

Mattagami First Nation **DRUM**



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Volume Six
Issue One

WORDS FROM THE CHIEF



**Chief Chad
Boissoneau
Mattagami
First Nation**

Welcome to 2020 and this promises to be a great year for all of us in Mattagami First Nation. There are so many good things happening in our community and that has everything to do with the great people working on Council, our capable staff, supportive and guiding Elders and our youth.

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Our members are finding employment in the many resource based initiatives in the area and now more than ever our youth are participating in training and educational opportunities that are providing them with bright futures.

Our First Nation is becoming more modernized, safe and comfortable due to all kinds of programs we have accessed through hard work and creative efforts of our Council and staff. We are communicating with each other very well and with our membership in terms of the services and programs we are providing.

We have some amazing new housing units that add to our development

in this area. In just a few decades we have come from minimal housing for our members to new developments that are providing modern, well built homes in a setting with up to date infrastructure. This is due to the tireless work and dedication of our Housing and Public Works staff.

Thanks to the efforts of our public works department we have clean water, better streets and roads and a clean and presentable environment right along the shores of Mattagami Lake. I believe we are the envy of many communities.

The developments at our Fire Department over the years have really moved into high gear and our Fire Chief Wilbert Wesley and his crew have provided us with a much safer and secure community that is prepared for any emergency. Considering that we are almost more or less in a semi remote area this is extremely important to the well being of our Elders, children and members at large. We are also grateful to Fire-fighting members Gerald Luke and past Fire Chief Ivan McKay, who retired from their work and were recognized for their over 30 years of service this past December.

Our police force also provides us with a protective and secure service that also adds to the comfort of our First Nation.

Recently we held the grand opening of the Odamino Youth Centre which features a fully covered ice rink complex and office area dedicated to the young people of our community. I was thrilled to welcome so many dignitaries who showed up to celebrate the grand opening of the centre with us. Shirley Gillis-Kendall, Executive Director Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services and Timmins Mayor George Pirie were on hand to help us celebrate. It was great to have Ted Nolan and his son Brandon as our key note speakers for the event and it was also the perfect choice in terms of motivation and encouragement for our youth on this special day dedicated to them.

It makes me very proud and happy to see so many of our young

people coming back to the community after achieving education goals and helping us as part of our team here in Mattagami First Nation. They assist us in running all of our various prominent events throughout the year including our annual traditional Pow Wow and fishing tournaments.

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We are so fortunate in our community to still have many Elders that we can turn to for guidance and for their teachings in terms of tradition and culture. Our language and culture and traditional knowledge is being shared in Mary Jane Memorial School right here in the community and recently I was lucky enough to venture out on the land with some of our youth to experience a traditional hunt camp. It was a great experience and it made me feel so proud to see our Elders and youth sharing this experience out on the land.

When I look around Mattagami First Nation today I can't help think about how proud and satisfied so many of our long gone ancestors, Chiefs and Councillors would feel to see how well we are living here in the community today. It occurs to me that of course everything we are enjoying today was done by the heavy lifting these men and women did in the past. I imagine one day future generations will look back and remember the efforts of all of us here in this time. Let's make them proud.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Through better communication and our work in reviewing how our First Nation is organized and managed we are moving ahead to meet the demands of modern realities in working with government, resource industries and the reality of change. Our efforts through the Harmony Project for the past few years has changed the political and management landscape in Mattagami First Nation. We are much more now about decision and policy making based on input from the grass roots, our membership.

Our most recent focus in improving how we manage our First Nation has been with our efforts in Human Resource Redesign. Right now we are developing new Human Resource policies in a draft form for our First Nation Management Office and also for the Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School. It has been so long since we have analyzed our policies and we realized at one point that it was time to modernize. We did this with input from our staff through anonymous surveys and by reaching out to everyone for their points of view. I am so proud of our staff members for their involvement and contributions that will lead to updated policies that in the end will increase our efficiency and be more fair and equitable to staff. We are aiming for finalization of the Human Resource Redesign in the coming Spring.

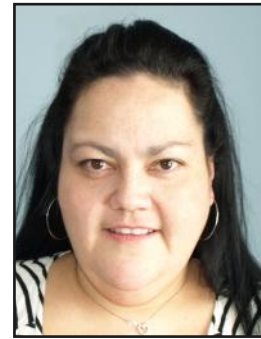
The new policies will change the way we interact and rather than an old style authoritarian arrangement of superior and inferior roles that exists between managers and staff we are looking at building a system

that is more open and cooperative. There will be more communication and better ways to solve problems in a more timely fashion. There will still be a need for accountability and we will have regular performance reviews but we are planning for better interaction between managers and staff so that we can identify any problems early on and find meaningful solutions. We will also have more clearly defined job descriptions and roles for each employee.

I give thanks to everyone for pulling together and making our community a great place to live.

As part of this review and analysis we have also been involved in research in terms of scale of pay and we are moving more towards a more fair and equitable system to improve salaries where there has been no increase over the years and to consider the role of responsibility in terms of an employees rate of pay.

It is important to remember that our staff in the office also lives in Mattagami First Nation and that makes for a very close knit relationship. However, there are also a lot of demands made on staff and we have so many who take on volun-



Juanita Luke
Executive Director

teer positions to assist with all kinds of development in our community. That can lead to burn out so we want to make sure that our staff does not end up working to the point where they are over burdened. We will be focusing our contributions to the community in a way that the health and quality time for family, recreation and leisure is considered. I am so happy that I have Janelle Golinowski assisting me and I am providing her as much input as I can so that she can take a position in management some day. We have to think more about how we pass on our knowledge as department heads and staff employees so that our work continues on a solid footing and in the best way possible into the future. With the work we are doing now with the Human Resource Redesign we will ensure that clear policies and a more efficient mode of operation will make it easier to meet the demands of the future.

