

# Mattagami First Nation **DRUM**



## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

- **AFN National Chief Speaks To Mattagami Youth**
- **Chief Walter Naveau Speaks On Derailments**
- **Walleye Hatchery Moving Ahead**
- **Kunuwanimano Makes History**

**Volume Three  
Issue One**

# WORDS FROM THE CHIEF



**Chief  
Walter  
Naveau  
Mattagami  
First Nation**

This issue of Mattagami Drum covers a lot of our recent happenings in stories and in particular the tragedy of a major train derailment in our traditional territory. We were all shocked to have to deal with such a huge derailment involving Canadian National which resulted in a fire and a huge oil spill onto the land and into the water. We are doing our best to communicate the details of this story to our members and the First Nations as well as the public at large through media. Have a look at our up close and personal story in this issue that recalls this disaster on our lands.

I am happy to say that although we as First Nation people have been having a difficult time under this federal government we are still finding a voice and speaking out on many levels. These past few years have been very hard with cut backs to First Nation organizations and many communities right across the country. This has resulted in a challenge for our organizations to advocate for our people and the land. Many of our Native media has had to struggle but our voice is still strong and we all hope our First Nation news media

survives these hard time to develop well into the future as a voice for the people. Thankfully, the political landscape is changing and First Nations are part of a new way of thinking right across the country in terms of demanding transparency, accountability and intelligent governing from our federal government.

Still there are new laws and regulations that endanger our freedoms and democracy in this country. Bill C51 which was passed recently gives our spy agency more power with less accountability and also has the potential of making anyone who protests against the government a terrorist. This should be a concern for all of our First Nation leadership and advocates who oppose and protest against development on traditional lands. We could become terrorists in the eyes of our government.

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***Together, all of  
us are making  
things better in  
our thriving  
and caring  
community***

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Also Bill C-23 or so called Fair Elections Act has been viewed as an assault on democracy and puts forth new requirements that end up making it more difficult for minorities, First Nation people and students to cast their votes. We need to make sure our people have the right to vote and understand all the new rules so that we are prepared to make our Native votes count in the next election.

The best way we can deal with governments and developments and happenings on our traditional lands is through education. As always, I encourage our young people to get as much education as they can so that they can lead our people in the future and make sure that we understand

and can deal with the mess that makes up the government bureaucracies we have to bear. With this in mind I want to thank AFN National Grand Chief Perry Bellegrade for taking the time and making the effort to visit our First Nation and speak to our graduates for 2015. I congratulate all of our students from Mattagami First Nation who graduated this year from all levels of our education system. We are proud of each and every one of you. More and more we witness our traditions and cultural teachings coming back into our First Nation. I see a newly invigorated, committed and aware youth that is fortunate to be getting a good education and the benefit of our traditional and cultural teachings.

As proof of this I look around and see so many of our young people achieving great things for our people in our own First Nation organizations. In thinking about this I want to single out Mike Miller, one of our members and Executive Director of Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services who assisted the agency in receiving designation as a fully mandated child welfare agency by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services this spring of 2015. We can now make sure that our children are cared for by our own people in our way after fighting so many years for this right.

We are also fortunate to have some wise and well grounded Elders in Mattagami First Nation and they help us in the decisions we make for our people. There are so many good things happening in our community with the Pow Wow coming up in August, all of the great Fishing Tournaments our members put together, the amazing and educational Fish Hatchery Project to reinvigorate our waters, the amazing Mattagami First Nation Summerfest and our involvement in resource development on our lands. Meegwetch to all our staff for coming to work everyday to serve the membership of Mattagami First Nation. Together, all of us are making things better in our thriving and caring community.

## Front Cover Photo

*Pictured on the front cover is Chief Walter Naveau, Mattagami First Nation (left) and National Chief Perry Bellegrade, Assembly of First Nations during his visit to Mattagami FN to celebrate the community's annual graduation ceremony.*

*photo courtesy of:  
Mattagami First Nation*

# Featured Youth - Samantha McKenzie

Samantha McKenzie is the featured Youth for this issue of the Mattagami Drum. She is active in promoting youth concerns and in encouraging other young people in her home First Nation.

