



The Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Working Group met in the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation on July 9-10, 2018, to receive presentations from keynote speakers and provide input to advance the implementation of the Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Law. — Photo by Laura Barrios

Child Well-Being Working Group meet to advance implementation of Child Well-Being Law

By Laura Barrios

ALGONQUINS OF PIKWAKANAGAN—The Child Well-Being Working Group gathered in the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation in July to receive presentations from various keynote speakers and provide input to advance the implementation of the Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Law.

The Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Law is the law approved by the Anishinabek Chiefs-in-Assembly by Grand Council Resolution and being adopted by the Anishinabek First Nations in accordance with the First Nation law-making process.

“We have 11 out of 40 First Nations that have ratified or approved the implementation of the Child Well-Being Law,” shared Tracey O’Donnell, Child Well-Being Law legal counsel. “Those communities are moving forward. Meetings with Chiefs and Councils and citizens will need to continue in the other First Nations. Each First Nation has to decide for itself whether it will enact the Child Well-Being Law.”

In accordance with the law, the Child Well-Being System will be established pursuant to the Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Law to support Anishinabek child and youth well-being and family unity.

“First Nations implementing and adhering to the Child Well-Being Law are exercising their inherent jurisdiction over the well-being of their children, regardless of residency,” explained O’Donnell. “The law will ensure the safety and well-being of their children and youth, families and communities. It acknowledges, respects and supports the primary role of parents/guardians, families and communities in safeguarding and promoting the well-being of the children and youth. It provides for the protection and care of children and youth in circumstances where their parents or guardians have not given or are unlikely or unable to give that protection and care. The law also ensures that traditions, culture, values and language are maintained. Lastly, the law ensures that adoptions only occur on the approval of the parent or guard-

ian and the First Nation the child and youth and his or her parents or guardians belong to. Additionally, the law will also establish the legislative framework for the structure of the Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Coordinating body; community agreements; and community standards.”

The 67 participants and members of the working group are encouraged to see that things are moving forward so well and so quickly.

“With Ontario, the Anishinabek Nation negotiated and signed a protocol agreement and a relationship agreement in less than nine months. The Anishinabek Nation also negotiated a draft collaboration agreement,” noted O’Donnell.

The working group, which is comprised of current or retired Social Workers, Directors of Social departments, citizens from Anishinabek First Nations and agency representatives, reviewed various strategic priorities. These priorities, which also included break-out sessions and presentations, are:

Establishing a Children’s Bill of Rights, developing a new relationship with Ontario, securing recognition of First Nation jurisdiction and funding from Canada, establishing and implementing a communications strategy.

“The Child Well-Being Working group keeps growing and it’s amazing and wonderful to see how many people have concerns and interest in making the future better for the kids,” expressed Hilda Tennisco, citizen of Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and member of the working group. “It’s nice to see everything that we’re doing and where we’re at now, what needs to get done, and what we need to work towards.”

Participants also received presentations on Alternative Dispute Resolution, Anishinabek Nation Grandparents Committee, Community Agreement and Community Standards, Action Plan for Anishinabek Children and Youth, Collaboration with the Kinoomaadzawin Education Body, and Elder Reflections.



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The current circulation of the Anishinabek News is 3,000 copies.

 **DEADLINE FOR FALL PRINT EDITION**
December 7, 2018

For more information or inquiries to the Anishinabek News related to circulation issues please call our Toll-free number: 1-877-702-5200. All advertising inquiries can be sent to news@anishinabek.ca

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ISSN 1182-3178 ANISHINABEK NEWS (PRINT)
ISSN 1923-0710 ANISHINABEK NEWS (ONLINE)



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Chippewas of the Thames Chief Myeegun Henry, Northern Superior Region Deputy Grand Council Chief Ed Wawia and Biinjitiwabik Zaaging Anishnaabek Chief Melvin Hardy at the Chiefs Committee on Governance meeting held Sept. 6-7 at the Anishinabek Nation head office.

Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement negotiations in the final stages

By Cindy Males

Governance Communications Coordinator
NIPISSING FIRST NATION—The Anishinabek Nation and the Government of Canada have been negotiating the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement since 1995 and these negotiations are now nearing completion. A ratification vote by the citizens of the Anishinabek Nation member First Nations is expected to take place next summer.

The Anishinabek Nation member First Nations who ratify the agreement will have the legal power and authority to enact their own laws on how they would like to elect their Chief and Council; determine for themselves who their citizens will be; determine how they will manage and operate their First Nation Government; and determine how they will protect and promote the Anishinaabe language and culture.

The Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement will establish a new government-to-government relationship between the Anishinabek Government, who will act on behalf of the First Nations who ratify the agreement and Canada that will include a new fiscal transfer framework for governance related functions.

Anishinabek Nation First Nations Chiefs have been guiding the negotiations through Grand Council Resolutions that continue to provide a mandate to the Anishinabek Nation to negotiate self-government agreements with Canada on behalf of the member First Nations.

A Chief's Committee on Governance, comprised of the Grand Council Chief and the four Regional Deputy Grand Council Chiefs along with two representatives from each of the four regions, was mandated by Chiefs in Assembly to provide direction. The committee and the Anishinabek Nation Leadership Council came together at the Anishinabek Nation head office on September 6-7 to get a progress update and provide feedback on the negotiations so far.

The committee will come together with the negotiators again in November.

The Governance Working Group, comprised of community representatives, has also been providing input to the negotiators. The group was established to help design and develop better government processes. The group is scheduled to meet again in October.

"If we continue to govern ourselves the

same way under the Indian Act, we will just get the same unacceptable results," says Chief Negotiator Martin Bayer. "And our people will continue to suffer from poor health, housing shortages, and high unemployment, lack of proper water and sewage treatment systems, and low rates of education. We now have a chance to start turning things around by looking at better ways of governing ourselves and the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement will give us that chance."

The Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement will not limit or take away any Aboriginal or Treaty rights of citizens in the member First Nations. The fiduciary relationship between Canada and the First Nations will continue and any change to those obligations must be agreed to by the First Nations.

An official launch is underway for this fall and negotiators will begin visiting Anishinabek Nation First Nations soon to discuss the draft Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement in more detail. Community meetings are also planned for both citizens who live in First Nations and for those who do not.

Southeast Regional Deputy Grand Council Chief troubled by local schoolboard trustee nominee

ANISHINABEK NATION HEAD OFFICE — Anishinabek Nation Southeast Regional Deputy Grand Council Chief Jim Bob Marsden is disturbed after learning that Gordon Gilchrist, a former Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board trustee, filed for nomination papers to run for a seat earlier this month for the very board that censured him in 2016.

"We are in disbelief that a man who resigned back in 2016 because of disrespectful comments he made about our youth drum circle would have the nerve to even think of running for a school trustee position when three local First Nations have students in these schools," stated Regional Deputy Grand Council Chief Marsden.

Board trustees censured Gilchrist by unanimous vote in 2016 following allegations of offensive and insensitive remarks he made during the performance of a First Na-

tions drum group at the opening of Cobourg Collegiate earlier that year. It was reported that Gilchrist's offensive remarks were made about Alderville First Nation's youth drum group in May 2016.

According to a group of students from the jazz band, Gilchrist allegedly told them "there's more to music than banging on a drum and yelling...I wouldn't have been so eager to take over this country if I'd known that was the kind of music they played here."

While Gilchrist denies ever making the comments, the board conducted a third-party investigation that determined that the balance of probability substantiated the assertions, which led the board to censure him.

Many individuals and groups, including MPPs, teacher unions, and Alderville First Nation Chief Marsden, called on Gilchrist to resign from the board. Gilchrist stepped down from his position with the board later

that year.

Gilchrist was also censured in February 2008 by his fellow trustees after a letter of his was published in a local newspaper where he made inflammatory comments regarding immigrants.

According to reports, Gilchrist feels a duty to run because there is a new director of education that he thinks may be more inclined to hear about his previously expressed concerns regarding students having to be re-taught math in university.

Regional Deputy Grand Council Chief is disappointed following the news as the schoolboard has had a strong and long-standing relationship with the surrounding First Nations.

"We have all worked so hard to build relationships with schoolboards and it completely goes against the Truth and Reconciliation Commission," added Chief Marsden.

Anishinabek Nation Grandparents Committee to guide Child Well-Being Working Group

By Laura Barrios

ALGONQUINS OF PIKWAKANAGAN—The Anishinabek Nation Grandparents Committee met for the first time on July 12 in the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation.

The committee was formed as part of the implementation of the Child Well-Being Law.

The Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Law is the law approved by the Anishinabek Chiefs-in-Assembly by Grand Council Resolution and adopted by the First Nation in accordance with the First Nation law-making process. The Child Well-Being System is a system established pursuant to the Anishinabek Nation Child Well-Being Law to support Anishinabek child and youth well-being and family unity.