Myself and all of our staff are grateful for the support of Chief and Council in regards to modernizing the way we operate and in developing this Human Resource Redesign.

In this issue of the Mattagami Drum, you will notice many stories on wonderful developments in Mattagami First Nation and the one thing in common with all these initiatives are the people who make them happen. I give thanks to everyone for pulling together and making our community a great place to live. As a community, we are only as good as our people and I am proud to say that I live in a First Nation that has a great sense of humanity. As a result, life for all of us here is getting better all the time.

Front Cover Photo

photo by Devin Naveau

Councillor Larry Naveau, a traditional hunter and trapper from the community led a group of youth on a traditional hunt camp to visit lands that have been used by the people of Mattagami FN for generations. Councillor Naveau is pictured here piloting a boat at the back as he takes Mattagami FN youth (L-R) Riley Luke, Jori Pellerin and Wyatt McKay to see the lands their ancestors lived on.

New Housing Developed For Mattagami FN



Tracy Harnack,
Public Works
and Housing
Director

The Mattagami FN Housing Department is addressing the housing needs of the First Nation with the opening of two new duplexes on November 1, 2019. The new homes were made possible by assistance from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) through their On-Reserve Non Profit Housing Program (Section 95), which provides funding for non-profit rental housing projects in First Nation communities. The two new duplexes were built by Royal Homes, a custom prefabricated homes design and building company based in Wingham, Ontario.

After the official opening, on November 15, four families moved into the new two bedroom unit homes.

"We were really happy to see the completion of these four new units for our community members. It takes a great deal of effort and organization to get through all the paper work as well as to coordinate all the building and construction steps to get this project done," said Tracy Harnack, Public Works and Housing Director.

The construction of the new homes started in the spring with the building and pouring of concrete foundations and the coordination of plumbing and electrical hookups. The homes were prebuilt at the company's facility in Wingham, Ontario and then delivered north to the community where they were assembled and completed on site. Company representative Wayne Taylor was on hand for the opening to offer his words of congratulations and gratitude to the community on the completion of the new homes.

The grand opening event was open to the community and First Nation members and the public were invited to tour the new homes, receive a light lunch and take part in door prizes and gifts activities. The event also featured the gift of department jackets to Public Works and Housing staff as a token of appreciation for their dedication to the project.

"As we build on more projects, we need more people to help get all this work done. There is so much effort by so many people from so many fields that go into building a home. We have a great team of people in our department and it

really took a group effort to make it possible to build these new homes for our members. I give thanks to all those who helped to make this housing project a reality," said Harnack.

She is assisted in her work in housing by Maggie Gignac, Housing Administrator and Madison Nicolas, Housing Assistant. Nicolas started her position in September 2019 through a job training program provided by CMHC and she has been valuable in delivering various projects, developments and programs as well as in assisting with the day to day operations of the housing department.

"This has been a great experience for me so far and it feels good to be directly contributing to our community," said Nicolas.

Gignac is involved in assisting the Housing Director and in working directly with community members and tenants on various housing related projects and programs.

"I think it is really awesome to see families have the opportunity to move into a new home and for those living off reserve to have the opportunity to live in the community again. It is really special to have a role in helping people to bring their family into a new home. We put a lot of work and effort in these projects and it just feels good to know that families are comfortable, safe and cozy in their new homes," said Gignac.



Maggie Gignac,
Housing
Administrator



Madison Nicolas,
Housing Assistant

She and Nicolas take a lead role in staying connected to the many tenants their department assists through the management of 30 housing units that range from single to four bedroom homes. They stay in contact with tenants through various events and gatherings held throughout the year to ensure that tenants needs are met and that homes are kept maintained.

The housing staff includes Housing Maintenance Workers Troy Turcotte and Steven Wilkenson. The greater Public Works and Housing Department staff also includes: Gerald Luke, Josh Luke, Curtis Fowler, Kevin Perreault, Nolan Harnack, Thomas Mathieu and Devin Naveau.

Harnack is hoping to start the process of making new building lots available to community members to give them the opportunity to construct their own homes. She will be working with the community and her department to establish a new policy and procedure that will make these buildings lots available through a fair and open process.

Community members can get in touch with the Public Works and Housing Department staff at the Mattagami FN office for more information on this process as well as to inquire about other programs or projects.

Remembering Richard Naveau



Mattagami FN was saddened at the sudden passing of Richard Naveau on Saturday December 28, 2019 at the Timmins and District Hospital at the age of 63 years. A funeral service was held on Saturday January 4th, 2020 at the Mattagami First Nation Community Complex and a visitation was hosted for family and friends on January 3 at the Mattagami First Nation Community Complex.

Richard was the loving partner to Jane Luke (and her children). He is also survived by his twin sister Gladys Naveau-Naponse (Francis). He also leaves behind his best friend Kaleb and best chum Betty Naveau.

Richard was predeceased by his parents Stanley and Beatrice, his brothers Edmund, Cecil, Wallace (Jackie) and his sisters Charlotte and Doreen Naveau. He will be greatly missed by his fur babies Lucky and Pepper. For everyone that knew Richard, he was a jack of all trades and a great mentor to many. He had a passion for hunting, trapping, fishing and music. He was a great mechanic and was also very artistic.

Richard was an amazing, funny and awesome relative and friend to so many. He will always be remembered for his big loving and caring heart. Remembrance donations to the Timmins Food Bank would be greatly appreciated in his memory.