In 2013, she took part in the Feathers Of Hope project to speak on the current situation of Aboriginal youth from her own personal perspective. It was also an opportunity to represent her home community.



**Samantha McKenzie**  
Mattagami First Nation

“This was an important project for me to participate in and it gave me such a wonderful chance to represent our community and our youth. Our young people have many difficulties including having to deal with drugs, alcohol and suicide. This project was important because it was a major undertaking that brought together many young people to give them a voice and to foster hope for the future,” said McKenzie.

She added that her participation in Feathers Of Hope also served as a source of personal growth.

“This was an empowering process and after speaking to everyone and meeting so many people, I was more confident with myself,” said McKenzie.

The Feathers Of Hope project is a program that was started in January 2012 to bring together First Nation youth from Ontario's 92 remote and fly-in communities together with policy and decision makers to discuss the realities and concerns for youth living in the north. The project culminated in a youth forum held in Thunder Bay in March 2013. The forum, which was held over five days, brought together 150 Aboriginal youth to address important issues affecting young people including identity, culture, education, health, addictions, suicide and sustainable funding.

McKenzie commented that Stan Wesley, a Cree actor / comedian / Aboriginal speaker from Moose Factory was supportive in helping her and other speakers in becoming more confident in themselves. Wesley is best known of his work with Wawatay Radio and Television and the creation of 'Bunnuck', a comedy character

he developed that portrays his unique Cree and Aboriginal humour.

McKenzie and several other young people became inspirational speakers at the youth forum in Thunder Bay and went on to continue spreading their stories and messages of hope in additional speaking engagements. She joined a group of other speakers from the project to take part in a youth forum in Whitehorse, Yukon where they were also joined by other young international speakers from around the world. McKenzie and the other youth participants also had an opportunity to meet with Dakota House, who is best known as a young Aboriginal actor in the Canadian TV series 'North of 60' in the 1990s.

At 28 years of age, McKenzie has been involved as a member of an environmental clean up crew with Caron Contracting near Gogama. Caron Contracting worked with Mattagami First Nation and CN Rail to deal with the clean up of a train derail-

ment near Gogama that took place on March 7 and spilled large quantities of oil and petroleum products into the river system and surrounding environment. McKenzie's involvement was with a clean up crew that included 20 other people from Mattagami First Nation and the town of Gogama.

A graduate of Timmins High and Vocational School, McKenzie wants to continue supporting youth initiatives in her home community and in regional Aboriginal initiatives. She commented that an important development for any community would be the creation of a youth council to advocate for local young people and a central youth center that could be used primarily for youth and run by youth.

A member of Mattagami First Nation, her parents are Clayton McKay and Laurie McKenzie. She also has two sisters Krista McKenzie and Julie McKay and a brother Chris McKay.

## Summerfest All About Music



**THE MATTAGAMI FN SUMMERFEST FEATURED MANY GREAT MUSICIANS INCLUDING THE ORGANIZERS OWN GROUP, THE CANUCKY BLUEGRASS BOYS PICTURED HERE. FROM L-R ARE: DON REED, LEE D ROY, MATT NAVEAU, LARRY CARRIERE AND RJ NELSON.**

*photo courtesy of the Canucky Bluegrass Boys*

Mattagami FN Summerfest presented an amazing line up of performances July 16 and 17. The second annual Summerfest, which was held in the First Nation was organized by musicians Matt Naveau and Lee D Roy of the group Canucky Bluegrass. The other members of that group are RJ Nelson, Larry Carriere and Don Reed.

“It was a great couple of days of fantastic music. This is the second year and we are hoping more people will hear about it and it will grow into the future,” said Dorothy Naveau, Mattagami FN.

The bands who performed on Friday started off with an open mic and then featured Matt Naveau, Linda Oneil, Cheyenne Saucier and Juno winner Lawrence Martin. The Saturday line up featured:

Cheyenne Saucier, Blue Rail, Canucky Bluegrass Boys, Jamie Warren and Railroad Steele.

