



Wabun Sun

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New Ambulance Building For Wahgoshig FN

Wahgoshig First Nation recently received \$100,000 in funding from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation to assist in the development of health services for the First Nation. The funds will go towards constructing a new Ambulance building in the community to house a local emergency vehicle and as well the building will provide a training facility for local first response team members. The funding was presented to Chief Paul McKenzie by Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation representatives in a ceremony in late April.

Dan Stubbe-Diamond, Band Administrator for Wahgoshig FN explained that it is hoped that construction of the new building will start in June. The construction of this facility will be a two month project.

"We are very happy to have this assistance for our community. If we did not receive this

assistance from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation we would not have this opportunity to build additional infrastructure in our community. We thank them for the assistance they have provided for our people," said Stubbe-Diamond.

He submitted the application to the corporation for the development of an Ambulance Garage as part of a Northern Communities Capital Assistance Program. Stubbe-Diamond developed the proposal with the support of local Chief and Council.

The new garage will have a floor plan of 46 feet by 24 feet and will include a garage for an ambulance vehicle, an office, mechanical room and a training room.

"This will enhance the services provided by our First Response Team and house their equipment in a secure and central location in their own building. Currently we are using our Fire Hall for our Fire vehicles as well



CHIEF PAUL MCKENZIE WAS AT A CEREMONY WITH DIGNITARIES FROM THE NORTHERN ONTARIO HERITAGE FUND CORPORATION TO ACCEPT FUNDING OF \$100,000. FOR WAHGOSHIG FIRST NATION. CHIEF MCKENZIE IS SECOND FROM LEFT.

as our ambulance vehicles which creates a very crowded environment. The new building will give our First Response Team some much needed space as well as deal with safety issues that have risen from the present arrangement of our emergency response vehicles," said Stubbe-Diamond.

He added that the com-

munity is also happy to see the new development in their First Nation. Stubbe-Diamond also explained that he is working with local leadership to access funding to build a multi use community centre for the First Nation.

Betty Singer, First Nation Councillor for Wahgoshig

FN is grateful for the assistance that has provided for her community.

"Everyone is happy to receive this new funding to help our people. It will greatly help our membership in the future," said Councillor Singer.

Brunswick House First Nation Moving Ahead

Brunswick House First Nation is a growing community that is being led by community members who are working hard to build on past successes and develop potential future natural resource opportunities. The First



ALFRED OJEEBAH

Nation has overcome many challenges in its past to arrive at its present situation as a successful First Nation.

Brunswick House FN was established as a community through the Treaty #9 document

which was signed by government representatives and the first recognised First Nation leaders in 1905 and 1906. In late July 1906, treaty commissioners met with the First Nation people who lived in the area of the Hudson's Bay Company post called New Brunswick House on the northern end of Missinaibi Lake. On the evening of July 25, 1906, the First Nation people of this area gathered to meet with the commissioners and the terms of the treaty were explained. Mr. J. G. Christie, Hudson's Bay Company Officer for the post translated for the First Nation people during this meeting.

The treaty was signed by local representatives: Alex Peeketay, Tom Neswabun and Jacob Windabaie (who signed in Syllabic characters) and Pootoosh and Peter Mitigonabie (who both signed with a simple 'x'). The document was also signed by Treaty Commissioners: Duncan Campbell Scott, Samuel Stewart and Daniel George MacMartin. The signing was also witnessed by: George Moosonee, James G.

Christie, Grace McTavish, Claude D. Ovens, Pelham Edgar and Edmund Morris. After the signing, 100 First Nation people were given the first payments under the treaty. On the evening of July 26, a feast was held and Alex Peeketay was chosen for the position of Chief. During the feast Chief Peeketay was presented with a flag and a copy of the treaty. Later on, a meeting was also held to discuss the land to be set aside under the treaty.

The land area for New



CHIEF CHRISTINE VENEDAM

Brunswick House under the Schedule of Reserves of the Treaty #9 document is described as: 'In the province of Ontario, beginning at the entrance to an unnamed creek on the west shore of Missinaibi river, about half a mile southwest of the Hudson's Bay Company's post, thence north four miles, and of sufficient depth to give an area of twenty-seven square miles.' After making their visit to New Brunswick House the Treaty Commissioners continued on to Heron Bay on Lake Superior to make their visits to Long Lake.