Odamino Grand Opening Celebrated

The Grand Opening of the Mattagami Odamino Centre dedicated to youth was held in Mattagami First Nation, December 4. The event featured guest speakers Ted and Brandon Nolan of National Hockey League (NHL) hockey fame, Mattagami FN Chief Chad Boissoneau, Shirley Gillis-Kendall, Executive Director Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services and Timmins Mayor George Pirie.

“This was a very exciting day for everyone in Mattagami First Nation as we had been planning for an arena and space dedicated to our youth for some time. I want to thank Dayna Cosgrove for all of her efforts and creativity in making this dream come true through Kunuwanimano and Jordan’s Principle funding. We are also grateful to our youth and Secord Construction of Timmins for providing us with this much needed facility,” commented Chief Boissoneau.

Cosgrove, who was instrumental in spearheading the Mattagami Odamino Centre project, worked with Chief and Council and the local youth and Secord Construction to develop the facility.

“I was involved in servicing our youth and when this opportunity for funding came up I knew we had to apply for it because I had input from our youth that this type of safe and dedicated space was needed for them. The youth provided a lot of input in the design of this facility and we worked with Secord Construction to bring it to life,” explained Cosgrove.

Now presently employed with Kunuwanimano in Chapleau, Cosgrove has been instrumental in her home First Nation of Mattagami FN in working with and assisting youth through all types of programming. She is active in promoting culture as a traditional dancer and she is involved in cultural revitalization in her community. She has assisted her community in coordinating and developing their annual pow wow.

“This grand opening was really a



photo by Devin Naveau

THE GRAND OPENING OF THE MATTAGAMI ODAMINO CENTRE FOR YOUTH WAS HELD IN MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION DECEMBER 4. HERE WE SEE THE RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY. FROM L-R ARE: WYAAT MCKAY, AVA NAVEAU, TED NOLAN, CHIEF CHAD BOISSONEAU, COUNCILLOR JENNIFER CONSTANT, BRANDON NOLAN, MARIAH MCKAY AND TREY THOMAS.

milestone for Mattagami First Nation and I am so proud of everyone involved that we managed to develop a first class ice hockey arena and complex for our youth. We also managed to connect with First Nation Hockey Drive and they delivered 45 bags of hockey equipment for our youth,” explained Cosgrove.

Master of Ceremonies for the Grand Opening and First Nation Councillor Jennifer Constant pointed out that the Mattagami Odamino Centre replaces a previously covered but open air rink.

“Thanks to Dayna and our youth we managed to develop a four season, enclosed arena rink with a change room with dedicated space for our youth to gather and an office for administration. The entire community benefits from the addition of this facility as it will improve the quality of life for our youth and families in Mattagami First Nation,” explained Constant.

Ted Nolan and his son Brandon, who represent their Ted Nolan Foundation and head 3 Nolans, a First Nation hockey school, spoke to the youth about focusing on their education and making their dreams come true. The visit by this father and son inspirational speaking

duo was also a chance for a reunion of sorts with Chief Boissoneau.

“I grew up in Garden River, where the Nolans are from and I have great memories of being part of the community and family life with the Nolans before I got married and moved to Mattagami First Nation. I was thrilled to be able to share the stage with these inspirational stars for such an exciting and important day for everyone in our community,” commented Chief Boissoneau.

The Thunder Creek Singers and Drum Group from Timmins provided opening and closing ceremony for the event and a group of youth hand drummers from the local Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School also participated.

Odamino is an Ojibway word that translates to ‘children’s play space’.

“I wanted to provide a meaningful name for our new youth facility and that led me to discussing possibilities with local Elder Lawrence Naveau. He enlightened me in providing the name Odamino which is a word from our own local Ojibway dialect. He pointed out that the word means children’s play space or area which is just perfect,” explained Cosgrove.



photo by Devin Naveau

DAYNA COSGROVE, KUNUWANIMANO CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES WAS A KEY ORGANIZER OF THE MATTAGAMI ODAMINO CENTRE. FROM L-R ARE: LEEON PRINCE, AVA NAVEAU, COSGROVE, LANDEN MCKAY AND COUNCILLOR JENNIFER CONSTANT.



photo by Devin Naveau

THE MATTAGAMI ODAMINO CENTRE WAS INTRODUCED WITH A GRAND OPENING ON DECEMBER 4.

MFN Hosts 9th Annual Pow Wow



all photos supplied by Mattagami FN Pow Wow

THE GRAND ENTRY IS PICTURED HERE AT THE START OF THE NINTH ANNUAL MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION POW WOW WHICH WAS HELD SEPTEMBER 14 AND 15 IN THE COMMUNITY.

In sight of nearby eagles the traditional Ninth Annual Mattagami First Nation Pow Wow took place September 14 and 15, 2019. This year's theme was "Noojimo'iwewin giinitamawind abi" which translates from Ojibway as "Healing Our Home". The host drum was the Young Eagle Singers and Co-Host was the High Ridge singers both of Moose Cree FN. Invite Drum was Northern Spirit Singers, Brunswick House FN. The Lead Female Dancer was Dawn McKenzie, Mattagami FN and Lead Male Dancer was Tyrone Shawana, Wikwemikong FN. The Lead Female Youth Dancer was Ava Naveau, Mattagami FN and Lead Male Youth was Beesym Couchie, Nippissing FN. Featured Grandmother for the Pow Wow was Agnes Naveau, Mattagami FN and Arena Director was Gerald Chum, Moose Cree FN. Kirby Mianskum, Moose Cree FN kept the event rolling as Master of Ceremonies and Head Veteran for the Pow Wow was Elder Leonard Naveau Sr., Mattagami FN.

