



# Wabun Sun

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## Elders Gathering Hosted By Matachewan First Nation

Matachewan First Nation hosted the second annual Elders Gathering in October 2007. The one day event was sponsored by Wabun Tribal Council and it was hosted by Matachewan First Nation. The gathering brought together Elders from all of Wabun's First Nation communities.

This is the second such event that has been held in the Wabun Tribal Council area. The first gathering was held in the fall of 2006 in Mattagami First Nation and it is now developing into an annual event. The one day occasion is meant to bring together Elders from the region in a social affair with family and friends.

An opening song was performed by Sage Picody, a young traditional singer from Mattagami First Nation. Vina Landry was also on hand to provide a presentation on the history of Matachewan First Nation during the gathering. She was performed this duty in place of Elder Alfred Batisse, who was not able to attend the event.

A delegation from Nishnawbe-Aski Nation

(NAN) was also on hand to participate in the day's events. Grand Chief Stan Beardy made a presentation during the gathering. He was in attendance along with Ben Cheechoo, Governance Secretariat; Lawrence Jeffries, Treaty Discussion Forum Manager; Donna Kiecmann, Senior Executive Assistant to the Grand Chief; Frank Beardy and Dianne Tookenay.

### PASSING DOWN KNOWLEDGE AND HAVING FUN

The Matachewan First Nation Elders Gathering was held at the community center and the day's events included a mix of local entertainment, traditional performances and various activities. Youth from Mattagami First Nation performed traditional singing and drumming, visiting musicians played fiddle and guitar and a country music band named "The Castellos", provided musical entertainment. Several activities were held during the day including a bannock making competition, a moose calling competition and an arts and crafts workshop. The arts and crafts workshop was headed



**CHIEF WALTER NAVEAU, MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION TAKES PART IN THE MOOSE CALLING COMPETITION DURING THE ELDERS GATHERING IN MATACHEWAN FN. PICTURED FROM L-R ARE: GEORGE SACKANEY, WAHGOSHIG FN; CHIEF NAVEAU AND ELDER MARIE BOUCHER, MATACHEWAN FN.**

by local Matachewan First Nation Elders Vina Landry and Marie Boucher who assisted participants in creating decorative hand drums and other crafts.

"This is a very social event for our Elders and a time to get together with friends and family and to have some fun. We organized

it to bring about some traditional activities that are familiar to our Elders and in a spirit of having a good time. Men were brought together for a bannock competition and the women came together to try their hand at moose calling. It made for an entertaining day that was enjoyed by everyone," said Edna

Hanson, National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (NNADAP) and Mental Health Care Worker for Matachewan First Nation.

Hanson worked with Corinne Wincikaby, Family Support Worker for Matachewan First Nation and Jean Lemieux, Health Director for Wabun Health Services to organize and coordinate the one day event. Wincikaby explained that everyone enjoyed the gathering in Matachewan and that they were also looking forward to next year's event.

"We look forward to seeing this event again in one of Wabun's communities. Everyone really appreciates these gathering as it is a non-political event that is meant as a celebration of our communities and our Elders," said Wincikaby.

Lemieux explained that Wabun Health is very interested in events that feature Elders from the Wabun First Nations.

### WABUN ELDERS SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE

Organizers explained that this event provides a way for Elders to come together in a social event that allows them the opportunity to meet old friends and connect with the greater Wabun community.

## Rene Ojeebah Elected Chief of Brunswick House FN



**NEWLY ELECTED CHIEF OF BRUNSWICK HOUSE FIRST NATION IS CHIEF RENE OJEEBAH WHO RECEIVED THE SUPPORT OF HIS COMMUNITY DURING A LOCAL BI-ELECTION ON JANUARY 26, 2008.**

Rene Ojeebah was elected Chief of Brunswick House First Nation in a bi-election held in the community on January 26, 2008. He will be working with current First Nation Councillors Marjorie Tangie, Charmaine Saunders and Irene Redbreast. Chief Ojeebah comes from a family of political figures who have been leaders in Brunswick House First Nation in the past. His father Alfred Ojeebah, who is currently the Board Chair for Wabun Tribal Council, held the position of Chief for Brunswick House FN in 1967, 1995 and a third time in 1996. In addition, Chief Rene Ojeebah's mother Caroline Ojeebah also served her community as Chief from 1984 to 1986.

"Our main goal is to provide employment opportunities for our members by

seeking out prospective opportunities to work with resource based companies in mining, forestry and hydroelectric projects. We also want to strengthen our ties with other First Nations in the Chapleau area and develop economic development strategies that will benefit all our communities in the future," said Chief Rene Ojeebah.

### LOOKING FORWARD

His community is also looking forward to employment and economic opportunities that will arise from the First Nation's recent partnership with Hydro-mega Incorporated. The company signed an Agreement in Principal in February 2007 to signify the formation of a formal business partnership with Brunswick House FN and Chapleau Ojibwe FN in the development of hydroelectric projects.

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# Brunswick House First Nation Elects New Leadership

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"We are looking forward to the short term benefits of employment for our community and the long term goal of working with Hydromega on hydroelectric projects in our area," said Chief Rene Ojeebah.

He added that he would also like to see his community explore opportunities in renewable and reusable energy.

## EDUCATION INSPIRES CHIEF

Chief Rene Ojeebah is currently completing his final year at Algoma University where he has majored in a three year Fine Arts program. In addition, he is also enrolled in Anishinaabe Studies, a program focused on social issues and movements. This program is offered in partnership with Shingwauk Education Trust - Shingwauk Kinooaage Gamig and the University of Sudbury. In a press release from the Shingwauk Education Trust - Shingwauk Kinooaage Gamig, Chief Rene Ojeebah is quoted as saying that the training he is receiving through the Anishinaabe Studies program is providing a broader view of Aboriginal politics that he will be able to apply to his

work as Chief of his community.

"The program I am taking is based on the study of Canadian politics and aboriginal issues. This has also brought me closer to other Aboriginal people who are also studying First Nation political subjects. All this activity inspired me to run for the leadership of my community and to help in the development of my First Nation," said Chief Rene Ojeebah.