“I want to thank all of our sponsors for their assistance as this event develops for Mattagami FN. Our sponsors this year included: GOLDCORP, Mattagami FN, No Frills in Timmins, Timmins Garage, Lessard Stephens Funeral Home in Timmins and Salon Elite in Sudbury,” commented Matt Naveau.

A member of Mattagami FN and a musician with Canucky Bluegrass Boys, he has a busy summer with the band. Canucky will perform on August 9 at the Manitoulin Countryfest in Little Current, August 26 at Music In The Park in Timmins and August 29 at the Great Canadian Kayak Challenge in Timmins.

# Chief Walter Naveau Speaks On CN Derailments

In an interview for the Mattagami Drum, Chief Walter Naveau shared his thoughts and feelings on the multiple train derailments that occurred near Mattagami FN. The interview was conducted by Mattagami Drum Editor, Xavier Kataquapit.

## **Xavier Kataquapit:**

*Chief Walter I would like you relate to me how you and Mattagami First Nation felt when you first heard there was a major derailment on your traditional lands on March 7, 2015?*

## **Chief Walter Naveau:**

Well, it was a shock you know. One minute everything is fine in our First Nation and then suddenly I got a call alerting me to this crisis and then there were police on my porch and this news that there had been a serious derailment and a resulting fire. It was scary and things were happening very fast in a hectic way because nobody was sure what would happen with the fire. There were Canadian National people coming into the community to do air quality checks, environmental experts arriving and just kind of a panic to make sure the fire was contained. This was a huge fire and it took four days to put it out.

## **Kataquapit:**

*How did the community members react to this emergency crisis?*

## **Chief Naveau:**

We did not really know what was going on and there was fear that we might have to be evacuated again. You know we had a major evacuation a couple of years ago because of a huge forest fire. So we were all concerned for our safety of our families, our Elders and of course the children.

## **Kataquapit:**

*When you learned that the fire had been contained and resolved what was the next step in dealing with this incident?*

## **Chief Naveau:**

As we became more involved and our people began to be part of the management in dealing with this derailment we quickly realized that it was a disaster that resulted in a major crude oil spill. We learned that 35 cars had left the track and five of them went into the Makami River which leads to Miniskawin Lake and into the Mattagami River system. The train involved was hauling 94 tanker cars of Al-



**TWO MAJOR TRAIN DERAILMENTS OCCURED NEAR MATTAGAMI FN THIS PAST WINTER. ONE TOOK PLACE ON MARCH 7 AND THE OTHER OCCURED ON FEBRUARY 14, 2015.**

berta Crude Oil. Wabun Tribal Council helped us in meeting with CN management and determining how things would proceed with the analysis, management and clean up or reclamation that had to take place.

## **Kataquapit:**

*What came out of meeting with CN and becoming involved in dealing with this disaster?*

## **Chief Naveau:**

Wabun Tribal Council assisted us in terms of the Executive Director Shawn Batisse negotiating our role in dealing with this disaster and bringing in the Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, David Zimmer for a first hand look at the derailment. Our very capable staff also put in place our crisis emergency plan which helped us so much. We managed to get a meaningful dialogue happening with CN. We of course had to impress upon them that fact that we had a right to be part of the process in dealing with this derailment, in terms of analyzing the environment impact, being part of the clean up and reclamation team and monitoring the situation both short and long term.

## **Kataquapit:**

*What was the outcome of Mattagami First Nation's involvement in dealing with this disaster?*

## **Chief Naveau:**

In the short term we were joined by Carolyn Burgess, a consultant who assisted us in navigating through so much information and making a plan of action for us in dealing with the situation and CN. We also brought on our own environmental expert, Ryan Wheeler to assist us in understanding the impact this spill caused. CN has told us that thousands of tons of soil was removed from the area and transported to an approved disposal location. They also claim to have collected and transported over a million litres of oily water to an approved disposal location. Our people have been employed in assisting with this work that deals with the short term. We don't know really the full impact of this spill but we understand that it has affected our waterways and the land in a very big way. We continue to monitor the situation.