Dignitaries on hand included Chief Chad Boissoneau, Deputy Grand Chief Walter Naveau, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN); Ontario Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald, Chiefs of Ontario (COO) and New Democratic Party (NDP) Candidate Stephane Paquette.

"I am happy to welcome everyone here today and I want to give thanks to Dayna our Pow Wow coordinator and all of her team and volunteers for making this event so great," commented Chief Boissoneau.

Deputy Grand Chief Naveau, who made a point to be in his home community for the Pow Wow, had to travel to another event the same day but he made sure to welcome all of those in attendance before departing.

"I am so grateful that we have our Pow Wow and traditional and cultural ways coming back to us here in Mattagami First Nation. I applaud everyone for all of their hard work to make this possible and I thank all of you who are visiting our community today," said Deputy Grand Chief Naveau.

Ontario Regional Chief Archibald, who hails from the north remarked on how wonderful she was welcomed into the community and how happy she was to be invited.

"These are special days for me when I get to come and visit our First Nations and see all of the good things being done with our traditions and culture. I see the joy on the faces of the

people here and in the eyes of the children and it makes me feel good," commented Ontario Regional Chief Archibald.

The event coordinator Dayna Cosgrove, who is also a dancer, has been organizing the Pow Wow for seven years.

"This is the best one yet and they keep getting better every year. We will be hosting the tenth annual Pow Wow next year and that will be a major event and milestone. I want to give my thanks to my partner Calvin for his support and my mom Dawn for introducing me to the traditions, culture and Pow Wow when I was a child. Thanks so much to Chief and Council, our Executive Director Juanita Luke, Jennifer Constant, Dorothy Naveau and all of our team and volunteers in particular our members who organized and supplied our feast and our local youth for keeping this Pow Wow alive," commented Cosgrove.

Prayer and guidance was led by Mattagami FN Elders Agnes Naveau, Leonard Naveau and Pastor Carol Gagnon.

Thelard Kicknosway a glow hoop dancer thrilled and entertained everyone with dance and stories.

Participants and the public enjoyed the opportunity to visit the vendors displays to view traditional crafts and also savour the tastes of traditional foods from hunters, fishing harvesters and cooks. The main sponsors for the Pow Wow included: Canadian Heritage Fund, Mattagami FN Trust with lead sponsors including Gold Corp and Kidd Creek GlenCore.



CHIEF CHAD BOISSONEAU, MATTAGAMI FN AND REGIONAL CHIEF ROSEANNE ARCHIBALD AT THE 9TH ANNUAL MATTAGAMI POW WOW.



MATTAGAMI YOUTH HEAD DANCERS BEESYM COUCHIE, NIPPISSING FN AND AVA NAVEAU, MATTAGAMI FN.

Youth Experience Traditional Hunt



photo provided by Devin Naveau

BRENT BOISSONEAU EXPERIENCED THE THRILL OF HIS FIRST MOOSE KILL. BACK ROW L-R: CHIEF CHAD BOISSONEAU, COUNCILLOR DEVIN NAVEAU, MASON MCKAY, BRENT BOISSONEAU, WYATT MCKAY, NOAH NAVEAU, COUNCILLOR LARRY NAVEAU AND TYSON MCKAY. IN FRONT L-R ARE: VINCENT BOISSONEAU, JORI PELLERIN AND RILEY LUKE.

Mattagami First Nation Health Department hosted a week long Hunt Camp for local youth during the first week of November 2019. The camp brought together seven community youth between the ages of seven to 12 with chaperones and traditional hunters and knowledge keepers to provide teachings about heritage and cultural traditions.

Youth participating in the camp were: Noah Naveau, Vincent Boissoneau, Tyson McKay, Wyatt McKay, Mason McKay, Riley Luke, and Jori Pellerin.

“I want to thank everyone for stepping up and contributing to this traditional and cultural hunt camp project. It’s important for us to keep our children connected to their history, their community, their ancestors and the land. It gives them a sense of pride and confidence to know who they are, where they come from and that their community cares for them. We have to make our youth confident in themselves and connecting them to the land is a great way of doing that,” said Chief Chad Boissoneau.

The group stayed for four days at the Naveau family camp at Grassy Narrows where they explored and travelled the land and waterways nearby. The group was led by Chief Boissoneau, Brent Boissoneau, Choose Life Program Worker and First Nation Council members Devin

Naveau and Larry Naveau. The Naveau camp is maintained by traditional hunter and trapper Larry Naveau, who primarily guided the group during the wilderness camping event.

The Health Care department helped to coordinate the hunt camp through funding support provided by the Choose Life Program through Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN), which is a Liberal Federal Government initiative. Eileen Boissoneau explained that the aim of the camp was to expose youth to traditional activities such as hunting, trapping and fishing as well as all the activities that occur with these pursuits. Youth were able to learn, experience and take part in harvesting, gathering and preparing moose, beaver, rabbit, fish and partridge.

“We want to have these camps and gatherings for our youth to take them out on the land to connect with our adults and especially our traditional hunters, trappers and fisherman to learn about our history and our culture. We want to see our young people have those same experiences we all had years ago when we participated with our parents and grandparents actively living off the land,” explained Eileen Boissoneau, Health Director for Mattagami FN.

She added that the Health Department, support staff and community members are also involved in providing regular camping events for girls as well. These camps are provided as a way to give all youth an opportunity to learn about their culture, their language and their history as much as possible.

Brent Boissoneau, who has been working to develop youth projects in the community, was excited along with the rest of the group of young participants to harvest a moose on the first day of the trip to the Naveau camp.