During his time in university, he has held the position of President of the Shingwauk Anishinaabe Students Organization that represents all Aboriginal students at the post-secondary institution. Chief Rene Ojeebah is also active in taking part in traditional and historical political groups. For the past two years, he has attended the Midewiwinin gathering, an aboriginal society that is part of the Three Fires Confederacy, a historic political group of aboriginal peoples from the Great Lakes area that dealt with early European governments in North America. The society encompasses aboriginal peoples in both Canada and the United States surrounding the Great Lakes area and

its members regularly gather to address governance and social issues.

## CHIEF IS ARTIST AND CRAFTSMAN

Chief Rene Ojeebah is also an Aboriginal visual artist and traditional craftsman. He continues to apply his artistic skills, that he has developed for the past 20 years, and shares his knowledge and experience with others by providing workshops on visual arts, traditional teachings and craft making. He attended the White Mountain Academy, an art school based in Elliott Lake, Ontario where he added to his skills as an artist and received training in aboriginal craft work, specifically in birch bark canoe building. He is now working with former classmate at the White

Mountain Academy Christopher Wabie of the Temiskaming First Nation, in providing workshops on traditional birch bark canoe building.

"There are many traditional teachings from our First Nations and our Elders. I feel that these teachings are ideas that we need to learn as First Nation people. I believe that our Aboriginal arts and traditional crafts are important and that we should work at trying to revive and maintain these lost arts," said Chief Rene Ojeebah.

He has been involved in First Nation education for the past ten years and he has volunteered his time to support and advocate for better education in First Nations.

"We need to support our people and our youth in pro-

viding better education as it plays an important role in our lives. A better education will allow our people to keep up with developments in all areas that affect our lives," said Chief Rene Ojeebah.

Chief Rene Ojeebah, 43 years of age, grew up in Brunswick House FN and attended his early education in the town of Chapleau. He remembers his childhood on the old reserve lands in Mount Batton township when the community was located there. The community and his family made the move to the First Nation's present location alongside Highway 101 when he was seven years of age. He has an older sister Debbie Ojeebah, a younger brother Darrell Ojeebah and two younger sisters Lisa Ojeebah and Rosanne Ojeebah.

## Wabun Finance Representatives Attend AFOA Conference

First Nation Financial and Administrative representatives from the Wabun area attended the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association (AFOA) of Canada, Eighth Annual National Conference held in Montreal on February 12 to 14, 2008. Darlene Lafontaine, Financial Advisor for Wabun Tribal Council; Juanita Luke, Band Manager / Financial Administrator for Mattagami First Nation; Pamela Gaudreau, Social Services Administrator / Finance Department for Mattagami First Nation and Diane Riopel, Executive Director / Finance Officer for the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre in Timmins attended the three day event.

"We had the opportunity to learn about new ideas and skills surrounding financial management as it relates to First Nations. We had the

chance to meet other people who are involved in finance and work with First Nations and were able to network and connect with other individuals and service providers who can assist us in our work," said Lafontaine.

She added that workshops and information sessions at the conference also provided much information on developing financial management tools for organizations.

"The workshops gave us a great insight into the steps that need to be taken to assist an organization or First Nation into good governance. The Aboriginal Financial Officers Association also gives us a structure in which we can share best practices amongst peers who are working towards better finance management in First Nations," said Lafontaine.

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## Reflections

by Shawn Batise, Executive Director



To start off with I want to wish all our readers a Happy New Year and a prosperous 2008. As you might know 2007 was a banner year for Wabun Tribal Council and our First Nations. As you have seen through past issues of Wabun Sun we have been making great strides in assisting our First Nations in terms of development within the communities and also dramatically through participation in resource development projects.

We are busier than ever these days in working with our First Nation Chiefs in their efforts to making life better for all of our First Nations. Several mining projects occurring in and around Wabun First Nations are moving ahead with our participation and our involvement. A current mining project development includes the signing of an Impact Benefit Agreement with Liberty Mines and Matachewan, Wahgoshig and Mattagami First Nations. We had already signed a Memorandum of Understand-

ing with the company this past summer. Wabun is also assisting with the negotiations of a Memorandum of Understanding between Matachewan First Nation and Northgate Minerals Corporation. Wahgoshig First Nation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Apollo Gold in January 2007 and then in September 2007 the First Nation signed another Memorandum of Understanding with Sheltered Oak Resources Inc. and Sage Gold Incorporated. With the price of precious metals generally improving I anticipate even more such developments in the future.

### POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS

We have also been negotiating with hydro power developments in our First Nations. Our major success story involves the active partnership of Chapleau Ojibwe and Brunswick House First Nations with Hydromega.

None of these projects merely fell out of the sky. We have developed a dedicated team incorporating our First Nation chiefs and leadership to identify, review and negotiate the details in partnering and participating with industry in the resource development opportunities that have come our way. From the beginning we realized that in the best interest of our First Nations and our future generations we had to find a way to become involved with all of these major mining, power companies and government in a manner that would provide benefits to our people and support the various projects.

I am very proud of and appreciative of the efforts of our negotiating teams. We started with a small core group and we have expanded with leadership involvement to the point where we are actively negotiating on our own. It has been all about capacity building and drawing on our own First Nation leadership so that we are progressing in a way that we have been more or less weaning ourselves off of expensive consultants.

### FUTURE BENEFITS

As we move ahead our First Nation members are finding training and employment opportunities and as well we are benefiting financially. This kind of promise brings hope to our First Nations and in the long term our members will incur benefits far into the future.

We have no intention to sit by the sidelines while the resources in and around our First Nations are developed. This is a new age in terms of opportunities for First Nations and we are resolved to make the most of it. At the same time we are also committed to working with all of our partners to ensure that the utmost is done in terms of environmental, safety and benefit issues. Things are not always easy and we have our ups and downs but the main thing is that there is a meeting of minds going on and we are all sitting at the table and working things out. I look forward to further successes on resource development fronts in the future and I congratulate everyone for all the hard work they are doing in the spirit of cooperation.