## **Kataquapit:**

*How much of a threat are these derailments and spills to Mattagami First Nation and its traditional lands?*

## Chief Naveau:

The scary fact is that we have had several such derailments with spills over a matter of months in the area. Earlier on February 14 a train of 100 tanker cars also derailed near Gogama and 29 cars left the track. There was a fire there for days and a spill occurred involving the crude oil and distillates being carried by this train. On March 5, 2015 another derailment occurred near Hornepayne and although there was no fire or major spill these cars were termed as carrying residue so this was claimed as having little impact on the land. I mean one of these derailments occurring is frightening enough but three nearby in a space of a few months? That should be unimaginable but it almost seems like it is becoming common place for us.

## Kataquapit:

*What can be done to deal with the fact that these derailments are taking place and it seems like they might continue into the future based on past history?*

## Chief Naveau:

The most important thing is that we have to understand that many of our First Nations right across the country are potential derailment disasters. This can happen anywhere and it always impacts our First Nation traditional lands and waterways. I have asked for support from Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) for a resolution to support Mattagami First Nation in dealing with this issue. I also asked recently at the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) 36th Annual General Assembly in Montréal, Quebec in early July for support from the AFN for the tabling of a clear environmental resolution. We need to be prepared for these derailments and we also need to be prepared for spills that happen from the current and proposed oil and gas pipelines that run through our traditional lands.

## Kataquapit:

*Are there any words of thanks you want to give regarding this recent derailment?*

## Chief Naveau:

I want to say Meegwetch to our Elders for guiding us through this disaster and keeping us calm and focused. I want to thank them for not being angry for what has been done to the land and rather to use this as a lesson and teaching that we must make a stand and do something so that our mother earth is protected. I want to thank Wabun Tribal Council for assisting us in figuring out how to move ahead in dealing with this disaster and as well I want to thank everyone who worked so hard to help clean up and reclaim the land and water.

# Amanda Ryan Staff Feature

Amanda Ryan is the Home and Community Care Worker for Mattagami First Nation. Since starting her position in March 2010, she has mainly been responsible for providing home visits in the community to the elderly who are not fully capable of performing home care tasks. In addition to caring for the elderly, she also assists other individuals who have recently been home bound and need assistance.



**Amanda  
Ryan**  
Home And  
Community  
Care Worker

“I enjoy visiting and socializing with everyone in the community and being involved in a variety of activities with people,” said Ryan.

In addition to assisting individuals in their homes, she also supports social activities for Elders by encouraging them to take part in community events. Her work also involves taking part in a Meals On Wheels program which is operated two days a week in Mattagami First Nation.

Ryan enjoys cooking as she worked in the food and beverage industry for several years. Over the past few years, she has been employed in several positions having to do with the catering and restaurant businesses for the private sector and mining companies.

Currently, she is working towards full certification as a Personal Support Worker through a correspondence program with St Elizabeth College in Thunder Bay. In addition, she has also added to her experience by attending a variety of health training programs and courses including diabetes management, wound management, dealing with trauma and education in crisis management.

As part of the Health Care staff, she is also a member of Community Crisis Team, a group of health care workers and individuals from the community that was formed to collaborate and cooperate as a unit dur-

ing times of minor and major crisis and emergency. She is active in other emergency response teams in the community and is a member of the local volunteer fire fighting department.

During one autumn in the community, she and her partner Gerald Luke, were able to put their emergency training to use during an unexpected accident they came upon. A woman had fallen off a trail from her four wheeled ATV and had partially landed in the water. She was unable to free herself and called for help. Ryan and her partner were able to help and rescued the woman from under her vehicle.

During a recent CN derailment near Gogama on March 7, 2015, emergency response plans were put into effect. Early response plans in the first stages of the emergency included the possibility of a community wide evacuation due to a large fire and heavy smoke that occurred when petroleum and oil products spilled into the environment nearby. Ryan explained that she along with the Mattagami Health Care team, Community Crisis Team, community leaders and others had to come together immediately after the derailment to assess the danger and consider the best course of action to ensure the safety of the community.

During the initial weeks of the derailment emergency, Ryan was tasked with secretarial duties to record regular meetings that occurred between the company, the community and local leadership concerning the derailment.

