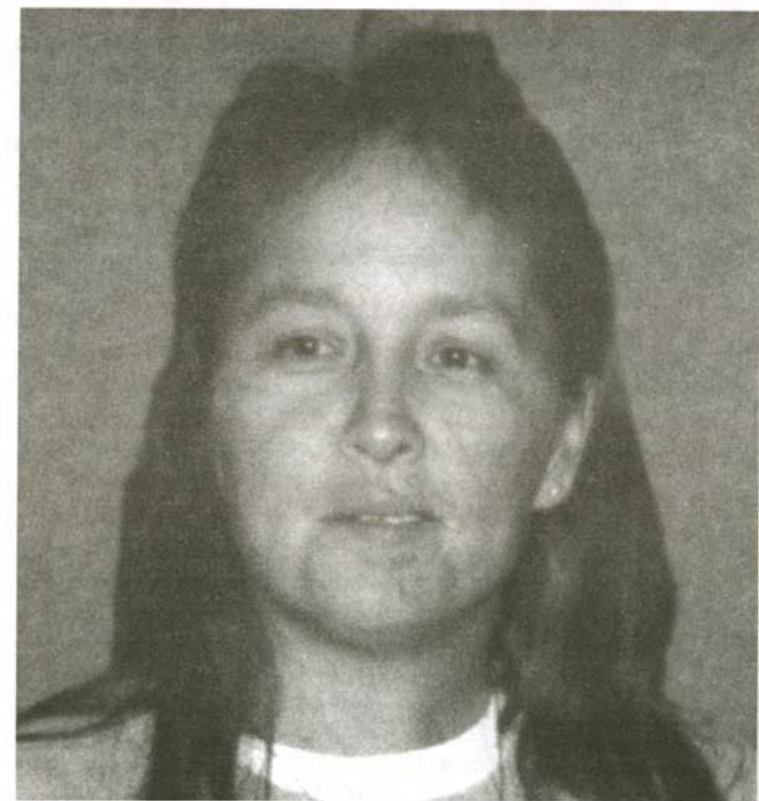
At 67 years of age, he is married to Rosy and they have two sons Lindy and Charlie Black. Elder Black is a member of Wahgoshig FN and is a First Nation Algonquin person. He explained that he would like to see more of his people speak their First Nation languages.

"It is important to keep our language. There are not many people who speak their Native language in our commu-

nity. My language is Algonquin which is related to the Ojibway and Cree. Even though not many people speak their Native language there are some people who do know their Algonquin, Ojibway and Cree," said Elder Black.

Elder Black also has a larger family of brothers and sisters and explained that his father married twice while he was growing up. His mother was Millie Nadeau, who was originally from Amos, in northern Quebec. Elder Black was born during this marriage along with sisters Anna, Ellen and Lizzy Black. After Millie passed away his father married Mary and they had Mike Black and twins Susy and Jeannie Black.

Tammy Gregoire Featured As NAPS Officer For Mattagami FN



TAMMY GREGOIRE

Tammy Gregoire, (NAPS) Officer for Mattagami Nishnawbe-Aski Police Services First Nation is the featured com-

munity person for this issue of Wabun Sun. She started working as a NAPS Officer in June 2001. Her office is based in the community's local administration office.

Gregoire's main role in the community is to ensure the safety of local members. She is the only NAPS officer in Mattagami FN and most of her work involves promotion and awareness of the law and law enforcement to local members. She is involved in an educational program for students at the Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School to teach them about principles and morals and in general about the law. Gregoire also invites guest speakers to come into the school to speak to local youth about the law and the police service. She patrols the community in a NAPS police cruiser and her work primarily involves making a presence in the community and ensuring a safe and secure environment for the First Nation.

She also does administrative work and follow-up work for cases that take place in the community. Although, Gregoire is the only officer in her community she works closely with local Chief and Council and with front line workers such as the Community Health Representative (CHR) and Mental Health workers in the First Nation.

Gregoire is part of Division A of NAPS which covers the eastern drive-in communities of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN). She completed training to become an officer for NAPS and graduated in September 2000. This included 13 weeks of training at the Ontario Police College in Alymer Ontario.

Prior to becoming a NAPS Officer, Gregoire worked as a Family Support Worker for Mattagami FN for 11 years. She completed a three-year program at Loyalist College in Bellville, Ontario and achieved a Social Work diploma. In addition, she

served as a First Nation Councillor for one term before attending training to become a Police Officer.

"I enjoy working for my community in this position and hopefully I will do so for a long time. Mattagami is where my mother is originally from and my family is from here. I like working with the public and being able to interact with everyone in the community," said Gregoire.

She is a First Nation Ojibway person and a member of Mattagami FN. Gregoire is originally from Garden River First Nation and transferred in 1990 to Mattagami FN, where her mother was born and raised. She has two children Kayla, 13 and Michael who is six years of age. Gregoire stays active and takes part in sports such as baseball in the summer time and during the colder months of the year she enjoys snowmobiling with her family.