In 1925, the Chapleau Game Preserve was established as a 7,000 square kilometer area for the protection of wildlife. The new game preserve surrounded Missinaibi Lake where the community of New Brunswick House had been allocated. When the preserve was created hunters and trappers including First Nation people who followed a traditional lifestyle were no longer allowed in the area. This meant the relocation of the people of New Brunswick House to a new land

base outside the game preserve.

Alfred Ojeebah, Board Chair for the Wabun Tribal Council was born and raised as a member of what is now known as the Brunswick House FN community. Currently, he is also working as a First Nation Councillor and a Resource Specialist for his community. He explained that after the creation of the Chapleau Game Preserve, his people were promised by the government to receive another allocation of land.

"When the Game Preserve was proclaimed our community was moved under the condition that the government would find us another land base as soon as possible. Unfortunately, we did not receive our permanent land base for 22 years after the relocation. When the people were asked to move they relocated to other nearby bands because they had no land base. Some stayed in the area and lived as squatters along the nearby Canadian Pacific Railway line," said Ojeebah.

In addition, in 1928 the Department of Lands And Resources, now known as the

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More History Of Brunswick House First Nation

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Ministry of Natural Resources, created a new policy for trap line allocation in the area which greatly affected the traditional activities of the Brunswick House First Nation people.

During the 22 year period the Brunswick House band had no land base, community lands were changed three times. The first move took place near Kapuskasing which provided about 50 acres of land. This move was not successful when a local pulp mill operation declared it had the rights to the land area. The community was moved again with the promise of finding another land base. The second move was agreed to take place on to what was known then as Loon Lake near the town of Chapleau and is now referred to as Borden Lake.

"Fifteen people were employed to cut a road to a site where our new community land base was to be located on Loon Lake. Unfortunately, during the initial construction, it was discovered that the new roadway had to run through the property of a prominent businessman from Chapleau. This move was contested and our community was moved again with another promise from the government," said Ojebah.

In 1947, a 36 square mile land base was finally provided for Brunswick House First Nation at Mount Batten township. This land base was mostly swamp land and was the traditional trapping ground of then leader of Brunswick House FN, Chief Joe Davis.

This move also had its difficulties. A forestry company known as Kalamazoo Vegetable and Paper (KVP) Company of Michigan, United States had acquired timber rights to Mount Batten from 1948 to 1958. Even after community members moved onto their new land in 1948, KVP Company continued logging in the area. In later years, it was also discovered that the area had been used as a Prisoner Of War (POW) camp during the Second World War after several grave sites were found in the area.

In 1970, a one square mile area of the land base was traded for an equal portion 10 kilometers east of the town of Chapleau on Highway 101.

"Our final move to our present location was made due to health reasons and to gain better access for our people to essential services and education for our children. It was difficult

for our students to travel an 85 mile drive from Mount Batten to Chapleau to attend school. Another reason to move was the fact that our drinking water from a nearby creek which was located along the CPR tracks had been condemned by a local doctor who serviced our area," said Ojebah.

As a young boy, Ojebah left his community when he was five years of age to attend residential school. At the time he remembers bulldoz-

Cree FN for an additional land area. At the time, First Nation people who participated in the hunt were charged for illegally hunting in the game preserve. Presently the First Nation leaders who took part in this hunt have yet to hear a response on this issue.

Currently the community is actively working to develop natural resource opportunities to create employment and revenue for the First Nation. In terms of

Advisor and Project Manager for the construction.

The community also completed the construction of a six unit Elders Complex in 2000.

"We are happy to see our Elders have their own place to stay in our community. This summer we are hoping to dedicate this new building to the memory of the late Chief Fred Neshawabin who served our community from 1965 to 1975. At the time he was Chief, it was his goal to have such a

building to take care of our Elders," said Ojebah.

Local leadership is looking to the future and it is hoped that a new administrative / business / sports complex will be developed for the community. Currently it is in the planning stages and the community will seek funding for the new project.