# Wabun Health Features Crisis Team Training In Timmins

Wabun Health Services hosted a week long Crisis Team Training event in Timmins, March 3 to 7, 2008. The sessions brought together crisis team members from each Wabun community to provide up to date training on suicide intervention, crisis response and debriefing strategies. The training event was held at the Howard Johnson Inn in Timmins.

Mike Archer, Regional Crisis Coordinator, explained that the people that make up the crisis response program for all of Wabun's communities are regularly kept up to date on the latest training and education. He added that this Crisis Team Training session is part of an ongoing strategy that provides an in depth training event every three years for crisis team members from each of Wabun's communities.

"We provide regular training to our crisis teams in each community but from time to time it is important to host a major training event. All this training ensures that everything is in place and everyone knows what to do when a crisis or emergency occurs," said Archer.

**SUICIDE PREVENTION**  
There were four crisis team members from each of Wabun's communities attending the Crisis Team Training event, including a community crisis coordinator and three additional crisis team members. Participants learned methods of providing support during

a crisis event, development and enhancement of their ability to respond to critical incidents and education on effective strategies and debriefing skills to engage and help vulnerable people affected by a crisis. Training sessions also covered other topics including: suicide intervention techniques, conditions that lead to suicide, warning signs of suicide, warning signs of suicidal behaviour, stages of grief, how suicide has a different impact than other deaths, skill development in individual and group debriefing, review of steps involved in critical incident group debriefing, history and types of critical incidents, special considerations for debriefing in incidents of suicide, how the impact of traumatic events influences people and steps to develop a crisis response team and plan. At the end of the week, participants received a certificate of completion of the training.

The Crisis Team Training was sponsored by Wabun Tribal Council, under the council's crisis training funding and by Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN).

"We always need to be prepared for certain crisis such as suicide and our crisis team members need to be there to help our people deal with these situations. This training will add to their skills and allow them to be better able to help community members. This is also the first time we are focusing on suicide intervention and also

in preventative steps to stop certain situations from arising. This is a new way of looking at things as we have mostly concentrated on looking at situations after the fact rather than considering how these situations occur in the first place," said Archer.

## FOCUS ON FIRST NATION NEEDS

The Crisis Team Training was facilitated by trainers from the Crisis Trauma Resource Institute which is based in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Crisis Trauma Resource Institute is an organization that provides training for individuals, groups or communities who are affected or involved in working with issues of crisis and trauma. The organization is comprised of a group of professionals that draw their knowledge from years of training and experience in the areas of social work, mental health, crisis management, trauma counselling, conflict resolution and psychology. They also bring their skills and experience from working in institutional settings, with individual adults and youth, family groups and in assisting community health organizations. These trainers provide regular public workshops nationally and internationally as well as through onsite training for organizations in the areas of crisis response, trauma, mental health, self harm and suicide; violence and conflict; team building, stress management, conflict and communication and effective life skills for youth.

"The Crisis Trauma

Resource Institute has training that is focused on the needs of First Nation people. Our communities require a unique approach to help our members who are affected by trauma and crisis. It is important for our crisis team members to understand how to deal with these situations in our First Nations," said Archer.

## LARGE NETWORK DEVOTED TO CRISIS RESPONSE

The Crisis Team training is part of an overall first response program that is coordinated by Wabun Health Services in each of its member First Nations. This program provides a strategy that coordinates the work of health care workers, volunteers and emergency response teams in the event of an emergency or crisis in a community. These events include regional emergencies that affect entire communities or a crisis such as a suicide or family violence that affects an individual, family or small group of people. The first response program also works with each Wabun First Nation and local municipalities to ensure the safety of its membership through local and regional comprehensive emergency response plans. Crisis team training also includes the practice and education of preventative measures to avoid emergency or crisis events.

As part of the first response program, each community has a local community crisis coordinator that is supported by three crisis team members, as well as by

local and regional health care workers and emergency response teams. These local crisis team members are mainly prominent community members who are regularly called upon by others for their assistance in crisis events or emergencies.

"Our crisis team members are an important part of our crisis response program. These are individuals that want to help their people and they are also the ones that are called upon by others in their community when a crisis occurs. Together with a local community crisis coordinator these crisis team members work alongside our health care front line workers to ensure the safety and well being of our First Nation members," said Archer.

He commented that the first response program and the crisis teams in each community have played a significant role in major events in Wabun's First Nations.

"We have noticed that in the past few years, the number of family violence events and suicides has come down. This is due to the hard work of our community crisis teams. They are there to help when a crisis event happens and also to assist community members lead healthier lives so as to prevent any negative situations from occurring. We commend them for their dedication because we would not be able to help our people without their efforts," said Archer.

# AFOA Provides Support For Aboriginal Finance Professionals

## CONT FROM PG 2

She has received certification as a Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager (CAFM) from the AFOA of Canada. Lafontaine acquired this certification during the organization's annual conference in Calgary which was held in 2004. Every conference that is held by the AFOA of Canada includes a CAFM Convocation where Aboriginal Finance Managers are brought together to determine how they can acquire their CAFM certification.

The eighth annual AFOA National Conference was titled "Aboriginal Management and Leadership - Working Together Towards Prosperity". This event, which was held at the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal, brought together First Nation financial professionals, management leaders and elected officials from across the country.

The conference provided workshops for participants on financial manage-

ment, governance and workplace management. Presentations were also made to highlight Aboriginal success stories in governance and management and during the second day an awards ceremony was held to honour individuals in Aboriginal youth financial management. Key note presentations were made by Dr. Wilton Littlechild, Member, United Nations Permanent Forum On Indigenous Issues and by Senator Gerry St. Germain, Chair, Standing Senate Committee On

Aboriginal Peoples. Entertainment was also provided by First Nation and Inuit performers.

The AFOA of Canada is an organization that assists First Nation finance professionals and leaders in capacity development. The not for profit organization was founded in 1999 on the basis of providing assistance to communities and professionals in finance and management practices and skills. The goal of the organization is to help Aboriginal communities

and agencies acquire effective management skills that will assist in social, economic and political development. The organization's members are given the opportunity for professional development, access to programs, products and services; networking opportunities and communications; career advancement and accreditation by adhering to professional standards.