Julie (McKay) Brousseau Moves To Further Education



JULIE (MCKAY) BROUSSEAU

Julie (McKay) Brousseau, Health Clerk for Wabun Health Services, has made the move to further her education. She finished working for Wabun Health Services on January 7, 2003 as Health Clerk to continue her education in

southern Ontario. She is attending post secondary studies at Sheridan College in Oakville Ontario.

She started her new studies in early January and is currently enrolled in a two year Social Services program. Brousseau will receive training in basic computer skills and will take part in several areas of this internationally recognized Social Services program. During her education she will also have the opportunity to take part in field placements. At the end of her program she will be qualified to work in placements and she will have the option of working in several different related employment positions.

"I am enjoying learning new skills through this program. When I am done I will have the opportunity to work in a broad spectrum of positions related to social services. I will also have the option of being able to continue my education in this field by going to university," said Brousseau.

She explained that she developed an interest in social services through her position as Health Clerk for Wabun Health Services where she worked closely with social workers from Wabun's communities. Brousseau was one of two Health Clerks at Wabun Health Services and assisted First Nation clients that were from outside the Wabun Tribal Council area. Part of the college program she is currently taking also involves advo-

cating for clients, which she says was a skill she learned while working for Wabun Health clients.

"I am just starting my education in this field and I have yet to decide on what area I would like to concentrate on such as working with the elderly or with youth. When I complete my studies and want to get back into the workforce again I definitely want to work in the Native sector. Ideally I would like to work for our Wabun communities again," said Brousseau.

She was originally employed by Wabun Health Services in July 2000 in her role of assisting First Nation clients that were not members of Wabun to access the Patient Transportation Program. In addition, she assisted these clients to access non-insured health benefits and advocated for patients seeking help through the Patient Transportation Program.

Brousseau is a First Nation Oji-Cree originally from

Mattagami FN. She is currently living with family in Oakville for the duration of her studies.

Jean Lemieux, Health Director for Wabun Health Services commented that she and the Wabun Health staff will miss Brousseau.

"We are happy for Julie who chose to further her education in the Social Services program at Sheridan College. On behalf of the Wabun Tribal Council Health Staff we would like to wish Julie all the best in her studies," said Lemieux.

Brousseau's mother, Paulette is employed by Wabun Tribal Council as Bookkeeper and her brother James is an upcoming sports athlete who recently attended the North American Indigenous Games. In addition she also has a sister Amy and her brother Chris was recently awarded Client Of The Year by Mamo-Wichi-Hetiwin Employment & Training for his career success.

History Of Mattagami FN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2 progressed greatly over the years and in June 1996 a new state of the art Community Complex was opened to house the First Nation's administration offices and other services. Today the community has a population of over 400 members. Recently, the First Nation leadership also

developed a logging and harvesting operation under the Gawuhigaewin Development Corporation, which is owned and operated by the community.

Currently, community leadership consists of Chief Chad Boissoneau and First Nation Councillors Willis McKay, Gary Naveau and Leonard Naveau.

Algonquin Translations

Here are some useful Algonquin words and phrases with translation into English. We thank Elder Alex Black of Wahgoshig First Nation for supplying Wabun Sun with this knowledge of the language.

KOOSIS - My Son

DADAM - My Father

JOJOOM - My Mother

KOKOOM - My Grandmother

KOON - Snow

AGI SHI KEESHEEKAK NOKOOM? - How Is The Weather Right Now?

EE DAS EE POO-POON - It Is Going To Snow.

Caroline Ojebah Retires From Wabun Health



CAROLINE OJEBAH

Before taking the position of CHR, Ojebah was employed as a Band Administrator for her community on and off over the years. She explained that this was a very challenging position that gave her a lot of experience.

"I was asked on several occasions to take this position to help our community. It was a very difficult position but it provided me with a lot of good work experience that was very useful later on. I attended many meetings representing my community and I learned a lot about how our community operates," said Ojebah.

In 1985, she was encouraged to run as leader of her community and was elected as Chief for a two-year term.

"I received a lot of encouragement from many people in the community to run as Chief. When I got in it was a very challenging position that required a lot of hard work. I think it was also a good experience that taught me many things about the community and First Nation administration. I was happy to work with two female councillors at the time, Marjorie Tangie and Francis Saunders,"

said Ojebah.

She has also been employed by her First Nation as a Referral Clerk and as a Band Clerk. During the mid 1980s she took the opportunity to take training as a Community Health Representative at Cambrian College in Sudbury for two years. She attended this program with other First Nation members in a partnership provided by the three Chapleau area First Nations, including: Chapleau Cree, Chapleau Ojibwe and Brunswick House. Ojebah successfully completed this training. She also completed a 12-week Personal Support Worker program in Sault College in Sault Ste. Marie. In addition, in 1982 Ojebah attended Canadore College in North Bay where she completed a 10-month Health Care Aid Program.