Originally from Cobalt, Ontario, in the Tri-Town area in the township of Temiskaming, Ryan had initially moved to Mattagami First Nation to be with friends. Little did she know at the time that she would end up in a relationship with someone from the community.

“I enjoy the quiet and laid back atmosphere of the community. Gerald and I really feel at home here for all the right reasons. It is a beautiful place,” said Ryan.

She and her partner Gerald Luke now enjoy all types of social activities and the wilderness setting in the First Nation with their two dogs Sadie and Havana at their side.

# Walleye Hatchery Moving Ahead

*Mattagami First Nation marked the third season of a fish hatchery in the community that is slowly encouraging the ecological health of Lake Mattagami.*

To date, over the last three seasons, the hatchery has deposited over 3.5 million newly hatched pickerel known as fry or juvenile fish into Lake Mattagami. The fish are known as pickerel in Canada and the same species is also called walleye in the United States.



**Chad Boissoneau**  
Councillor  
Mattagami  
First Nation

“This has been a great project for our community as it has brought together many people through a shared interest in keeping our water, our land and the animals that live there safe and protected for future generations,” said Councillor Chad Boissoneau, the lead organizer of the Fish Hatchery.

He was assisted in this year's hatchery project by Hudson Naveau, a young man from the community who is learning about the process from Boissoneau.

The hatchery process started early in the year when Boissoneau and other traditional people and fisherman determined when the pickerel would begin their spawning period. In late April, 20 female and 20 male pickerel were caught in live traps and brought to the community.

Boissoneau explained that these fish were all that was needed in order to fertilize an estimated one to two million eggs. The eggs were then contained in controlled water tanks fed with local lake water and monitored carefully over a period of 15 to 20 days.

On May 15, most of the eggs had hatched and it was this point that Boissoneau, Naveau and many volunteers, collected the newly born juvenile fish or fry into containers for transport. The estimated 1.2 million pickerel fry were then released into

Lake Mattagami in different locations to maximize their chances of survival in the wild.

The hatching process was also a learning opportunity for visitors as well. School children from the Mary Jane Naveau Memorial Elementary School visited the hatchery several times to monitor the growth and progress of the fish. Boissoneau added that local Elders and traditional people also showed interest in seeing how the fish developed.

“It's great to see everyone taking an active interest in this project. Seeing the fish eggs under a microscope and watching how they grow over a period of two weeks was impressive and educational for our visitors. It gives us all a better understanding of the life cycle of a fish and how we can take care of our lake,” said Boissoneau.

A past Chief of Mattagami First Nation from 2001 to 2004, he has led the hatchery project for the past three years as the main developer and organizer. Boissoneau, who has an extensive background in natural



**THE MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION WALLEYE HATCHERY WAS AN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY FOR LOCAL YOUTH. PICTURED IS COMMUNITY MEMBER KALEB TURCOTTE DURING A VISIT TO THE HATCHERY.**



**MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION YOUTH TOOK AN ACTIVE PART IN THE WALLEYE HATCHERY PROJECT. PICTURED IS TAMARA MATHIEU, MATTAGAMI FN YOUTH RELEASING NEWLY HATCHED WALLEYE INTO LAKE MATTAGAMI.**

resources organizations also has valuable experience through his involvement in fish hatchery projects with the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The project is supported by the First Nation financially as well as through volunteer support by community members. Over the past three years, the main financial supporters have been Gold Corp, IAM Gold, Ontario Power Generation (OPG), Lakeshore Gold and Caron Contracting.

Boissoneau added that the recent derailment of two CN trains on February 14 and then on March 7 added some uncertainty and concern about the damage done to local waterways and the land. The two derailments spilled large amounts of oil and petroleum products into the water system that leads to Lake Mattagami.

“We have no idea what the spill will mean for the future of the fish population on the lake. The hatchery is

an ongoing project and we will not know what results these spills will generate until a few seasons pass. As is the case with the development of our fish it takes years of monitoring to understand the real impact of spills like this to our environment,” said Boissoneau.