For further information on AFOA-CANADA, please visit the website [www.afoa.ca](http://www.afoa.ca).



# Elders Gathering In Matachewan FN Draws Many Participants

CONT FROM PG 1

"It felt good to see all our Elders in one gathering and to hear them speak in our traditional language. Everyone really enjoyed themselves as they were able to spend time with old friends and this allowed them meet new people from our other Wabun communities," said Hanson.

The day ended with a feast that was organized by local caterers Mary Batisse and Julie Wincikaby with the assistance of community volunteers. Gift bags were also presented to vis-

iting Elders and prizes were awarded for the day's activities.

"We would like to thank our Wabun Elders for participating and taking part in this gathering. We are grateful to our First Nation Chief and Council for their support and for hosting this event. In addition, we could not have done this without the guidance of Alfred Batisse and Jean Lemieux at Wabun and all the Elders that helped by providing their input and support for this event," said Wincikaby.

Lemieux explained that

the Elder's Gathering came out of a need from community members and Elders. In the late 1990s, Wabun Tribal Council members, staff, health care workers and Elders regularly came together to discuss traditional and cultural topics in their respective First Nations. Lemieux recalled one meeting in particular in 2000, where she sat with Elder Thomas Saunders, of Brunswick House First Nation.

"He wanted to make a presentation at the meeting but his way of speaking to an audience was different

from what everyone else understood. He spoke as if telling a series of stories that expressed his thoughts and feelings and he motioned to me to translate his ideas to the group," said Lemieux.

She added that his presentation was delivered in a traditional manner that was once used by Elders when they wanted to convey an idea with feeling and emotion.

"He talked about his experiences, life on the land, hunting, trapping and his community. He also talked about his recollec-

tions of gatherings when he was a child and how he and his friends peaked through the tents and teepees to watch leaders, Elders and traditional people gather to discuss many things. It was amazing to listen to these stories and to understand the ideas, morals and traditional beliefs he wanted us to know. Through his stories, he was showing us that an Elders gathering was a traditional event that was part of our cultural background," said Lemieux.

CONT ON PG 5



HAVING A LAUGH DURING THE MOOSE CALLING COMPETITION AT THE ELDERS GATHERING IN THE FOREGROUND ARE HELEN MCKENZIE (LEFT), TEMISKAMING FIRST NATION, QUEBEC AND SOFI MILLER, MATTAGAMI FN.



FIRST NATION LEADERS HAD A CHANCE TO MEET DURING THE ELDERS GATHERING IN MATACHEWAN FN. PICTURED ARE CHIEF ELENORE HENDRIX (LEFT), MATACHEWAN FN AND CHIEF DAVE BABIN, WAHGOSHIG FN.



ELDERS AND YOUTH INTERACTED AT THE ELDERS GATHERING IN MATACHEWAN FN. PICTURED FROM L-R ARE: LISA DIAMOND, WAHGOSHIG FN; ELAINE DALY, MATACHEWAN FN; LAWRENCE NAVEAU, MATTAGAMI FN; LIZ BABIN, WAHGOSHIG FN AND SAGE PICODY, OF MATTAGAMI FN WHO PERFORMED THE OPENING SONG AT THE EVENT. SEATED IN FRONT IS DON MILLEN OF MATACHEWAN FN.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS FROM WABUN'S FIRST NATIONS SOCIALIZED AT THE ELDERS GATHERING. PICTURED FROM L-R ARE: EDNA HANSON, EVELYN BLACK AND LIZ BABIN.



TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDED A MOOSE CALLING COMPETITION DURING THE ELDERS GATHERING IN MATACHEWAN FN. PICTURED IN FOREGROUND IS JAMES BATISSE, MATTAGAMI FN AND IN THE BACKGROUND ARE COUNCILLOR ELAINE DALY (LEFT), MATACHEWAN FN AND CHIEF ELENORE HENDRIX, MATACHEWAN FN.



MOOSE CALLING BROUGHT OUT SOME RARE PERFORMANCES DURING THE ELDERS GATHERING. PICTURED IS ELDER VINA LANDRY, MATACHEWAN FN.



WABUN STAFF SUPPORTED THE ELDERS GATHERING. PICTURED IS WABUN HEALTH DIRECTOR, JEAN LEMIEUX HAVING A TRY AT MOOSE CALLING.



# Wabun Elders Take Time To Celebrate Culture And Traditions

**CONT FROM PG 4**

From this meeting and Elder Saunder's presentation, Lemieux along with

the other meeting members began discussions on how to create an Elders gathering in their communities.

She added that they continued to consult with Elder Saunders on a regular basis. He provided encouragement and support for such an event and he looked forward to attending a gathering of Elders.

"He was aware of his age and health and he said that he may not be here to see an Elders gathering. However, we made a promise that we

would do our best to make his wish a reality. Our first gathering was a great success and Elder Thomas Saunders was still with us to hear about the event. Unfortunately, he was not able to attend this gathering he had hoped to see as he was in the hospital," said Lemieux.

Elders Thomas Saunders passed on a year after the

first Elders Gathering took place. Lemieux said that she was happy to have helped Elder Saunders realize his dream.

"Elder Thomas Saunders was someone who cared about bringing youth and Elders together. His sharing inspired the Elder's Gathering and helped to ensure that we will not lose our traditional knowledge," said Lemieux.