“A large number of grandparents across the Anishinabek Nation are the sole caretakers of their grandchildren and are responsible for raising them,” explained Ronnie George, Prevention Services Coordinator at the Anishinabek Nation. “In some situations,

grandparents are in poor health, dealing with financial strain, and there are few resources in place to support them, and the ones that are in existence, are not well-known to them or within the community.”

The purpose of the committee is to guide the Child Well-Being Working Group in the work that they do. As a voice of the grandparents raising their grandchildren, the committee will provide strategic direction and leadership to ensure the empowering of grandparents’ ability to provide safe, long-term care for their grandchildren.

During the inaugural meeting, the Grandparents broke off into small working groups to discuss the draft Terms of Reference for the committee, which includes their purpose, mission and responsibilities.

“I’m a grandmother and I feel it’s an honour to be here. I feel I have a lot to offer and to help formulate this group. My heart is in a good place. I feel we can manage this,” said Darla Day-Clancey, citizen of Serpent River First Nation and a social worker. “I believe



The Anishinabek Nation Grandparents Committee met for the first time on July 12 in the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation.

it’s due to the love in our homes that we do have the resources within our own communities. A goal for me to see in our communities is to support the parents—it’s time that we take care of our own. We need that responsibility back in our communities. We can actually take back our control. We don’t need people telling us about our culture. We have that choice.”

While the participants come from all walks of life, one vision unites them: to see Anishinabek children return to their com-

munities and be surrounded by their families, culture and language.

“I want to see the changes in my time,” shared Debbie Lemieux, a Sixties Scoop Survivor and grandmother from Wahnapitae First Nation raising her six-year-old granddaughter. “How do we come back from that big system and fight it everyday? We have to stand up to the judges and lawyers. If we keep pushing forward and try to combat that and stay strong in our own way, it will be okay.”

Youth summit inspires youth to become entrepreneurs

Submitted by Sarah A. Blackwell

NIPISSING FIRST NATION—The Anishinabek Nation Wahniigaaniwat Youth Summit held at Nipissing University on August 14-16, 2018, was attended by 29 youth participants represented from Anishinabek Nation First Nations.

The youth summit was a collaborative effort between the Anishinabek Nation Youth Program and the Economic Development Program with the intention of building youth leadership skills for business development through a cultural lens.

The youth participated in business presentations from successful Indigenous entrepreneurs that included Mark Marsolais-Nahwegahbow of Birch Bark Coffee Company; Cliff Skelliter of LaunchPad Creative; Joseph Pitawanakwat of Creator’s Garden; and with a special keynote address from Earl Lambert of Warrior Spirit Productions Ltd. on the Spirit of Entrepreneurship.

If the youth did not begin the summit with a business idea, the presentations and cultural activities empowered them to believe they can become a business owner.

“I wanted to return home right after one of the business presenters to call the business center to get started on my business plan,” expressed Tammy Roszel, a youth participant from Aundeck Omni Kaning.

The agenda integrated cultural activities throughout the three-day event, which the youth participants expressed was a nice balance to a very busy agenda.

These activities included a medicine walk with Joseph Pitawanakwat of Creator’s Garden; building their own mini model teepees with Audrey Commanda; and participating in a social evening of hand drumming and singing with Nathalie Res-toule and Jordan Mowat.

The youth enjoyed the evening socials on both evenings, and even though they had to wake up early for morning activities, they were engaged and interactive throughout the event, and suggested future events be scheduled for a longer duration so they have more time to create closer connections with other youth participants.

There were a number of youth that expressed interest in starting a Youth Council in their First Nation following the youth summit. The business skill set in an entrepreneur is transferable and empowering for youth to become youth council leaders in their community.

Anishinabek Nation’s Youth Program Coordinator, Sarah Blackwell, spoke about the importance of creating a Youth Council mentorship program.

“There are only approximately five First Nations with youth councils in the Anishinabek territory. We need to create opportunities through youth summits like this one, so a peer-mentorship model can be created as it pertains to youth council development.”

The final day of the Wahniigaaniwat Youth Summit included group strategy sessions where participant input was collected to help guide the future development of the Anishinabek Nation Innovation Center, spearheaded by Megan Goulais, Economic Development Project Coordinator with the Anishinabek Nation.