A First Nation Ojibway person, Ojebah is originally from Brunswick House FN where she is also a member. She has three daughters, Deborah Nakogee, Lisa Ojebah and RoseAnne Ojebah and two sons Rene and Darrell Ojebah. Caroline Ojebah also has several grandchildren. She is current-

ly living in Timmins and spending much valuable time with her grandchildren.

"In the 30 years that Caroline has worked for her community, about 10 of them were in the area of health services. She has dedicated many years to serving her community and we will miss working with her in Brunswick House FN. On behalf

of Wabun Tribal Council Health Staff and Health Care Workers, we would like to wish Caroline all the best in a well deserved retirement," said Jean Lemieux, Health Director for Wabun Health Services.

Her daughter RoseAnne Ojebah is employed by Wabun Health as a Health Clerk for Wabun members.

Health Matters



by Jean Lemieux,
Health Director

In this issue of Wabun Sun you will notice several stories that deal with our people. When you think about it, Wabun Health is successful because of the efforts, experience and dedication of our administration, staff and our First Nation leadership and community members. All of our successes are the result of the hard work of many people.

With this in mind I want to say a very heartfelt thanks to both Caroline Ojebah, our Community Health Representative (CHR) for Brunswick House FN and to Julie McKay, our Health Clerk for non-Wabun Clients here at Wabun Health for all of their dedication to helping our community members. Both have recently moved on.

Caroline has retired after serving her community in the health services field for 10 years with Wabun Health and a total of 30 years for Brunswick House FN.

It was such a joy to have Caroline on staff and we benefited very much from her kind nature and vast experience. We hope that she enjoys her retirement as she has certainly earned it. We understand that she will be spending more time with her family and will be in Timmins near her grand-

children. Best wishes to her from all of us at Wabun Health and everyone at Wabun Tribal Council and we count on seeing her often as a visiting friend.

Julie was also a great asset to Wabun Health and performed very well in assisting First Nation people. We will miss her good humour and quick wit. However, we are very proud of her decision to seek higher education as she embarks on a two year Social Services program at Sheridan College. We hope to see her often in the future as she walks her journey of learning.

Life is all about changes and growth and in that spirit we welcome Marilyn Tangie as Referral Clerk for Brunswick House First Nation. She started working with Wabun Health on January 10, 2003. Marilyn comes to us with many skills and a dedication to serve her community. She is a big asset to our Wabun Health Team.

I encourage our youth in all of our Wabun First Nations to consider Health Education as an option when considering career goals. As we continue to develop, Wabun Health as well as other area Health Organizations will need First Nation people to serve in all aspects of Health Care. The Health Care sector is expanding and it offers career opportunities that are very rewarding and satisfying. At Wabun Health we are all very proud to be working with such a capable team and serving our Wabun members.

Featured Health Care Worker Is Marilyn Tangie Of Brunswick House FN



MARILYN TANGIE

new to me in this position but I am getting accustomed to the work involved. I work closely with Cynthia Swanson, Personal Support Worker for our community to provide our Elders with the help they need," said Tangie.

Currently, she is also waiting to attend training on a new First Nation Health Information System to provide more efficient service in her position as Referral Clerk. The training is associated with the First Nation and Inuit Health Branch in Thunder Bay and will provide Tangie with the skills needed to use an online system to process patient transportation information. She noted that a new faster high speed internet service will also be installed to allow her to better access the new system.

"I enjoy working with computers and learning about health care services. It also feels good to interact with others in the community and work with our Elders. As part of our work in helping our Elders we also try to find activities for them to take part in," said Tangie.

She has also lived in other parts of Ontario including Sault Ste. Marie and Toronto. In Toronto she was employed as a Summer Student for one season. She held this position in 1996 at

the Ontario First Nation Technical Services Corporation in Toronto. Tangie gained computer skills and helped to develop and design a website for the corporation. As well she performed regular office duties and assisted the Secretary with office correspondence and communications. In 2001 she attended a 16 week computer program in Sault College and completed training in Microsoft Word Level One and Two, Microsoft Excel and an Introduction to the Internet and Email. In addition, she attended a Hair Stylist program in Sault College and now provides her skills in this area to community members.

"I enjoy working for my community and I hope to gain more experience and skills to move to a position with more responsibility. I plan to take more training and education in order to achieve this goal. I want to help my community with the best of my ability," said Tangie.

At 26 years of age, Tangie is originally from Brunswick House FN where she is also a member. She has four children Eric, 8; Tyson, 5; Cole, 3 and ten month old Tanner. She enjoys spending time with her family and helping her son Eric who is involved in hockey.

Marilyn Tangie, Referral Clerk for Brunswick House First Nation is the featured Health Care Worker for this issue of Wabun Sun. She is responsible for scheduling patient appointments and coordinating and arranging for costs of patient transportation. Tangie started her position on January 10, 2003.

She is also co-ordinating the Home and Community Care Program in Brunswick House. This program works closely with the community's new Seniors Complex and provides services and assistance for Elders.

"Everything is fairly

Wabun Sun



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