**TRADITIONAL CRAFT MAKING WAS ANOTHER ACTIVITY THAT WAS PART OF THE ELDERS GATHERING IN MATACHEWAN FN. PICTURED FROM L-R ARE MATTAGAMI ELDERS BEATRICE GOULAIS AND CLARA PRINCE.**



**MANY MATTAGAMI ELDERS CAME OUT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELDERS GATHERING IN MATACHEWAN FN. PICTURED FROM L-R ARE MATTAGAMI ELDERS FRANK MCKAY AND MIKE NAVEAU.**



**HAVING FUN WHILE TAKING PART IN A MOOSE CALLING COMPETITION DURING THE ELDERS GATHERING IN MATACHEWAN FN IS COUNCILLOR GERTRUDE NOLAN, MATACHEWAN FN.**

## Mattagami First Nation Elder Irene Luke Passes



**MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION WAS SADDENED AT THE PASSING OF LOCAL ELDER IRENE LUKE ON JANUARY 25, 2008. SHE IS PICTURED HERE ON THE LEFT WITH HER SISTER NANCY NAVEAU DURING THE ELDERS GATHERING IN MATACHEWAN FN IN OCTOBER 2007.**

Irene Luke (Nee Naveau) passed away at the age of 77 years, January 25, 2008 at the Sudbury Memorial Hospital. She was a well respected elder in Mattagami First Nation. She was predeceased by her husband Aubrey Luke in 1977 and an infant daughter Shirley Luke in 1952. Also predeceasing her were her brothers Stanley, Edward, William, Joseph, Edmond and her sisters Julia, Jane, Clara, Lena and Mary.

Irene Luke is survived by her children Howard (Melva), Sally (Rick), Sandra (John), Myrna, Melvin (Bonnie) and Doreen. She is also survived by her grandchildren

Jason (Penny), Curtis (Dorothy), Greg (Feather), Ryan, Luke, Connie, Scott (Joy) and Troy. Great grandchildren surviving her include Caitlin, Channing, Chance, Aubrey, Savery, Kali, Trinity, Samara, Deacon, Aries, Phoenix and Manuel. In addition she leaves her brother Mike Naveau, her sisters Beatrice Goulais and Nancy Naveau as well as many nieces and nephews. A funeral service was held at 11 a.m. on Tuesday January 29, 2008 at the Mattagami First Nation Community Complex with interment following at the Mattagami First Nation Cemetery.

## Sue Collins Is Featured Health Care Worker



**SUE COLLINS, COMMUNITY HEALTH REPRESENTATIVE, MATACHEWAN FN**

Susan (Sue) Collins, Community Health Representative for Matachewan First Nation, is the featured Health Care Worker for this issue of Wabun Sun. She is a long time member of her community's health care team as she has worked in this position for the past 15 years.

As CHR, Collins is responsible for assisting local community members in accessing health care services. She oversees the Patient Transportation Program where she manages the referral services for this program in her community. In addition, she provides educational

materials for local members, promotes healthy lifestyles, advocates for local members accessing medical services and promotes lifestyle choices that help to prevent the onset of disease and poor health. Collins is in constant contact with local community members during her day and she works closely with the rest of the Wabun Health staff to ensure health services are provided to local First Nation members. Her office is located inside the First Nation administration office in Matachewan First Nation.

"I enjoy working with my community and meeting those I have known for a long time on a regular basis. Even though I have been at this position for many years, there is always something new and I enjoy the many challenges that my work brings," said Collins.

### DIABETES EDUCATION

Currently, she is adding to her work experience by attending a 12 week program at Yellow Quill College in Thunder Bay to become a Diabetes

Prevention Worker. She started this program in October 2007 and she will complete it in June 2008. The program is designed to offer students in existing employment positions the opportunity to continue their current work placement while at the same time complete an educational program. During the 12 week program, Collins attends a one week in class training period in Thunder Bay. She then returns for three weeks at her work place and she has the opportunity to complete assignments through long distance education. The program provides teaching in all aspects of diabetes education and training including: an overview on diabetes, symptoms of diabetes, types of diabetes and their management, personal care techniques, exercise and diabetes, impact of diabetes on families, preparing healthy meals, motivating the community on diabetes and planning a community diabetes program.

**CONT ON PG 6**



# Water Treatment Plant And Power Service Upgraded In Mattagami FN

Mattagami First Nation is redeveloping its water treatment plant and upgrading the electric power system for the community. The water treatment plant, which is currently still under construction, will come online May 2008. The new power system has been installed but will not be operational until the water treatment plant is completed. This major five million dollar infrastructure upgrade for the First Nation has been in the making for several years and has involved local leadership, Wabun Tribal Council and the assistance of technical services and government agencies to make it possible. The project received financial assistance from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) under the agency's major capital funding budget. Chechetto & Sons Construction started construction of the new facility in September 2007. The company hired on several members of Mattagami FN.

"We are very happy with the water treatment plant development and upgraded power system for our community. Before this change, our community did not have an adequate water system and the power system was unreliable. This major upgrade to services in our community will provide our First Nation with safe drinking water with the added benefit of a more stable power system. This upgrade has also meant a lot to our people in terms of employment and work experience," said Chief Walter Naveau.

## SAFE WATER SUPPLY

He explained that the new water system will also ensure a safe supply of water pressure for fire hydrants, the local school and administration buildings. In addition, the new system will mean an end hopefully to regular boil water advisories which were common in the past due to an inadequate water treatment system.

"We are planning on hosting a celebration and feast to open the new system to announce the change to the community and to recognize the hard work of so many people," said Chief Naveau.

In 2004, Wabun Tribal Council with the guidance of the First Nation started the process of accessing funding to upgrade the community's water treatment facilities. An engineering assessment on the existing treatment plant was completed to identify any deficiencies in the system and to help establish options for