In the next few months, a final video will be produced to capture the event in its entirety, and will be published on the Anishinabek Nation YouTube channel, shared with member First Nations and the Anishinabek Nation Weshkiniijig the Facebook page. Some of the youth also participated in having their photos taken for an inspirational photo series.



Sarah Blackwell, Youth Program Coordinator at the Anishinabek Nation and Megan Goulais, Economic Development Program Coordinator at the Anishinabek Nation address the youth participants of Wahniigaaniwat Youth Summit at Nipissing University on August 14-16, 2018.

– Photo by Laura Barrios



Youth participants receive teachings and samples of medicines from Joseph Pitawanakwat, Holistic Health and Plant Educator, and owner of Creator’s Garden.

– Photo by Laura Barrios

Gii-maamiikwen daagod

Submitted by Ashley St. Pierre

Gii-maamiikwen daagod!

These words help describe my feelings over the week of sharing at the Anishinabek Nation Wahniigaaniwat Youth Summit at Nipissing University on August 14-16. It was inspiring, good, great, incredible, fantastic, and I could not help but share my daily experiences with my Gran who, at 72 years young, accompanied me on the trip to North Bay.

My initial thought when I was invited to the Wahniigaaniwat Youth Summit was, 'How does entrepreneurship suite my interests?'. Leadership—yes, definitely—but entrepreneurship? I never saw it being in my career interest. What I discovered at the Youth Summit was, yes, it does! Being an entrepreneur doesn't just mean you're a business person with the main objective to make millions of dollars. Becoming an entrepreneur can also mean someone that establishes an organization to help solve or remedy an issue, or even draw awareness and promote preventative measures. The overall goal is to help many people and even inspire others.

I was inspired in many ways. On the first day, we met Earl Lambert, a motivational speaker and entrepreneur that brought the spirit of entrepreneurship to life for me. I was inspired by his introduction of what it means to be an Indigenous entrepreneur. Hearing Lambert's story of how he became an adolescent entrepreneur that followed into young adulthood was inspirational.

From selling preowned vehicles in college, to creating a clothing business sporting the logo "Proud to Be"; his journey brought him to creating his current business, Warrior Spirit Productions Ltd. His perseverance during his many struggles throughout his career taught him many valuable lessons along his journey and he came out the other side as a highly influential successful Indigenous entrepreneur. Lambert was great, and motivated everyone to participate in every activity, by invigorating the youth when the energy was lacking from us.

I greatly appreciated Gokomis Virginia Goulais and her presence. I could feel her warm spirit when she gave me a hug and introduced herself. She spoke with great insight and I really enjoyed the songs she shared and the stories behind each one. I was moved by the meanings of the songs and felt so connected with my heritage—hearing and feeling the beat of the drum, which is important to me—as I don't feel a strong sense of connection to my culture.

The medicine walk led by Joseph Pitawanakwat of Creator's Garden was calming and very exciting to learn from about the different vegetation species and all applications each species of vegetation can do for the body.

Joseph's knowledge of the forest is incredibly vast and super resourceful. I not only learned so much about plant medicine, but also was able to network with him as I build my business ideas around creating a



Ashley St. Pierre, youth from Moose Deer Point, attended the Anishinabek Nation Wahniigaaniwat Youth Summit at Nipissing University on August 14-16.

holistic Aboriginal Mental Health practice.

Further presentations included Nadine Roach who defined Social Enterprise & Entrepreneurship that brought a clear depiction between what an enterprise & entrepreneurship is. Cliff Skelliter of Launch Pad Creative was down to earth and shared his journey and how he felt academics was not his strength, but he still became a successful entrepreneur in Sudbury. Skelliter is inspiring to many of the youth who may not feel that they can become successful at anything.

The speakers and information sharing was beneficial; however, the most rewarding was interacting with other Indigenous youth and hearing the challenges in each community and hearing how those challenges have been resolved. For example: the creation of

language apps would help combat the issue of our language dying in many communities, and this was shared as part of our group discussions. Every day we shared our view of entrepreneurship, but on the final day, we brainstormed as a group on what we thought makes a successful entrepreneur and the challenges/barriers for youth within a First Nation face to become a successful entrepreneur.

The Wahniigaaniwat Youth Summit was spectacular! I hope there will be other events like this for the youth in the future. Looking forward to the new Innovation Center that is going to be developed in the near future. Every aspect was such an excellent experience for each and every one of us youth attending the Youth Summit.