In the future, he hopes to expand the hatchery project from a single building in the community and add a rearing pond.

# Kunuwanimano Makes History

On May 1, 2015 Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services took a step forward in advocating for Aboriginal children by being designated as Ontario's newest children's aid society. Kunuwanimano received formal approval from the Honourable Tracy MacCharles, Minister of Children and Youth Services, following the last stage of the transitional review in March, 2015. As a new children's aid society, Kunuwanimano will provide child welfare services to the Aboriginal community within the Districts of Temiskaming, Sudbury, Cochrane and Algoma.

“This is a historic change for our community and other First Nations in the Wabun territory. It means that our children will not be taken away to be handled by a foreign culture. Watching our children leave their home communities always left a hole in our hearts,” said Chief Walter Naveau, Mattagami First Nation.

He was grateful for the support of Elders, board members, leaders and individual advocates from the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) and Wabun Tribal Council area that supported Kunuwanimano over the years. From the time when the organization was first established, the staff and leadership of Kunuwanimano has worked over the past 25 years to achieve this designation. Up until the recent announcement, one of Kunuwanimano's primary roles was to advocate for children that were in the care of Children and Youth Services in Ontario.

“We are thankful for the many people and leaders who have represented Kunuwanimano over the years. Myself and our Council are also proud of the work of Michael Miller, Executive Director and a member of Mattagami First Nation for his unwavering direction in making this possible,” said Chief Naveau.



**Michael Miller,**  
Executive  
Director  
Kunuwanimano  
Child and  
Family  
Services

In a press release announcing the designation, Executive Director Miller, explained that the change will allow their organization to offer services that honour and support the inherent authority of member First Nations to provide care for their children based on unity, traditions, values, beliefs and customs.

“Our mission is to work collaboratively with our First Nations members to ensure the safety and well-being of children is secured by strengthening,

supporting and encouraging the healthy development of families. We are committed to providing services in a manner that is holistically and bi-culturally appropriate for our First Nations. The designation as a Children's Aid Society further enables us to strengthen families and communities,” said Miller.

Elder Morris Naveau, of Mattagami First Nation, has sat as a Board Member of Kunuwanimano several times over the past 25 years. He was very happy to see the successful designation of this Aboriginal organization.

“This has been a long 25 year journey for our people. We now get to live up to the name of Kunuwanimano which means 'keeping our own'. After watching many of our children leave not just our community but other First Nations throughout my lifetime, this designation is a dream come true for me and our people,” said Elder Naveau.



**DELEGATES AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM NORTHERN ONTARIO CAME TOGETHER IN WAHGOSHIG FN TO CELEBRATE KUNUWANIMANO CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES BEING DESIGNATED A CHILDREN'S AIDE SOCIETY. FROM L-R ARE: CHIEF LAWRENCE BAXTER, CONSTANCE LAKE FN; CHIEF SONNY BATISSE, MATACHEWAN FN; CHIEF WALTER NAVEAU, MATTAGAMI FN AND CHIEF DAVE BABIN, WAHGOSHIG FN.**

*photo courtesy of MPP John Vanthof, Timiskaming-Cochrane*

# Featured Elder Carol Gagnon



**Elder Carol Gagnon**  
Mattagami  
First Nation

Elder Carol Gagnon is the featured Elder for this issue of the Mattagami Drum. Originally born in Mattagami First Nation, she has gone down a long path on her life journey with a return back to her family and home community in northern Ontario.

After her birth she was placed in adoption at three months of age and lived a life away from her culture and community. She was raised not far from her original family in Sudbury for many years until she moved to the Ottawa area in 1970.

"My birth was a sad tragic beginning. After my adoption, my mother was told that I had a heart condition and had died soon after. It was a terrible circumstance for her and for the longest time, everyone that knew of me thought that I was gone," said Elder Gagnon.

To add to the confusion, her birth name which was Aileen was changed to Carol, which made research into her adoptive past and origins more difficult.

In 1984, she began to work for the federal government in several positions including Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). She grew up with a French Canadian family and she became fully bilingual in both English and French which helped her secure an office career as an Administrative Assistant for 20 years.