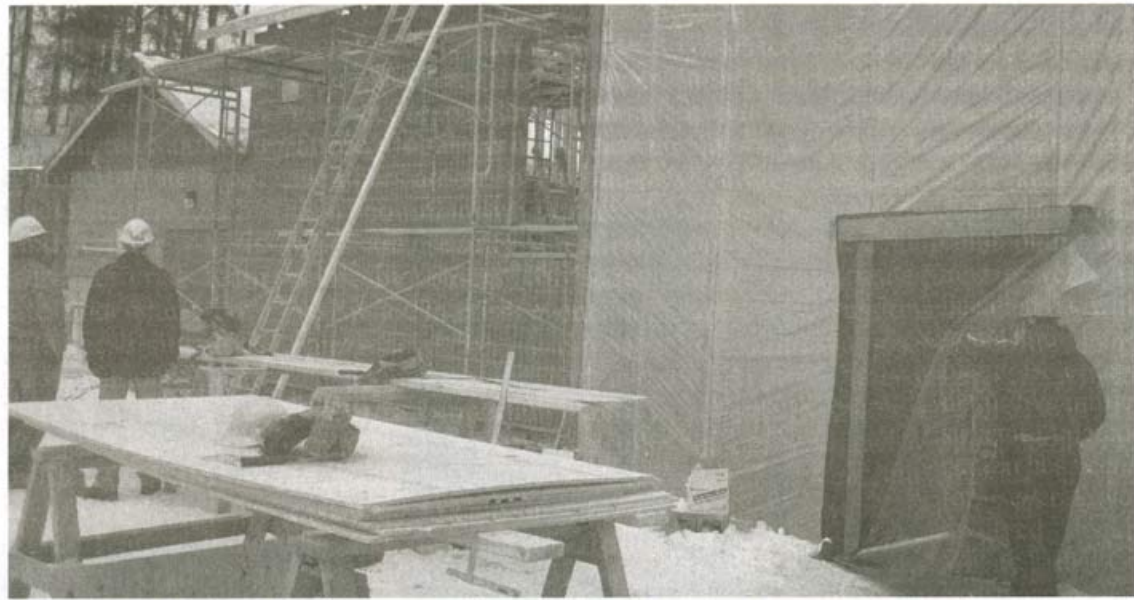
upgrading or redevelopment. As a result of this assessment Wabun Tribal Council and Mattagami FN identified that in order to provide the community with an adequate water services system a significant capital investment was needed to overhaul the old system.

## CHIEF AND COUNCIL SUPPORT

"We worked alongside everyone involved to get this job done. However, the original budget that was provided only specified a half million dollar upgrade to the old system. We did not want a temporary solution to a major problem so we lobbied the government to provide a more permanent solution. It may have taken us a long time to get this project going but it ensured that the community's troubles with water would be properly addressed. We would not have been able to do this without the support of our Wabun leadership and the Chief and Council of Mattagami FN," said Jason Batise, Economic Development and Technical Services Advisor for Wabun Tribal Council.

In addition to this major water service upgrade, Wabun Tribal Council and local leadership also identified that in order to provide a reliable water treatment plant for the community, the new system required a whole new power service. Currently, the community is powered on what is known as single phase power. This is a basic power service that is plagued with frequent power outages or brownouts. In order for the new plant to operate properly, it needed a steady flow of power to allow more modern instrumentation, new motors and large components to operate efficiently and reliably. The community's electric system will now be upgraded to a three phase power system which is more robust and it will be more capable of withstanding storms, fallen trees and high winds. The new line has been installed to connect Mattagami FN to the nearby town of Gogama.

"The community needed a more reliable source of power so we petitioned INAC to upgrade the power service to provide a well rounded system for the new water treatment plant. Hydro One is intending on upgrading the electrical service to Gogama in the future so hopefully, we have taken the first step in ensuring that Mattagami is



**MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION IS CURRENTLY UPGRADING ITS WATER TREATMENT PLANT AND ELECTRICAL SERVICE SYSTEMS FOR THE COMMUNITY. PICTURED IS THE WATER PLANT UNDER CONSTRUCTION.**

well equipped to provide a reliable power system for years to come," said Batise.

## LOCAL COMPANY INVOLVED

The new line which stretches 22 kilometers between the community and Gogama is now completely installed but it will not be in operation until the Water Plant project has been completed in May 2008. Project organizers were also able to secure a \$350,000 contract for Mitika Logging, a Mattagami First Nation forestry company which employs local members. They were contracted to do cutting along the new power line.

The new water treatment plant was designed by First Nation Engineering, a Native owned engineering company based on the Six Nations of the Grand River, in Oshweken, Ontario. First Nation Engineering has acted as project consultants on all of Wabun Tribal Council's water treatment plant projects in its member communities. The Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) managed the project development and worked with local leadership and Wabun Tribal Council in developing the new water treatment plant. The OCWA is a crown agency of the Province of Ontario that is

mandated to provide clean water management services to communities in Ontario.

"We would not have been able to complete this project without the support of the First Nation. Local leadership established a Band Council Resolution stating their support of the project and they were kept up to date on the development of the project as it progressed. Once the plant is completed, it will provide the community with clean healthy water for the next 25 to 30 years," said Batise.

## EMPLOYMENT AND LONG TERM BENEFITS

The project has provided short term employment for local members and in the end it will also mean long term benefits by providing reliable and safe drinking water for the community.

"This will be a state of the art facility with all the modern conveniences of operation similar to ones that exist in other larger communities throughout Ontario under the project management of the OCWA. This organization has been instrumental in helping us put this together and they have noted that the water plants in our Wabun communities are among the best they have seen. Compared to some municipalities, the water plants in our Wabun communities are slightly more modern,"

said Batise.

After completion, the new plant will be operated by Morris Wheesk, a member of Mattagami FN, who has Level Two Water Plant Operator training. In fact, Wheesk is the highest trained water plant operator in all of Wabun Tribal Council's communities.

"We were pleased to see that Morris will be the one to operate this new plant. He is our highest trained Water Plant Operator and that will ensure that the new plant will be well looked after," said Batise.

Chief Naveau pointed out that the new changes will give the community more modern and safer services for the future.

"This major infrastructure upgrade for our community has gone beyond our original expectations. These changes will mean better living conditions for our Elders and a safer environment for our children. We would like to thank the hard work of Wabun Tribal Council as well as Ontario Power, Chechetto & Sons Construction, First Nation Engineering and the people at the Ontario Clean Water Agency. We would also like to thank our members for their patience and for their support of local leadership," said Chief Naveau.

## Sue Collins Provides Support For Community

### CONT FROM PG 5

"I feel that this type of training is important to add to my experience as a health care worker.

Diabetes is a widespread health problem in our Native communities so any education we can acquire on this subject is important for the future health of our people. This is an intensive educational program offered by

Yellowquill and I am happy with the level of training and education that I am receiving," said Collins.

Her training is being funded through the support of Health Canada and Matachewan First Nation.

"I commend Sue for all her good work in helping her community and for her motivation in obtaining valuable education and expertise to

assist people in her First Nation" said Jean Lemieux, Health Director for Wabun Health Services.