Kinoomaadziwin Education Body directors set new strategic course

By Andrea Crawford

NORTH BAY—The Kinoomaadziwin Education Body's (KEB) Board of Directors met last spring in North Bay for its annual retreat.

Elder John Sawyer attended the gathering and provided traditional services and guidance to participants over the two days. In his opening remarks, Sawyer spoke about the many educators and champions who have given their time and efforts to the establishment of the Anishinabek Education System (AES). He connected their successes in the past to the organization's successes in the future and asked the board members to always be mindful of the history that belongs to the system.

"Our way of learning is not new," said Sawyer. "We have been educators since our people were first put here, and now we are trying to put back into place many things that were taken away."

As part of the retreat, the 12-member Board of Directors reviewed its terms of reference, director roles and responsibilities, and the organization's corporate by-law.

Legal counsel Tracey O'Donnell brought attention to the importance of board members acknowledging their responsibility as

directors for the whole of the system, which includes 23 Participating First Nations (PFNs).

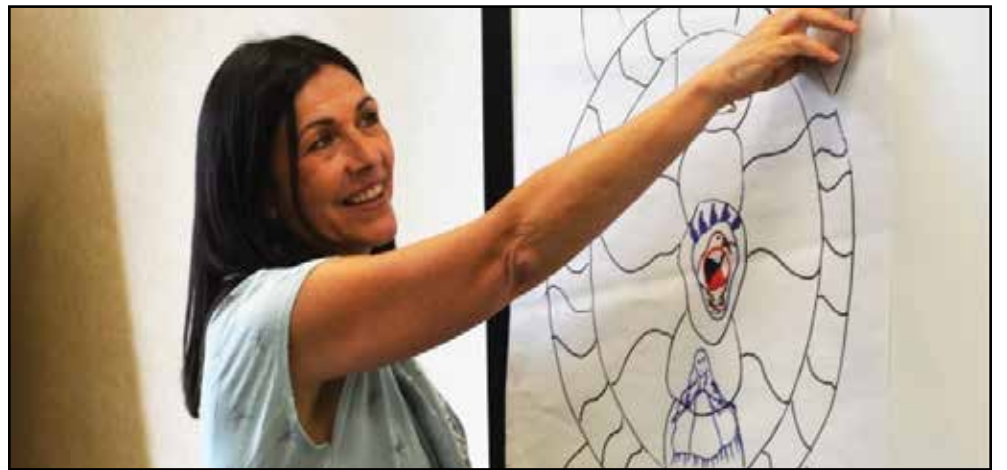
Among their roles as directors, the board members have an important obligation to ensure the adherence of the KEB's corporate by-law, the administration of funding allocations, and the development and implementation of the organization's policies and strategic direction.

To set the direction of the KEB for the next year, the directors developed a new vision and mission statement, as well as new strategic objectives that will guide a comprehensive strategic plan.

Kinoomaadziwin Education Body Board of Directors participate in the KEB retreat on May 25, 2018, in North Bay, ON.

The new vision of the KEB is Anishinaabe Aadzwin. A holistic learning path using Anishinaabe ways of knowing, celebrating a bright future for our people. Anishinaabe Bimaadzwin.

The vision was identified through various group reflections and discussions, which led participants to think critically about what the KEB will strive to accomplish over the coming years. These identified objectives form



Lauri Hoeg, member of Chippewas of Georgina Island and member of the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body Board of Directors, participates at the KEB retreat.

the foundation of a strategic plan, which will be shared with the PFNs in July 2018.

In addition to hosting the board of directors' retreat, the KEB held its Annual General Membership meeting on June 5, at the Valhalla Inn, in Thunder Bay. The membership heard the financial statements of the organization, as well as updates on staffing, communications, work plans and the prog-

ress of the head office location in Nipissing First Nation.

A grand opening event is scheduled for October 2, to mark the launch of the Anishinabek Education System and to celebrate the opening of the KEB's new head office.

A full report on the KEB's Annual General Membership meeting will be provided to all PFNs in July 2018.

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Jeannette Corbiere Lavell was invested into the Order of Canada by Governor General Julie Payette on Sept. 6.
— Photo by Sgt Johanie Maheu, Rideau Hall © OSGG, 2018

Anishinabek Nation Citizenship Commissioner receives Order of Canada

Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Glen Hare would like to congratulate the Anishinabek Nation's Citizenship Commissioner Jeannette Corbiere Lavell (Keewenaning) on becoming a member of the Order of Canada.