Brunswick House FN has a membership of 550 people with a population of about 150 individuals living in the community.

Local leadership is looking to the future and it is hoped that a new administrative /business/sports complex will be developed for the community.

ers cutting the access road to the new community on Mount Batten. Later on he came home when he turned 16.

"When I left as a young boy, I remember piles of brush had been left during the construction of the road and creation of housing lots. Several years later when I returned, the brush piles were still there and I was hired at \$0.40 an hour to burn these piles. At the time in 1960 there were approximately 25 houses in Mount Batten with one school house. A church was later built in 1969," said Ojebah.

Brunswick House FN continues to hold land rights to 35 square miles of land on Mount Batten. In 1999, 45 percent of this land area was burnt in a major forest fire that was caused by prohibited grass fires which were lit by CPR workers along the rail line. This forest fire also caused an evacuation of the Brunswick House FN community. Local leadership successfully argued this situation and the case was settled out of court between the CPR and the community.

In November 2000, 50 Brunswick House FN members along with other area First Nation leaders and the Mushkegowuk Council under Grand Chief Lawrence Martin led a protest hunt into the Chapleau Game Preserve. This was done to attract the government's attention to land issues with the Missinaibi Cree, the displacement of Brunswick House members and ten year old requests of the Chapleau

forestry, Brunswick House FN has created the White Eagle Logging company which is working in partnership with Domtar to improve forestry operations and develop training opportunities for the First Nation. The community is also working with Weyerhaeuser, another forestry company to develop further opportunities in forestry. To facilitate these developments, the community is in the process of hiring a Forestry Manager and plans to create a non-profit organisation to handle all of the community's forestry initiatives.

In addition, local leadership is also negotiating with Falconbridge, a major mining company, on the possibility of reopening a mining operation close to the community's traditional lands. Communication is also taking place with a diamond mining company that is interested in exploration in the area.

In 1990, Brunswick House FN under the leadership of the late Chief Joseph Saunders was one of the founding First Nations of Wabun Tribal Council. The community now benefits from its membership in the Tribal Council by being able to utilise medical services as well as assistance in the development of infrastructure projects. Recently, a new water treatment plant was completed in 2001 with the assistance of Jason Batise, Economic Development And Technical Services Advisor for Wabun, who acted as Technical

Reflections



by Shawn Batise,
Executive Director,
Wabun Tribal Council

It is hard to believe that in this day and age we First Nation peoples still have to fight unjust and inappropriate legislation from the Canadian government. However, regarding the First Nations Governance Act or C-7 and the suite of legislation, First Nations people across the country have been organizing and protesting against this legislation from the start.

The government of Canada and in particular the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, Robert Nault are intent on pushing through an act that has not included the participation of First Nation people in any real way from the start. Wabun Tribal Council First Nation Chiefs have supported the Assembly of First Nations, Chiefs Of Ontario and Nishnawbe-Aski Nation in the efforts of First Nation organizations and peoples to stop this act but to no avail. The government of Canada in a most arrogant and condescending manner, has chosen to move forward with legislation that (A.) Does not include any reference to skills and capacities required to promote governance; (B.) Does not respect the Constitution and recognize First Nations inherent right to self government and (C.) Creates additional rules and red tape for First Nations, imposing an

approach to governance as determined by the Minister and does not recognize First Nation governance and systems. Under this act First Nations will have two years to develop three different codes or sets of rules on: elections, financial management and administration.

The government of Canada has used the excuse that they want to put this legislation in place with accountability in mind. Perhaps if that is their main concern they should first turn their attention to the accountability of their own government ministries and the private sector corporations in Canada. It saddens and infuriates our First Nation leadership that the government of Canada has largely ignored the protests of our First Nations governments in ways that are remindful of the colonial attitudes that we all had presumed buried in the past. Most First Nations want to be accountable. It is not fair for the Minister to paint us all with the same brush.

Bill C-7 is in the final stages of government process in that it was tabled, had first reading, second reading and third reading. After being approved by the senate it will become legislated into law with the final step which is Royal Assent by the Governor General. Very recently many of our leaders from across the country have been protesting and in the most part to make sure that the Canadian public understands what the government is doing in regards to this wrongful legislation. At this point it is obvious that the government will proceed with C-7 against our wishes. However, we are not finished in our fight to scrap this legislation and the government's process that has ignored us from the start. We are resourceful, dedicated and united in our continuing efforts to this end.