In her position as CHR, she has completed numerous training programs and educational courses concerning her work in the health care field. Collins is a First Nation Ojibway person and a member of Matachewan First Nation.



# Wabun Health Wellness Workshop Features Prominent First Nation Facilitators

Wabun Health Services hosted a Men's and Women's Wellness Workshop in October 2007 that brought together people from Wabun's First Nations with the goal of helping them to lead healthier lives. The event attracted 31 participants to the Howard Johnson Inn in Timmins for a three day workshop from October 16 to 18, 2007. Wabun Tribal Council sponsored the workshop.

"This is the second wellness workshop we have held. In our first year we provided a workshop for men but this year we wanted to include women. We felt that it would be more inclusive to have an event for both men and women. Everyone was happy with the event and it was successful in that many special moments took place and it brought together many people in a healthy and sharing environment. This is a gathering that is getting bigger every year and hopefully we will be able to do it again in the future," said Mike Archer, Regional Crisis Coordinator for Wabun Health Services.

## WELLNESS WORKSHOP A JOINT EFFORT

Archer worked with Jean Lemieux, Wabun Health Director in organizing and managing the event. He acted as coordinator and as back up counsellor to support workshop group participants.

The event drew 15 men and 16 women from all of Wabun's First Nations. Workshop participants covered all age groups which ranged from 18 to 65 years of age. The men's portion of the workshop was facilitated by Billy Rogers, a prominent

First Nation wellness trainer and speaker. The women's workshop sessions were led by Maria Trevizo, a traditional Native American teacher, singer and ceremonialist.

The overall workshop was based on giving both men and women a better understanding of their roles in a family group. They learned how to better communicate with others, and discovered more about themselves as people. Participants were also provided information on how to prevent family violence and how to become healthier members of a larger community. The men's workshop centered around group work and communication and this focused on topics including: manhood, self image, why we wear masks, good native man, controlling anger, healthy family characteristics, relationships and male sexuality. The women's workshop covered topics including: trust building, family patterns, historical trauma, healing circles and relationships. The women's activities also included learning how to make traditional crafts such as medicine bags. Workshop sessions included participation in role playing activities, group sessions and presentations by the facilitators.

## MEN AND WOMEN WORKSHOPS FEATURED

The three day workshop was organized into two groups - one for men and one for women. The first and second days had two separate workshops that were designed for men or women only. On the third day, organizers brought everyone



**WOMEN'S WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS** INCLUDED FIRST NATION MEMBERS FROM WABUN FIRST NATIONS. PICTURED ARE FEMALE PARTICIPANTS BACK ROW L-R ARE: TANYA MATHEWS, SUE CHOKOMOLIN, BEVERLY NAVEAU (IN BACK), BONNIE SACKANEY, FREE FOX, CAROL DESMOULIN, CYNTHIA DIAMOND (IN BACK), GINGER NADON AND ELIZABETH BABIN. FRONT ROW L-R ARE: FLORENCE BATISSE, ALICE PICODY, VALERIE BULL, MARIA TREVIZO, WOMEN'S WORKSHOP FACILITATOR; BERNADETTE MORRIS AND THERESA SUTHERLAND.

together in a large sharing circle where participants talked about their roles in a family and a community, their expectations of the opposite sex and how they can communicate with each other. In all, the goals of the various components of this workshop were to show participants how to live in a family without violence, how to better communicate with others, how to create a healthier family and how to become productive members of a community.

Archer explained that participants provided very positive feedback on the event and that they look forward to future workshops on health and wellness.

"We are hopeful that we will be able to provide a workshop such as this again in the future. It was good to see that about half of the male participants were individuals that attended last year's men's wellness workshop. It was evident in the men that came back that there was a great change in

their ability to share and communicate their thoughts and feelings with others around them. The workshops show that they do have an impact on the lives on the people that attend," said Archer.

## FACILITATORS HAVE VAST EXPERIENCE

Billy Rogers is the owner and director of "Native Workshops", a training company he founded in 2000. Rogers has been involved in Native wellness and health organizations for the past 24 years and he has worked for over 390 Native communities to promote healthy living and well being. He is a member of the Kiowa Nation and his credentials include a Master of Science in Public Health/Health Administration, Oklahoma University Health Sciences Center and a Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma. In addition, he has published several articles focusing on Native family systems, youth empowerment and health promotion. This is the second time that

Rogers has visited the Wabun area. Previously, he facilitated a Wellness Workshop in Brunswick House First Nation in January 2007.

Maria Trevizo is a traditional Native American teacher, singer and ceremonialist who is a descendant of the people of Isleta de Sur Pueblo of Texas and the Tarascos of Mexico. She has a degree in psychiatry and substance abuse counselling and she has worked in the health and wellness field with youth and adults in many Native American communities in Canada, the United States and Mexico.

"This is the second time we have had Billy Rogers come to facilitate such an event. He is a very knowledgeable speaker. It was also good to have Maria Trevizo as part of our workshop as she brought new ideas and skills for our women as it relates to health and wellness. We thank them both for sharing their knowledge and experience with our Wabun First Nation members," said Archer.



**MEN'S WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS** WERE LED BY FACILITATOR BILLY ROGERS, FROM THE KIOWA NATION IN THE UNITED STATES. PICTURED ARE THE MALE PARTICIPANTS, STANDING IN BACK L-R: MAURICE PARENT, DAN STUBBE, JOSEPH NADON, LINDSAY BLACK, PHILIP MAURER, BILLY ROGERS (HOLDING PAINTING) MEN'S WORKSHOP FACILITATOR; MORRIS WHEESK (STANDING IN BACK), GEORGE SACKANEY, MIKE ARCHER, JOEL (BEAR) BABIN, TERRY MATHIAS (IN BACK), MARTIN MILLEN AND DOUGLAS REDBREAST. IN FRONT FROM L-R ARE: AJ SUTHERLAND, DAVID BLACK AND DONALD MILLEN.