She began researching her family background in the early 1990s and in 1991 found the connection to her mother Mary Naveau and her family in Mattagami FN. In March 1991, the Naveau family led by Gary Naveau, who currently serves on council, went to Ottawa to visit Elder Gagnon.

"I can still remember their arrival at about nine at night as it was just starting to get dark. It was an emotional reunion with my mom when we met at the door. She said something in Ojibway to me, placed her hands on my face and called me Aileen, my birth name. There were a lot of happy tears that night and I got to meet all my sisters and my brothers for the first time," said Elder Gagnon.

Her family includes her late mother

Mary and late father Sabian Naveau. Her sisters are Veronica Commando, Gail Naveau, Agnes Naveau and the late Theresa Naveau and the late Elizabeth (Loley) Naveau. Elder Gagnon also has brothers Gary Naveau, Ronald Naveau and the late John Naveau. John recently passed on in January 2015 at the age of 76. Elizabeth Naveau who was known to everyone in the community as Loley Naveau was actually a member of the first all female Chief and Council which included Chief Helen Naveau and Councillor Irene Naveau.

She saw her home community of Mattagami FN, where she was born, for the first time as an adult soon after her family reunion in July 1991.

"I went to stay with my mom at her house in the community. It is hard to put into words the sense of relief and a feeling of being complete when I spent time with my mother in Mattagami First Nation," said Elder Gagnon.

She went back to visit in the community several times and in May 2011,

she attended a service at the local Mattagami Full Gospel Centre and shared her beliefs and Christian spirituality to the members of the congregation. A vote was held with the 15 full time members of the church and Elder Gagnon was elected as the new Pastor. Since her husband Richard Gagnon had a contracting business that could place him in any location and the fact that she had recently retired, the couple made the decision to leave their home in Aylmer, Quebec and move to Mattagami FN.

Over the past two decades, Mattagami FN has seen a resurgence in Aboriginal culture and spirituality including the development of an Annual Pow Wow in the community. Elder Gagnon explained that she has a deep respect for the beliefs of her people and that much of the traditional teachings are not that different from modern Christian practices and ideas.

Elder Gagnon and her husband Richard have two sons Julian and Michel; grandchildren Jasmine, Rylee, Emilie and a fourth grandchild is expected in September.

## Pow Wow August 22 / 23

The Fifth Annual Mattagami First Nation Annual Traditional Pow Wow, titled 'Honouring Mother Earth' will be held in the community on August 22 and 23, 2015.

The event which is being headed by Pow Wow Coordinator, Dana Cosgrove of Mattagami FN has a full line up of traditional performers. She is also being assisted in developing the Pow Wow by volunteers and supporters from the community.

"I am excited to see everyone at this year's Pow Wow. We have some new performers and singers but it will also be special to see our young people from the community taking part. This is an important event that not only brings together our community but teaches us all the importance of our traditions and culture," said Cosgrove.

The Host Drum will be the Ottawa River Singers (Ottawa, On); Co-Host Drum, Storm Cloud (Kitigan Zibi FN); Lead male dancer, Laval Williams (Wasauksing FN); Lead Female Dancer, Dawn Recollett (Mattagami FN); Youth Lead Male Dancer, Geronimo Tootoosis (Chief Poundmaker FN); Youth Lead Female Dancer, Janelle Gowlinowski (Mattagami FN); MC, Greg 'Mista Wasis' Dreaver, (Mistawasis FN, Saskatchewan); Lead Fire Keeper, Morrison Solomon, Cape

Croker FN; Arena Director, Josh Couchie (Nipissing FN) and Head Grandmother Elder, Clair Prince (Mattagami FN). Representatives for Veteran, Head Grandfather Elder and Head Fire Keeper will be announced at the event.

This year's Annual Pow Wow is supported by several organizations and businesses including: Mattagami Trust, Mattagami First Nation and Iam Gold.

"We want to thank our Chief and Council for their continued support in making this gathering possible. We are also grateful to our sponsors and supporters for their assistance," said Cosgrove.

She added special thanks to her mother Dawn Recollett and her sister Deidra Boissoneau, who are both traditional performers and teachers, who provided valuable assistance and support.