"I was proud to attend the presentation of the Order of Canada to Jeannette Corbiere Lavell on behalf of the Anishinabek Nation," expressed Grand Council Chief Hare. "Jeannette is the Anishinabek Nation Citizenship Commissioner and has dedicated her life to fighting for women's rights and equality for Anishinaabe women."

Corbiere Lavell is a central figure in the pursuit of fairness and recognition for First Nations women and children, especially those who have lost their Indian status due to provisions of the Indian Act. Aside from lack of access to social and treaty benefits that are attached to Indian Status, the loss of status can also carry a stigma in First Nations.

"We are so fortunate to have such committed and resilient advocate for women's rights within our Nation," continued Grand Council Chief Hare. "Jeannette is one remarkable woman and is very deserving of being heralded for her unrelenting effort to pursue the 'right to belong' to their home communities after being stripped of their status, for many Anishinaabe women and their children throughout Canada. Congratulations!"

In April of 1970, the citizen of Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory married David Lavell who was non-Indigenous man from

Toronto, which resulted in the loss of her Indian Status and citizenship rights. Corbiere Lavell began her struggle to ensure that the rights of Indigenous women were equal to the rights of Indigenous men under the Indian Act. In 1973, the Supreme Court of Canada heard Corbiere Lavell's case, now known as the Lavell Case (AG v. Lavell), but it was lost by a single vote from the bench.

When the Indian Act was revised in 1985, Bill C-31 created new criteria for Indian Status. Section 6 (2) states that only children of two parents with Indian status can pass Indian status on to their children. The rule, sometimes called the "two-generation cut-off", could mean the extinction of so-called "status Indians" within six generations.

More recently, two major court cases in 2009 and 2015 have further challenged gender-based status provisions and the courts found that subtle forms of sexual discrimination persisted under the Indian Act and ordered the government to reform the law comprehensively.

Corbiere Lavell has been the Anishinabek Nation Citizenship Commissioner since 2008. The Anishinabek Nation has developed its own Citizenship Law, Anishinabek Nation E-Dbendaagzijing Naaknigewin, which adopts the one-parent rule. Anishinabek First Nation citizens have stated over the years that, "We have the right to determine our own people" and the government should not have the legislative authority to dictate who is "Indian" and who is not.



On behalf of the Anishinabek Nation, Grandmothers led two Sacred Blanket Ceremonies to raise up and recognize the tremendous contributions that Elders: Edna Manitowabi and Jim Dumont have made to Anishinaabe people. Their life's work has been a blessing to our nations. We are so grateful to have had the opportunity to express our heartfelt appreciation for all that they have done and continue to do.

Mino Mshkiki Maawnjidwin - Good Medicine Gathering an inaugural success

SAULT STE. MARIE, ON—The Anishinabek Nation made cultural history this past month by hosting the very first Traditional Medicine Gathering, on August 14-15, in Sault Ste. Marie. The event named "Mino Mshkiki Maawnjidwin", the "Good Medicine Gathering", featured three incredible keynotes and 16 different workshops, focusing on a wide variety of different traditional medicines promoting healing for the mind, body and spirit.

There were teachings on medicines for diabetes, chronic pain and illness, addictions, traditional harvesting practices, the healing dress and many, many more. The event filled quickly with an estimated 170 Anishinaabe people attending the event hosted by the Anishinabek Nation FASD Program.

"As more of the communities are moving towards land-based healing initiatives, we felt it imperative that we bring our Traditional Healers and Knowledge Keepers together to create an opportunity to connect, as well as share knowledge and teachings," said Conference Coordinator Laurie McLeod-Shabogiesic. "We are so excited, we dreamed of a Gathering that was all Anishinaabe Mshkiki, that was rooted in Culture, Language and Spirituality and with the help of our Advisory Committee (Geesohns Manitowabi, Perry McLeod-Shabogiesic and Bob Goulais) we were able to make that happen. Our events started at sunrise with teachings going until sunset."

"The event also gave us an opportunity to recognize and thank two incredible Elders. Our Anishinabek Nation Grandmothers, which included Chief Veronica Waboose, led two sacred Blanket Ceremonies to honour Elders: Edna Manitowabi and Jim Dumont. Each has dedicated their lives to contributing to the well-being of our people and we wanted to let them know how much we have appreciated all they have done and all that they have shared," added McLeod-Shabogiesic. "We are in awe of the knowledge that each of them carries. Their life's work has not been without sacrifice and we felt it important to take the opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to each of them."