Elder Hattie Luke-Maher - Elder Of The Issue



ELDER HATTIE LUKE-MAHER

Elder Hattie Luke-Maher is the featured Elder of the Issue for this edition of Wabun Sun. At 63 years of age, she is an active volunteer and involved with several organizations in the Timmins area.

Elder Luke-Maher was born and raised in Mattagami First Nation. She grew up in Mattagami during the winters and in the warmer months travelled with her parents to Bear Island on Lake Temagami, where her mother was originally from. As a young girl she attended school at the start of every year at Bear Island then transferred to the elementary school in Mattagami when her family

returned for the fall hunting season. Her family stayed for the winter in Mattagami and they travelled back to Bear Island again in the spring.

"I gained a lot of life experience from my parents as well as a great deal of knowledge about life on the land. Every year we travelled by boat from Mattagami across Mattagami Lake then by vehicle to Gogama where we caught the train to head south. We travelled from Gogama to North Bay and then north again to Temagami and from there by boat on Lake Temagami to Bear Island. It was always an adventure for me," said Elder Luke-Maher.

In 1984, she attended a two-year drug and alcohol counselling program at Northern College in Timmins. During this time she volunteered to help organizations such as Telecare Timmins and a withdrawal management service in Timmins. Elder Luke-Maher has devoted much of her time to drug and alcohol abuse counselling. While attending Northern College she worked during the summers at the Jubilee Centre as an Attendant. In addition, she later attended a

full detoxification program in Sudbury which included a three month training period at the Pine Gate Women's Detoxification Centre in Sudbury.

"I enjoy working with people and helping others. Being able to assist people in the community has always been a great motivation in my life. I have had my own share of hardships in my life and these experiences have made me want to help others more. It has made me want to go the extra length to help other people," said Elder Luke-Maher.

Elder Luke-Maher is now retired but continues to provide assistance to organizations as an Elder and volunteer. Currently, she assists a local church organization in Timmins. In addition, she also actively works with the Workforce 2000 Initiative in Timmins as a First Nation Elder.

Elder Luke-Maher explained that she is grateful to be able to help others.

"It is an overwhelming feeling to know that I can help others by just being able to listen while they talk. I think others feel good when we are able to

accept each other for who we are and get to know one another," said Elder Maher-Luke.

She believes that her role as an Elder is to help others in the community.

"I think my role as an Elder is to show others that we should care for one another and respect each other," said Elder Luke-Maher.

As a First Nation Elder, she believes that education is important for young First Nation people.

"Education is empowering for people so it is important for everyone. We can gain experience through our own cultural upbringing as well as from the modern education system. It is important to learn from both the Native and non-Native cultures. I think that we are all teachers

and at the same time are able to learn from others as well," said Elder Maher-Luke.

She is hopeful for the future and is happy to see First Nation people achieving a higher education.

"I encourage young First Nation people to continue their education because it is good for their future. I also want to encourage them to respect themselves and others, as well as share their knowledge and experiences to develop a better understanding with other people," said Elder Luke-Maher.

She is a First Nation Ojibway person and is able to speak her Native language. In her spare time she enjoys reading and going for long walks. Elder Maher-Luke is a member of Mattagami FN.

Ojibway Translations

Here are some useful Ojibway words and phrases with translation into English. We thank Elder Hattie Luke-Maher of Mattagami First Nation for supplying Wabun Sun with this knowledge of the language.

WA-WASH-KEH-SHO - Deer

CHI-KI-SHA-TEH - Really Sunny Out

AHN-TEH EH SAH-EH-YAN - Where Are You Going?

KWEH-KWEH - Hello (an old form of greeting)

KWEH DEH YAM-YAN - Do You Want To Go Pray?

Changes Affect Non-Insured Health Benefits

Some new changes have taken place to the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program. These changes include new policies for the Patient Transportation Program and a new development called the Client Consent Initiative for the collection of patient information for management and monitoring purposes under the NIHB program.