“It was an awesome experience for me and for our youth. This was my first moose kill and it was an amazing moment to share with everyone. We were on our way to the camp when we saw the moose on the road through the forest. The funny part was when one of the youth, Noah Naveau, had mentioned to me that I would get my first moose on this trip. Sure enough, we met our moose and the group decided that I would be the one to take the shot. It was definitely a very memorable moment for me and for everyone there,” said Brent Boissoneau.

Councillor Devin Naveau felt like the trip to the camp was a home coming and full of nostalgia as the camp at Grassy Narrows has always been the traditional land base used by his family for generations and most recently by his grandfather Elder Leonard Naveau and it is currently maintained by his uncle Larry Naveau.

“It was very humbling for me to be out there at our family camp with everyone. It felt great to share stories of our past, stories of our families, our Elders and all those old ancestors who had been here so many years ago. This really provided us with a sense of connection for our young people, to their ancestors and to the land,” commented Councillor Devin Naveau.

He explained that the youth had plenty of opportunities to learn about the land and the history of their families as well as picking up skills having to do with hunting, trapping and travelling on the land. The group also learned about various traditional medicines and plants.

Cindy McKay Heads Education



**Cindy McKay,
Education
Director**

Cindy McKay is the Education Director for Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School as of this past September 2019.

"I have been involved in education for many years so it is very satisfying that I am now working in this leadership position. I thank all the past and present education leadership and teachers for assisting Mattagami First Nation in developing such a great education facility right here in our community, I also give my thanks to Chief and Council and to Juanita Luke for their support and encouragement," commented McKay.

Her new position allows her to be based in the school which keeps her in close touch with the staff and students and daily operations. She is responsible for working with the various education government funding bodies, producing reports on local education, ensuring the education department is operating and developing successfully and overseeing and managing the staff. She maintains a close working relationship with the Chief and Council, Elders and parents.

***"It takes a
community to
raise a child"***

"I originally started in a position last summer where I was in charge of secondary and post secondary students. In September I moved to the position of Education Director and Derick McKay took over my position at the First Nation office as we in fact switched roles. I am very comfortable working in this new role. I am getting so much assistance and support from staff and leadership and that is helping me rise to this challenge," commented Cindy McKay.

She has been involved with education at the Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School since 1988 in one way or another. She worked many years as a Teacher's Assistant and also served as a Family Support and Prevention Worker with Kunuwanimano Child And Family

Services while based in the community. She graduated from a Native Classroom Assistant Program in 1992 from Nipissing University. Currently she has enrolled in an Education Director Management Program with Nipissing University online.

"I am not only an Education Director in the typical sense of that role in that I live in Mattagami First Nation. This has always been my home and I know everyone. I see students here today at the school who are the children of parents I worked with here years ago. I know the students and their parents on a personal basis. I have always been a big believer in education as a means to lift our people up and I have a revolving door policy as my door is always open to everyone including staff, students and parents," explained Cindy McKay.

She has a history of organizing fundraising events in the community and is actively involved in working on the Christmas Concert, various events and the annual year end school trip for students. She is dedicated to making sure the students have access to all possible programming in education. She is also supportive of Native language programming and encouraging traditional and cultural teachings in the school.

"We have one of our teachers using curriculum Keepers Of Our Stories by Nicole Nicholas who wrote stories based on Mattagami First Nation featuring many of our Elders. We also have instruction on our Ojibway language and the children are learning about tradition and culture so I am very happy that we can offer this to our students," said Cindy McKay.

She pointed out that her dedication to children's education comes from her own experience in growing up in Mattagami First Nation as a child and being assisted on her journey by her grand parents Sabian and Mary Naveau and so many wonderful aunts and uncles. Her mother Theresa was the band manager for Mattagami First Nation for many years.

"I understand very well the concept of 'it takes a community to raise a child' as I am so grateful for all the love and care I got from everyone when I was growing up. I know how important it is to never break the spirit of a child but rather lift them up, encourage them and give them your time and assistance. It makes me feel so good to hear so many children here refer to me as auntie even though I am not their aunt. I make sure they understand that they can always approach me for assistance. I am so excited and happy when I see one of the students I have known in the past gradu-

ate from college or university and then return here to the community to help us develop and that makes everything worthwhile," explained Cindy McKay.

With pride, Cindy McKay points to her daughter Melissa who is currently teaching kindergarten at the Mary Jane Memorial School after having graduated from Nipissing University as a Teacher's Assistant. Melissa is now taking a fully certified teaching program from the university while also still teaching in Mattagami FN.

Cindy McKay is married to Ivan McKay and their children are Melissa and Myles McKay as well as step daughter Cindy Mathieu. Her grandchildren include Tessa Thomas, Trentin Thomas, Trey Thomas and Tatum Koosees-McKay.

Remembering Jordan Stoney



Jordan Stoney, son of Cathy and Stephen Stoney, passed away suddenly on Friday, August 30, 2019 at the age of 29. He was a member of Mattagami First Nation and the community mourned his passing and the loss of a kind and bright spirit. A funeral service was held September 8 at the Mattagami First Nation Community Complex. Interment for burial is at the Mattagami First Nation Cemetery.

He is survived by his brother Ryan (Destiny Jahtail) of Attawapiskat, Adam of Mattagami First Nation, Jerrica of Mattagami First Nation, Bradford Matthews of Fort Severn and Ambrose Thomas of Attawapiskat. He was also an uncle to Archie, Richie, Keewadyn, Keemiwon, Remiah, Lance, Chase, Skyrah and Dyland. He will also be sadly missed by his grandmother Nancy Stoney and his aunts and uncles: Dorothy (Curtis), Kim (Denis), Bev, Michel, Adelaide (Emesiah), Joyce, Diane, Bruce and Melvin as well as many cousins.

Jordan was predeceased by his grandparents Archie Stoney, Margaret and Norman Naveau and his cousin Kaneesha. Donations can be made to the Kidney Foundation in his memory.