"The event was so well received," said McLeod-Shabogiesic. "In compiling the feedback from our Traditional Medicine Conference, this note brought tears to my eyes: 'My life has been really hard lately, being here and receiving these teachings was needed. This conference in all honesty saved my life. Meegwetch'."

The Anishinabek Nation FASD Program would like to express its gratitude to all those Traditional Teachers who came and so generously shared their knowledge with all of the participants, Advisory Committee Members, co-workers and the Ministry of Children & Youth Services, and for all that they did to help make the event possible. The FASD Program hopes to secure funding to help make this an annual event.

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Dancers at the Honouring Mothers FASD Awareness Day Mini Pow Wow at the Current River Park in Thunder Bay.

‘It’s important to recognize the day to help women understand the dangers of drinking alcohol during pregnancy’

By Rick Garrick

THUNDER BAY – The Honouring Mothers Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Day 10th Annual Mini Pow Wow featured a Moment of Reflection, free lunch, giveaways and a special dancing out event.

“It’s important to recognize the day to help women to understand the dangers of drinking alcohol during pregnancy and to help prevent children from being damaged due to exposure to alcohol in utero but also for everybody in the community, like the partners and other family members to support the women to abstain from alcohol during those important nine months of pregnancy,” says Lynda Banning, Anishinabek Nation’s FASD regional program worker for Northern Superior, noting that the Moment of Reflection is held on the ninth minute of the ninth hour of the ninth day of the ninth month. “We call it Honouring Mothers because we

like to honour all mothers and motherhood and that special connection mothers have to the spirit world and to bringing the spirit into this world, giving life and all of the people that support her in that process.”

Banning adds that the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre (TBIFC) donated about 30 pieces of regalia to families whose children didn’t have regalia for the Mini Pow Wow.

“We did the giveaway last night so they could bring (the regalia) today,” says Kylie Marion, Aboriginal family support worker with the TBIFC. “They are super excited to have their regalia and being able to dance in an outfit today. Parents were very appreciative that we were giving them away. Lots of them were asking what the cost of it was and they were very happy when we told them they were completely free. We just wanted them to have fun and get into the Pow Wow.”

Northern Superior Region Deputy Grand Council Chief Ed Wawia says it is important to educate pregnant women to avoid alcohol in order to prevent FASD.

“There are four different effects it has on the children,” Wawia says. “It could be physical effects or it could be neurological effects. The worst part is there is no cure for it — there is treatment, you can treat the children to have as good of a life as possible, but it is non-reversible.”

David Jones, a Garden River citizen and founder of Turtle Concepts, says FASD affects people throughout the world as well as North America’s Indigenous people.

“I think it is important to celebrate that they are still good people, they still have abilities and we want to support them in their journey and learn how to work with that and how to let them have that Bimaadiziwin that we speak about,” Jones says. “I am just so

glad to see so many people out and to see the little ones dancing and doing what we do to celebrate life, and just smiling and connecting. That’s what I came to do, just to connect with some people and this was a great opportunity to connect with Thunder Bay friends.”

Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler says it is important to support the work that organizations are doing to create awareness about FASD and to create supports for families that live with FASD.

“We can prevent this in our communities and it is so important that we create that awareness out there that this is preventable and that we all have a role in that,” Fiddler says.

The Mini Pow Wow was held at Current River Park on the north side of Thunder Bay with Thunder Spirit as the host drum and Fox Island as the co-host drum.



Traditional Ecological Knowledge Elders ask Eacom to respect Anishinabek jurisdiction on aerial spraying

By Dorothee Schreiber

GARDEN RIVER FIRST NATION—On August 24, the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Elders Group met with two representatives of Eacom Timber Corporation in Garden River First Nation.

Christine Leduc, director of public affairs, and Jennifer Tallman, chief forester for Eacom in Ontario, were invited to the gathering to give an overview of the company's operations in the Robinson-Huron Treaty Territory and to listen to the Elders' concerns over the use of forest herbicides.

The TEK Elders Group is composed of Robinson-Huron Treaty Elders working to end the aerial spraying of glyphosate in north shore Lake Huron forests.

Glyphosate, also known as Roundup, is an herbicide used to kill poplar, raspberries, fireweed, birch, and other species that overgrow jack pine or spruce on recently replanted clear-cuts.