Peggy Claveau, Assistant Health Director for Wabun Health Services explained that changes to the Patient Transportation Program deal mainly with the number of escorts to accompany a patient. Claveau also acts as NIHB Health Care Manager for Wabun Health Services.

"The main differences we have to adjust to have to do with the fact that from now on only one escort is required for a patient regardless of the situation. Before the changes there was some flexibility in the program for cases like when a child required both parents to accompany them on health services related travel from their home. Even in cases such as this the program will only allow for coverage of one parent," said Claveau.

The changes were put in place on April 1, 2003 as part of a new First Nation and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) Medical Transportation framework policy. In addition, the new changes include more detailed and frequent reporting on travel, accommodations and other expenses that are to be covered under the NIHB program.

The Client Consent Initiative is a new change that was initiated by FNIHB. The new initiative requests that clients sign a consent form when accessing

Non-Insured Health Benefits. The consent form enables FNIHB to process claims for provider reimbursement and to monitor drug use patterns. Those that do not sign the consent form still have access to Non-Insured Health Benefits but are required to pay up front for all benefits and submit their own claims for reimbursement to a regional office.

"I want to stress that the Client Consent Initiative only affects Non-Insured Health Benefits. This initiative does not affect the care provided by a General Practitioner, Doctor or Health Centre under the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP)," said Claveau.

Discussions on the issue of client consent for the NIHB program have taken place between Health Canada and First Nation representatives since May 2000. In January 2002, the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) was enacted by the federal government. This legislation meant that health service providers such as pharmacies, laboratories and health professionals were prevented from transmitting or sharing personal health information of individuals. To deal with this development, the Assembly of First Nations/NIHB National Joint Steering Committee (NJSC) created the Joint Advisory Client Consent Committee.

In September 2002, discussions broke down when the FNIHB unilaterally introduced the NIHB Program Consent Initiative for a 12 month period. In response to this development, the AFN has opposed this initiative in the hopes of creating an alternative to the unilateral deci-

sion. In addition, the AFN has expressed serious concern that First Nation people will not be able to access NIHB benefits due to their opposition to the initiative. The AFN has viewed the NIHB program as a fiduciary obligation resulting from Treaty and First Nation rights to health. AFN representatives believe that First Nation people remain uninformed about Health Canada's current approach to gather their consent. As a result, AFN leaders and representatives have started a Strategic Action Plan on Non-Insured Client Consent to guide technical work on developing alternatives and options. The AFN and the Chiefs of Ontario have advised its membership to not sign the consent forms, stating that 'our people continue to have status quo regarding our health care up until September 1, 2003'.

"One of the other arguments that have been made against the Client Consent Initiative is the fact that the majority of our First Nation members do not have the money to pay for benefits up front," said Claveau.

The deadline for clients to sign their Client Consent form is on September 1, 2003, after which, Health Canada has stated that the initiative will be implemented as a legal requirement. If a client continues to choose not to sign, they will be required to purchase the benefit on their own. The NIHB program will reimburse for the purchase of the benefit after submitting a request to a regional Health Canada office. However, the First Nation person would still be required to sign a 'one time' NIHB Program Consent form. In

addition, clients have the option of signing at any time after the deadline and when clients do sign, they can withdraw their consent at any time, even after September 1, 2003.

The NIHB Medical Transportation Program is a Health Canada program that is delivered through Wabun Health Services to each of its six communities. Nationally, the NIHB program provides benefits to approximately 710,000 eligible First Nation and Inuit people throughout Canada. The program is designed to meet the needs of medical and dental services not covered by federal, provincial, territorial or other third party health insurance plans. The NIHB program

includes benefits for drugs, medical transportation, dental, medical supplies and equipment, vision goods and services, crisis intervention, mental health counselling and health care premiums where applicable.

Claveau will be working with other Wabun Health Care workers to provide information sessions for Wabun members on this issue. In June, she is planning on conducting a series of community visits to inform members on these new changes to the NIHB program. For more information on changes to the Patient Transportation Program or the Client Consent Initiative, please contact Wabun Health by phone at 705-268-9066.