FISHING TOURNAMENTS

Mattagami First Nation Fishing is set for their major events for 2020 starting with the Annual Pike Ice Fishing Derby February 29. The MFN Ontario Walleye Spring Fishing Tournament is scheduled for June 6 and 7 and the MFN Fall Walleye Tournament is set for September 12 and 13.

The MFN Fishing Committee is grateful to all sponsors for their support and to all volunteers who help with the setup, operation, and clean up for the events.

FOR INFORMATION ON HOW TO REGISTER FOR THE UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS OR RESULTS FROM PAST EVENTS AND A LISTING OF SPONSORS YOU CAN GO TO:

WWW.MFNFISHING.COM

FACEBOOK @MFNFISHING

YOU CAN ALSO CALL JESSICA NAVEAU AT 705-221-4248

OR EMAIL: FISHINGMFN@GMAIL.COM



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THE TOP 3 FINISHERS AT THE MFN 2019 FALL CLASSIC WALLEYE TOURNAMENT SEPTEMBER 7 AND 8 WERE SEPARATED BY JUST OVER A HALF POUND. WITH A TOTAL WEIGHT OF 25.89 POUNDS THE TEAM OF DAN HEIN AND DIDIER GERMAIN TOOK HOME TOP PRIZE AS TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS.

RESULTS FOR THE JUNE 1 AND 2, 2019 20TH ANNUAL MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION SPRING WALLEYE TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS WERE THE TEAM OF CRAIG SALMONSON AND ROCK BOUCHARD OF TIMMINS, ONTARIO. THIS TEAM IS NO STRANGER TO PODIUM FINISHES. THEY TOOK HOME THE TOP CASH PRIZE OF \$9,650 AND A BEAUTIFUL TROPHY REPRESENTING THEIR WIN.



Memorial To Michael Nicolas And Veronica Naveau Commando



Michael Nicolas passed away on Thursday September 5, 2019 at the Timmins and District Hospital at the age of 51. Cremation has taken place. A memorial service to honour Michael was held on Monday September 9, 2019 at 2 pm at the Mattagami Community Centre and visitation was held prior to that for family and friends at the centre.

He is survived by his wife Brenda McKay. Sadly he leaves behind his children Sarah McKay (Deidra), Madison Nicolas, Michael Jr. Nicolas and Mackenzie Young (Robert). In addition he is mourned by his step grandchildren Dane Boissoneau and Beesym Couchie. He was the son of Guy Nicolas and Ida Nicolas, and brother of Guy Jr. Nicolas (Tammy) and Nicole Nicolas-Bayer (Martin).

He is also survived by his nephew Nicolas Bayer and his niece Summer Bayer who both held a special place in his heart. He will be sadly missed by his four dogs Toby, Marley, Bella and Bubba. He was predeceased by his grandparents and dear aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

Michael will be remembered for his boisterous laugh, his kind soul and for his loyalty to friends and family. Michael found happiness spending time with family and friends, fishing and playing bingo with his favourite bingo partner, Brenda. Michael loved deeply, lived large and touched the lives of many people. Remembrance donations to the Timmins Humane Society would be greatly appreciated.



Mattagami First Nation member Veronica Naveau Commando passed away suddenly at the Timmins and District Hospital on October 21, 2019 at the age of 73. A funeral service took place on Friday October 25, 2019 at Mattagami First Nation at 1p.m. and there was visitation in Timmins on October 24 and also at the Mattagami FN Complex on October 25.

Veronica leaves behind her husband Edward Commando. She is also survived by her children Valerie, Eric, Robert and April Naveau and step children Becky and Kyle Commando. She is also sadly missed by her grandchildren Blake, Kourtney, Nolan, Ava, Xander and Kaydence and her step grandchildren Wayne and Hannah. In addition she leaves behind her great grandchild Delsin and her step great grandchild Levi.

Her surviving siblings include: Carole, Agnes, Gail, Rayno and Gary. Veronica was predeceased by her parents Sabien and Mary Naveau, her first husband Edward Naveau, her son David Naveau and her siblings John, Theresa and Elizabeth (Loley) Naveau.

Veronica was an amazing and loving wife, mother and grandmother. All those around her were always able to count on having a smile when in her presence. She loved to travel and to pass time on the land and outdoors. She will always be remembered as the amazing ZaZa to all who knew her.

Donations to the Canadian Diabetes association would be greatly appreciated in her memory.

Wilbert Wesley Leads Fire Department



Wilbert Wesley
Fire Chief,
Mattagami FN
Fire Department

Wilbert Wesley is the Fire Chief and Coordinator of Protective Services for Mattagami First Nation. Although primarily employed by Mattagami FN, Wesley is also the Coordinator of Protective Services for Region Nine Sudbury District. He also takes time to provide emergency management and safety training to First Nation people in the north.

“Our fire department provides a lot of services for our community and the surrounding area. In addition to fire services, our department is also involved in a provincial agreement with the region. In addition to structural fires, we also do search and rescue, water and ice rescue and highway emergency calls such as auto extrication. I am proud to say that our team can perform all these responsibilities because we have a certified team of people with all the required skills and training,” said Fire Chief Wesley.

The Mattagami FN Fire Department works with four different emergency services that are based in Sudbury, Timmins, North Bay and the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Services, as well as being involved with motor vehicle emergency events along Highway 144. Fire Chief Wesley provides regular training opportunities for his crew and encourages them to acquire as many additional skills as possible. The 21 member Mattagami FN firefighting crew are also first medical responders who have specialized training to deal with medical emergencies including how to handle and treat overdose events.