**WABUN MEMBERS** HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET TOGETHER AND GAIN NEW SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE DURING THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S WELLNESS WORKSHOP, OCTOBER 16 TO 18, 2008. PICTURED ARE FROM L-R: BEVERLY NAVEAU, ALICE PICODY, MARIA TREVIZO WOMEN'S WORKSHOP FACILITATOR AND VALERIE BULL.



# Health Care Workers Retreat Features Traditional Education



**PEGGY CLAVEAU,**  
ASSISTANT HEALTH DIRECTOR,  
WABUN HEALTH SERVICES

Services.

She explained that most of the people involved had witnessed sweat lodge ceremonies before but this was the first time they had an opportunity to actively take part in developing one.

"We did not realize how much work went into building a sweat lodge and the amount of knowledge and teaching that goes into performing the ceremonies. It took our group half a day to prepare the sweat lodge and Liz and Martin were patient teachers who provided us plenty of information and knowledge about this traditional practice. It was also a team building exercise as it brought all of us together to take part in an activity that was memorable and educational," said Claveau.

Participants at the Health Care Workers Retreat also took part in other events during the week. On one evening, Terese Manilla, Community Health Nurse for Mattagami First Nation, offered a workshop on the use of essential oils and provided an introduction and informative presentation on this therapeutic treatment. Participants also took part in a hiking excursion led by Pam Hamel, General Manager of the Eco Lodge. The group toured on the trails surrounding the lodge. In addition they took part in gathering natural materials from the forest to create their own decorative crafts to take home.

## TAKING TIME TO MEET AND LEARN

The Health Care Workers Retreat also allowed Wabun's health care team to come together in a relaxed environment and socialize with other health care members.

"Since our health care workers are so busy during the year we organize this retreat so that they can take some time out of their schedules to learn new methods, treatments and ways of caring for people in need. Even though we are learning new ideas it is also an opportunity to spend time away from the office in a new environment. We may see each other or talk over the phone throughout the year but it is really great to take the time and make the effort to be meet in person with our health care team members in a relaxed and learning setting," said Claveau.

Organizers of the event focused on taking parts of the event into the outdoors to offer a break for staff from the

routine activities that keep them inside buildings and offices most of the time. The Health Care Workers Retreat was originally scheduled to take place earlier in October but due to scheduling conflicts with staff and participants it was moved back to November.

"We have held several Health Care Retreats in the past for our health care team and this has been one of the most informative and educational. However, due to the poor weather and the timing of the event our turnout was down a little. We were very happy with the outcome of the event and our next event will

focus more on increasing attendance," said Claveau.

The event was sponsored by Wabun Health Services. It is organized with the participation of the health care team through regular input and meetings during the year.

"We are looking forward to our next event in 2009 and we invite our health care team members to give us their feedback and share their thoughts on what they would like to see," said Claveau.

Participants at the event included Jean Lemieux, Health Director; Peggy Claveau, Assistant Health Director; Cindy Giguere,

Community Health Nurse (CHN), Matachewan FN; Bernadette Morris, Health Care Aide, Wahgoshig FN; Ginger Nadeau, Community Health Representative (CHR); Evelyn Black, National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (NNADAP) Worker, Wahgoshig FN; Michelle Carrier, CHN Brunswick House FN and Chappleau Ojibwe FN; Theresa Manilla, CHN, Mattagami FN and Caroline Ojeebah, CHR, Brunswick House FN.

The event was facilitated by Liz Babin, of Wahgoshig FN and Martin Millen of Matachewan FN.

## Health Matters

by Jean Lemieux, Health Director



**JEAN LEMIEUX,**  
HEALTH DIRECTOR,  
WABUN HEALTH SERVICES

As you notice in this issue of Wabun Sun we are putting a lot of effort into bringing people together for educational, social and healing initiatives. I am very happy with the turnout we had this past year at the Elder's Gathering which was held in Matachewan First Nation. It just makes me feel so good to see so many of our elders having the opportunity to gather in a relaxed social setting. This is a time when they can socialize and see old friends while at the same time pass on some of their knowledge and teachings to us all.

I want to point out that the initial idea and motivation for establishing our annual Elder's Gathering all started with input from one of our cherished elders, Thomas Saunders of Brunswick House First Nation. This all came about in a meeting we were having in the year 2000 and Thomas in a very wise way introduced the importance of bringing our elders together. He planted the

seed that day for what has become an important event for all Wabun First Nations and I am happy to report that it is getting better and bigger as we go along. Thomas passed away and never had the opportunity to actually attend the event but his energy and spirit certainly contributed to getting this annual gathering off the ground.

I want to thank everyone involved this year in putting together the gathering as it is a big job and takes a lot of effort and skill to produce. Thanks to Chief and Council of Matachewan First Nation and also special Meegwetch to Edna Hansen and Corinne Wincikaby for their efforts in staging the conference.

We also made sure that our youth had the opportunity to connect with this event and we are planning to do more of that in the future. In the last issue of Wabun Sun we reported on the Wabun Youth Conference. I am really excited about all the initiatives that are taking place in our Wabun First Nations involving youth. We are going to continue to put increased focus on developing programs and resources for our youth as they really hold our future as a people in their hands. It is up to us to give them as much as we can in terms of education, teachings and traditions and the encouragement to move ahead and do wonderful things. As you can see in this issue of Wabun Sun we are progressing

in developing programs and resources committed to helping our First Nation members and with safety and healing in mind. I am happy to see so many bridges developing between our elders and our youth. We are very positive in making sure that these bridges and opportunities for our elders and youth to meet are happening often.

Some of our Wabun First Nations have gone ahead with their own form of bringing youth and elders together. Mattagami and Matachewan have developed programs where elders spend time with youth in language classes and in making traditional crafts. Mattagami youth have had the opportunity to take part in a program where they learned traditional hunting skills. It is obvious to us that when we can connect the elders, adults and youth it brings balance to our communities. We have so many knowledgeable and skilled people in our First Nations and I am happy to see them sharing what they have learned and what has been passed down to them with others in our communities.

We will be running the Elder's Gathering again next year as well as the Youth Conference. As part of our ongoing development in these areas we will also be supporting community initiatives dedicated to our elders and youth.



**Wabun Sun**

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