Welcome Back Julie Brousseau

Julie (McKay) Brousseau has returned to Wabun Health Services to work as the Wabun Health Clerk. She had previously worked in this position for Wabun and was welcomed back on April 28 to continue her work.

Brousseau returned to Wabun after attending post secondary health studies in southern Ontario.

"Attending post secondary studies was definitely a positive experience and I am glad I had the opportunity to go and do something new. I am still looking at furthering my education in the future. I don't think there is ever a point in our lives when we stop learning. I also discovered that one of the greatest assets I have developed is the experience I have gained while

working at Wabun Health," said Brousseau.

Brousseau explained that she is happy to be at Wabun again.

"I feel good to be back at Wabun. I really looked forward to coming back to work again. There have been some changes since I left but I feel that I am back on track again. I enjoy working with our Wabun clients. I also missed everyone here at Wabun Health and it feels good to back," said Brousseau.

Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director, welcomed Brousseau back to the Wabun Health team.

"Julie has a lot to offer and we are very satisfied that she has come back to serve our Wabun clients," said Lemieux.

Two Elections Held In Wabun First Nations

As a result of an election held in Matachewan First Nation, Elenore Hendrix is now the Chief of that community. Previously the Chief was Richard Winickaby. Chief Hendrix is not new to this position as she held the position of Chief of Matachewan in the recent past.

An election was also held in Mattagami First Nation recently which resulted in the return to the office of the Chief for Chad Boissoneau. Chief Boissoneau has now won his second consecutive term as Chief.

"Congratulations to

both Chief Hendrix and Chief Boissoneau for success in the elections held in their communities. We are happy to welcome Chief Hendrix back to the Board of Directors as she has a lot of experience to draw and it is good to see that Chief Boissoneau will continue to serve his community

and Wabun Tribal Council," said Shawn Batisse, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council.

Wabun Tribal Council Chiefs also include: Chief Roy

Meaniss of Beaverhouse, Chief Paul Mackenzie of Wahgoshig; Chief Christine Venedam of Brunswick House and Chief Anita Stephens of Chapleau Ojibwe.

Poker Run Promotes Diabetes Prevention

A Poker Run Event was organized in Mattagami First Nation to promote healthy living, exercise and diabetes prevention in the community. The event brought out 80 participants from the community. The Poker Run took place on April 30, 2003 as part of the nationally recognised Diabetes Awareness Day on May 1, 2003. The day was organised by Eileen Boissoneau, Community Health Representative (CHR) for Mattagami FN and Therese McLellan, Community Health Nurse (CHN) for the community.

The Poker Run event was a physically challenging event for all ages in the community. Participants had to take part by walking to prearranged points in the community to collect individual cards to play in a game of poker at the end of the

course at the Community Complex. Those who took part had to walk or run at their own pace, as this was not designed as a fast paced racing event and were not allowed to use any vehicles or bicycles. Three grand prize winners were announced at the end of the Poker Run. Grand prizes were awarded to Sarah McKay, who won \$100; Loretta Quachegan, who won \$50 and Chad Naveau who won \$25. Prizes were also drawn at random for participants with gifts that included small items such as T-shirts and canvas carrying bags.

"I want to thank everyone who participated from the community and made this event a success. This was not a race to recognize the fastest or strongest but an event that included everyone and in the end promoted diabetes awareness and exercise," said Boissoneau.

She explained that she and McLellan developed the event and designed the course, rules and regulations. At the end of the event, a Blood Sugar Clinic was held to help community members stay aware of their blood sugar levels.

Boissoneau developed the event after attending a Diabetes Initiatives meeting with Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director in Toronto earlier this year. She gathered several ideas for the promotion of diabetes awareness and prevention and with the help of McLellan settled on coordinating a Poker Run event.

"The event had a great turnout with lots of participation from the community. I congratulate Eileen and Therese on a successful event that has encouraged people to exercise more and promote diabetes prevention in Mattagami FN," said Lemieux.

Alternative Medicine Training Provided

A two day training session on the alternative health practice of Reiki was provided to Wabun Health Staff on May 1 and 2 by Kathy Bobula an Usui Reiki Master, Karuna Reiki Master.