“All of this knowledge keeps our community safe and although we may not have many emergencies that require this specialized training, these skills provide a wealth of experience that our firefighting team members can use towards potential careers in mining, heavy industry or other areas. For me, it is not just about helping to train firefighters or first responders, it also allows these individuals to take another step towards further opportunities for their future,” said Fire Chief Wesley.

He has become a highly trained expert in the emergency services field,

specifically for First Nation communities through his involvement in emergency management positions for over 20 years. He is recognized as a senior instructor for First Nations when it comes to disaster efforts and management. He has taken the lead on many declared states of emergencies in First Nations in the past due to his background and experience. During emergency events, he is called upon to act as a mediator to work with First Nations, provincial entities and other emergency organizations to coordinate activities and priorities. Over the past two decades, his career in emergency management has allowed him to work for communities in northern Ontario and in Newfoundland and Labrador.

He is a James Bay Mushkego Cree, who is a member of Attawapiskat First Nation and was raised in Kashechewan FN and Moosonee. He fluently speaks the James Bay Cree dialect which he learned from his family and especially his grandparents Samuel and Dianah Wesley, whom he spent a lot of time with in Kashechewan FN in his early years. His family has dealt with the generational impacts of the residential school system and he is also a survivor of the daytime residential school system. He credits his family’s ability to transcend the effects of this generational trauma to allow him and his siblings to take a greater interest in achieving higher education.

Upon completing his secondary education he followed his brother Roy Wesley into the military and joined the Royal Canadian Regiment and trained at St Jean, Quebec for three years. After the military, he decided on a career in emergency and safety services and went north to take an Ontario Fire Marshal

curriculum in Moosonee and later additional training in Englehart and Rama First Nation. He then moved to Newfoundland and Labrador to attend the Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland in St John’s, Newfoundland. He completed three years of study in Safety and Emergency Response with the support of the Mushuau Innu First Nation in Labrador. He then went on to work for the Mushuau Innu FN for four years where he gained lots of valuable field experience and real world training.

“I was grateful to the Mushuau Innu First Nation for their support and it was an amazing opportunity to work for their community. After spending seven years out east to achieve all this training and experience, I really wanted to return home to northern Ontario to help my people. The specific training I achieved out east was at a national standard and when I returned home, it meant that my education and experience exceeded the level already offered provincially in Ontario. Not knowing it at the time, I went into emergency management for First Nations in the north and with my level of training, I was able to help our communities as well as offer my knowledge to train others in the north,” said Wesley.

He took a position with Moosonee Emergency Management Services and then later as Emergency Management Service Coordinator for Mushkegowuk Council which involved him in many events and emergency activities that utilized his training and added to his experience. He became directly involved in several declared states of emergencies including suicide crisis, housing crisis, a nine day power outage involving several communities, forest fire evacuations,



photo provided by Mattagami FN Fire Department

A RETIREMENT CELEBRATION FOR GERALD LUKE (FAR RIGHT) AND HONOURING OVER 30 YEARS OF SERVICE FOR PAST FIRE CHIEF IVAN MCKAY (2ND FROM RIGHT). PRESENTING AWARDS ARE FROM L-R: CURRENT FIRE CHIEF WILBERT WESLEY AND ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF CURTIS FOWLER.

emergencies from infrastructure failures and annual spring break up flood evacuations.

As an experienced Emergency Management trainer, he now provides regular training to First Nation participants through various programs. Fire Chief Wesley explained that it is his hope that he can help to build a community of specially trained individuals with the ability, knowledge and awareness to help northern remote and semi-remote First Nation communities.

"I grew up in the north and I have witnessed my share of tragedies and difficulties as a community member and as a leader overseeing an emergency event. One of the reasons I got into emergency management training was in losing my aunt and her children to a house fire when I was young. I did not want that same experience to happen to others. I have learned to combine my training with my knowledge of life in the north to bring together the proper help when it is needed during an emergency. I also believe that we have to train others to do the same and have our community members build on this knowledge so that we can have trained First Nation people in place whenever an emergency occurs," said Fire Chief Wesley.

He has four sons who have started their own journey in higher education. Three of his sons Elijah, Nehemiah and Jerome are currently attending post secondary studies in Labrador and a fourth son Isaiah is attending studies in Mechanical Engineering in Sudbury.

Fire Chief Wesley has helped the Mattagami FN Fire Department to build on its capacity, training, equipment and resources. In November 2019, his department held specialized ice water rescue training on Lake Mattagami. In December 2019, the Mattagami FN Fire Department announced the purchase of a new rescue vehicle to provide another level of safety equipment for the community.

On December 20, the Mattagami FN Fire Department held a retirement party in honour of Gerald Luke who had completed 30 years of dedicated service in emergency management and safety for his community. Fire Chief Wesley also made the extra effort to acquire honorary service bars and service badge to previous Mattagami FN Fire Chief Ivan McKay for his over 30 years of service for the community. The Mattagami FN Fire Department also provided other awards of recognition to its members. The awards of recognition were presented by the community leadership with words of congratulations offered by Elders and community leaders.

"It's important for us to recognize the tireless dedication of our volunteers and service men and women in our community. Gerald and Ivan had served their home community for a long time and it was an honour to recognize their achievements," said Fire Chief Wesley.

MFN & IAMGold Sign IBA

Mattagami First Nation and IAMGold have signed an Impact Benefit Agreement (IBA) with the hope of the development of a mine known as the Cote Gold project. The potential mine means more than a one billion dollar investment that would mean training, jobs and business opportunities for Mattagami First Nation members. This is a joint venture project with a 70 percent interest by IAMGold and 30 percent by Sumimoto Metal Mining of Japan.