The purpose of the aerial spraying or "aerial tending", as the Eacom representatives called it, is to "maintain the same proportion of species that were in the landscape when [the forest] was cut."

Tallman said that forestry companies are mandated by Ontario to manage forests in such a way that replanted trees "go back to the forest inventory," which occurs at the "free to grow" stage, five to 15 years after planting.

"Aerial tending is one of the more efficient ways for conifers to come up above the competition," stated Jennifer Tallman.

"We have a very different perspective of how we manage the land," stated Josh Eshkakogan, a citizen and Elder of Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory. "We try to create a very diverse land and we can't use poison to create a certain species for a user group."

The approach of the newcomers is point focused, as Art Petahtegoose explained, surveying land, renaming places and defining spatial areas for exploitation.

"Suddenly it voids our presence, it erases our presence in our home," Art Petahtegoose said. "It's not an objective that we're exploiting, it's a life...when we put the Anishinabek name on a water body, we say there is a life there, an ecology that has to remain intact."

The Elders spoke about how herbicides poison everything that lives in the sprayed area, from the water to moose to insects, which together form an integrated whole.

"The weeds did their job at a certain time," Ray Owl of Sagamok Anishnawbek explained. "The Creator made them to do their job. That lifecycle is only so long and then the jack pine or spruce takes over."

Garden River citizen Sue Chiblow pointed out that "this whole perspective of a tree competing against another tree is actually not true," and that trees have been shown to share nutrients through sophisticated underground networks.

The Eacom representatives said that the company incorporates First Nations perspectives in the forest management process through the committees in charge of writing the 10 year plans.

Amanda Barbe from Henvey Inlet First Nation, sits on two different forest management planning committees and she noted that she "can tell you it is just a formality, it is not consultation."

The primary role of First Nations individuals on forest management planning teams is to provide statistical data and information on "values" – points like bird nests and burial sites, or clearly defined areas such as trap lines – that would be disturbed by forestry operations.

In Ontario, the forest management planning process begins with Crown approval for aerial spraying already in place. The use of forest herbicides is covered under the Class Environmental Assessment for Timber Management decision issued in 1994.

"Many of us believe the Crown doesn't have the jurisdiction [over forest management]...what we're seeing here is a jurisdictional issue," Kenneth Daigle from Batchewana First Nations said.

The Elders made it clear that under Treaty the Anishinabek gave permission for the newcomers to come onto the land and make a life, but that the Anishinabek retain the authority to make land management decisions.

The Treaty was also meant to share the wealth of the land so that First Nations would "never be in want," Petahtegoose said. Manual tending of replanted areas, while more expensive than using herbicides, is practiced in Quebec, where Eacom also has forestry operations and where aerial spraying is illegal.

Using mechanical tools to remove unwanted vegetation on timber plantations could provide jobs for Indigenous communities in Ontario, Skip Jones suggested.

"I was around when they used to tend and release yellow birch. As late as the 70s, when I was with Lands and Forests, every winter people were hired to tend yellow birch. The same thing could be applied here."

Eacom's representatives said that they take their permission for forestry practices from the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Environment.

Stephen O'Neill, a lawyer and retired judge who represents the TEK Elders Group, spoke of the Robinson-Huron Treaty Annuities case and the resurgence of First Nations in the Treaty Territory.

While the upcoming annuities decision won't address aerial spraying, the court case goes to the heart of a treaty-making process in which First Nations and the Crown agreed to walk together, O'Neill said.

He pointed out that when Eacom says it is not part of the problem between First Nations and the government, the company is in fact taking a side.

"If I say I'll just get my authority from the Crown, am I not concluding that there is no [First Nations] perspective here, no authority, no jurisdiction?"

In January 2017, 21 Robinson-Huron Treaty Territory Chiefs signed a declaration and resolution calling for a moratorium on aerial spraying.

The declaration states that "the Robinson Huron Treaty communities and their people have not been adequately consulted as required by the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850 and Canadian law, nor has Canada or Ontario received our free, prior, and informed consent to spray these chemicals within our treaty territory, as outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples."



Elder Ray Owl of Sagamok Anishnawbek is co-founder of the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Elders Group. – Photo by Janet Owl

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Please send the name and explain why you feel this person is your Hero in Health along with a supporting letter from your community Health Director/Manager no later than November 23, 2018. These individuals will be honoured at the Anishinabek Nation 4th Annual Health Conference during lunch on January 23rd, 2019.

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November 23, 2018 at 4:00 pm.

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