The training which took place in Timmins at Enchanting Moments was attended by: Pauline McKay, Healthy Baby Child Worker and Eileen Boissoneau, Community Health Representative (CHR) both of Mattagami FN; Susan Collins, CHR and Edna Hanson a National Native Alcohol And Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) Worker both of Matachewan FN; Natalie Ellison, CHR and Evelyn Black, NNADAP Worker both from Wahgoshig FN; Therese McLellan, Wabun Health Community Health Nurse (CHN), Cindy Giguere, Wabun Health CHN; Cecile Wesley, Wabun Health CHN; Peggy Claveau, Assistant Director Wabun Health; Darlene Lafontaine, Financial Advisor, Wabun Health and Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director.

The training featured an introduction to Reiki that covered the origin of this alternative

health practice in Japan in the early 1900s and development over the years. The training participants were also provided with a Level 1 experience. The participants learned about Reiki Energy in a manner to provide healing.

This learning can now be utilized by those who took the training to assist others. Reiki is said to be useful in many ways to provide healing for people who suffer from various illnesses including stress.

Scholarship Fund Awards

Wabun Tribal Council has awarded four scholarships this year to post secondary students. The four winners shared in the Annual Wabun Scholarship Fund awards based on their academic performance. The annual awards are provided by Wabun Tribal Council and businesses who are interested in supporting Wabun First Nation students in regards to their education.

The \$1,000 Northern Telephone/Wabun Tribal Council Scholarship Award went to Christina Morris a Wahgoshig First Nation member. In addition the \$500. Wabun Health Services Scholarship was awarded to Mary-Lee Boissoneau of Mattagami First Nation.

Wabun Tribal Council \$350 Scholarships were also awarded to Doreen Fox, a Matachewan First Nation member and Jeanine Batisse also of Matachewan First Nation. Wabun was assisted by First Nation Engineering, Mattagami Construction and Bank of Nova Scotia in providing these scholarships.

"Congratulations to our Wabun Scholarship Award Winners and a heartfelt thanks to all our sponsor partners who make this possible," said Shawn Batisse, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council.

The annual scholarships are open to all post secondary students who are members of a First Nation community in the Wabun Tribal Council.

Health Matters



by Jean Lemieux, Health Director

We like to keep current with new research in regards to health issues in general and more specifically the issues that affect our Wabun First Nation members. With this in mind I would like to bring to your attention some recent information based on research that deals with gestational diabetes and First Nation women.

First let me explain that gestational diabetes is a form of diabetes which occurs temporarily during pregnancy. Women with this condition undergo hormone changes during pregnancy, which interfere with insulin production within the body. Since many women who get gestational diabetes have no symptoms, doctors routinely give them a glucose-screening test between the 24th and 28th weeks. Now even though the high glucose levels go back to normal after pregnancy women who have gestational diabetes have higher risk of developing type two diabetes later on.

Recent studies have shown that First Nation women are twice as likely to develop gestational diabetes compared with the women in the general population. Also they showed that gestational diabetes could be a key factor in the type two diabetes epidemic because of its impact on the next genera-

tion.

I don't want to alarm anyone but at the same time I want to remind all our First Nation members who are pregnant to consult with their family doctor or with their Community Health Nurse to discuss the possibility of screening. If you have gestational diabetes it is also important to follow up with your doctor to make sure that you are screened for type two diabetes annually. In recent studies it was reported that up to 40 percent of women with gestational diabetes may develop type two diabetes when they get older. Those at risk for gestational diabetes include: Women who are overweight before pregnancy; Women with a family history of diabetes; Women who have had babies over 9 pounds at birth and Women who are over the age of 30.

A proper diet and physical exercise are two good preventive measures that anyone can develop so that the risk of getting diabetes is diminished. If you are concerned about gestational diabetes or diabetes in general I suggest you consult with your Community Health Nurse for information on diet and exercise options. We can successfully fight this diabetic epidemic in our communities with education and lifestyle changes. With this in mind I congratulate everyone who participated in the recent Poker Run in Mattagami First Nation which was organized by Eileen Boissoneau, CHR and Therese McLellan, CHN and I urge other communities to consider similar events.

Wabun Sun



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