"Although this has been a long process we have managed to complete an IBA with the company that will provide many benefits to Mattagami First Nation if indeed a mine is constructed. It all depends on the market and demand for gold whether or not this mine will move ahead," explained Jennifer Constant, Mattagami First Nation Councillor.

She is a member of the Social Economic Management Committee, the Monitoring Planning Committee and she was a Negotiator for Mattagami on the IBA Negotiation Team.



Jennifer Constant
First Nation Councillor

"We now have a strong voice in any consulting and negotiations taking place"

IAMGold put the billion dollar project on hold in January 2019 in a pause to wait for market conditions to improve in regards to gold pricing. In 2013 the project was also paused to consider market conditions. However, for the past few years work has been going on in terms of exploration, consultations with Mattagami First Nation and the public, permitting, engineering and negotiating agreements with the First Nation.

The Cote Gold Project is located near Mattagami First Nation about 20 kilometres southwest of Gogama. The nearest cities are Timmins and Sudbury. Consultation and negotiations have been going on with Mattagami First Nation, Flying Post First Nation and Wabun Tribal Council for some time.

"I have been involved in a lot of negotiating agreements with mining

companies and I can tell you that not many exploration projects make it to the development of a mine. However, we are dedicated to negotiating good Impact Benefit Agreements for our people and making sure we are part of the process in case there is a chance that a mine might develop," explained Chief Chad Boissoneau, Mattagami FN.

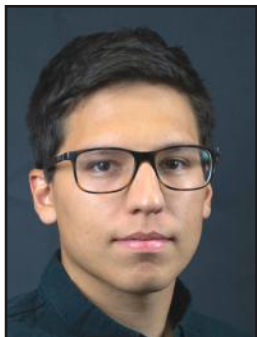
Chief Boissoneau, his Council members, First Nation management and Elders have experience in negotiating with mining exploration companies and making sure that local First Nation membership has a voice in any development so that environmental and financial concerns are met.

"As usual it is normal that although most people support a resource development like this, some do not. However, we have to make sure we are at the table and negotiating as much as we can in terms of caring for the environment and making sure we benefit in terms of training, jobs and business opportunities, if the mine actually goes ahead. Years ago we were never consulted and certainly never invited into planning and development of any resource development taking place on our lands but that has all changed and we now have a strong voice in any consulting and negotiations taking place," explained Constant.

If the mine does become a reality then many employment opportunities will arise out of the construction of the open pit mine and a mill. Once construction is complete then there will be opportunities for employment in the daily operations of the mine.

"We have been fortunate that we are working with great people from IAMGold and the government ministry personnel involved. The process has been open and transparent in terms of communication and in developing the IBA and we are all hopeful that the mine will become a reality in the most environmentally sensitive way possible," commented Chief Boissoneau.

Devin Naveau Is A Role Model For Youth



Devin Naveau
FN Councillor /
Accounts
Receivable

Devin Naveau is a busy young man and he is proof that a new generation of Mattagami First Nation youth are returning after accessing education and experience to assist with building the community for the future. He works in Accounts Receivable for the community and also serves as one of the operators for the local water treatment plant. In April of 2019 he was elected to Mattagami FN Council. In addition the 25 year old is involved in local housing development, developing a youth council, sharing his expertise in computing and electronics, volunteering with the local fire department and providing photography coverage for community events.

"We are all very proud of the efforts Devin provides for our community. It is great to see our youth coming back to Mattagami First Nation and helping us to make things better here for all of us. He is involved in so many aspects of our community and in particular with our youth. More and more of our young people are coming back to join us as we plan for the future and that is exciting," commented Juanita Luke, Executive Director of Mattagami FN.

Naveau has been involved with the finance department since 2016. He completed a welding program at Northern College in Kirkland Lake that year and while considering his options for work, he took a job in Accounts Receivable. He had experience in the position as he had worked

in the department as a summer student.

At one point he became involved in working with the water treatment plant as there was a need for someone to provide assistance to the lone plant operator Josh Luke. Naveau obtained some training and worked along side Luke for some time and recently obtained accreditation as a class one operator in regards to water treatment. This allows for a better work environment and provides downtime for Luke who had been providing 24/7 service for the community for years.

In sitting on council Naveau brings the perspective of youth and his experience over the past few years in finance as well as administration.

"I am very grateful to all those who voted for me to have a seat on council. I am learning a lot from our Chief and Council and it feels great to be participating in leadership for my community. One of my main interests is in developing a youth council based on our traditions and culture," explained Naveau.

Currently he has introduced the idea of the youth council to the community membership and he hopes to move ahead with a concept based on the seven grandfather teachings and seven clans. The idea would be to have seven youth represent the seven clans and in a way that they would participate based on their strengths and skills.

"I am hoping this youth council will give young people a voice at the table in terms of leadership decisions. This concept goes well with the Harmony Movement that the community has been involved in with regards to operations based on traditional and cultural roots," explained Naveau.

His involvement as a volunteer fireman for the community has been rewarding in terms of training and working as part of a team.

"I have learned so much working with the fire department for the past three years. Wilbert Wesley, our Fire Chief has brought us so much expertise at very high levels and we have the benefit of training from him. We have some great people on our volunteer fire department and I find I feel more safe and secure in Mattagami First Nation with this service in operation here in the community. We have gone from having the bare minimum to a first class department that can respond to emergencies in minutes," commented Naveau.

His interest in photography has resulted in the documentation of many events in the community and his work has appeared in publications across Ontario.

His parents are Leonard and Sue Naveau and his grandparents are Leonard Sr. and Daisy Naveau. His grandparents on his mother's side are Diane and Jean Guy (both of whom have passed on).



Mattagami FN Drum

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