Leading up to this year's event, Pow Wow Socials took place in July to provide visitors and participants an opportunity to learn about Pow Wow ceremonies and teachings. On Saturday August 22, a Pow Wow fundraiser will also be held to support this year's event.

For more information contact:

**Dana Cosgrove by email:**  
[d\\_cos@hotmail.com](mailto:d_cos@hotmail.com)

**Facebook page at:**  
**"Mattagami First Nation Annual Traditional Pow wow"**



# Community Energy Plan Approved

*Mattagami First Nation has received approval for the development of an Aboriginal Community Energy Plan (ACEP).*

The development of the plan will evaluate the current state of energy use in the community and allow for further planning for energy needs and priorities as well as address rising energy costs and environmental impacts.

“One of the biggest concerns in our community is about the cost of energy and hydro power. The cost of power has risen and we want to try to find ways that can help our members cope with these increases,” said Councillor Jennifer Constant, who is the lead representative in this development.

***The ACEP is a step towards developing solutions for the community's energy needs for the future.***

Mattagami First Nation applied for the development of this plan in partnership with JAZZ Solar Solutions, a private company based in Ottawa that has partnered with First Nations in the development of green energy projects. The ACEP is a program that is delivered and managed by the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), a crown corporation responsible for operating the electricity market in the province of Ontario. Mattagami First Nation's successful application was one of 15 approved proposals that will be funded by the IESO.

The ACEP will start in the summer and fall of 2015 with an expected com-

pletion in mid 2016. The energy plan will provide a comprehensive long-term plan to improve energy efficiency, reduce consumption and assess opportunities for clean energy solutions.

Councillor Constant commented that the planning process has raised awareness in the community especially to young people about the importance of conservation and energy consumption.

“As a community we can work together towards a common goal such as planning our energy needs and conserving as much as we can. These are long term plans and it is helpful to teach our children the importance of energy use, saving as much as we can, recycling where we can and learning about alternative energy sources,” said Councillor Constant.

She is hopeful that Mattagami First Nation can some day find solutions that would allow the community to become more self sufficient and less reliant on conventional power sources.

“We are paying a high cost for our energy consumption. On top of that there are still frequent power outages in our community during the year. Alternative power may not be feasible right now but at least we have to look at beginning some development so this would offset the high cost of energy use for our members,” said Councillor Constant.

She added that power usage and unreliable power sources affects the community in various ways. Community members regularly travel to the city of



**Jennifer Constant**  
Councillor  
Mattagami  
First Nation

Timmins which is an hour away to buy their groceries. Many people who do this are hard pressed to find transportation or find services to take them to Timmins so they are forced to make a single trip every week to buy food in bulk with the limited funds they have. Much of the food they store relies on refrigeration or deep freezing to maintain food supplies for a week or more. When the power cuts out for long periods of time, the food supply of an entire family is put in jeopardy.

She explained that the ACEP is a step towards developing solutions for the community's energy needs for the future.

“We are working towards solutions and the first steps will help us to plan for the future. This planning has allowed our community to discuss and consider viable energy alternatives at first to cut down energy costs, by becoming more energy efficient and hopefully in the future become energy independent,” said Councillor Constant.

## Home For Elderly Developing

Mattagami First Nation is working towards establishing a home for the elderly in the community. Councillor Jennifer Constant, Business Development Coordinator is gathering input from the community and consulting with professionals on how to move ahead with this initiative.

“I have discussed this project with our health staff and with local leadership and so far everyone is excited and positive about moving ahead with it. This is an important project for our community as it will provide the means for us to take care of our Elders and keep them in our community, near their families and on the land where they were born and raised,” said Councillor

Constant.

Presently, Mattagami First Nation has no facility to care and house the elderly. Over the years, many families in the community have seen their parents and grandparents moved to homes in nearby cities and towns to receive care and medical attention.

“It is important for us to find a way to keep our Elders close to their families and have them cared for in their home community. Our Elders are our knowledge keepers and they keep and share many important parts of our cultural heritage,” said Councillor Constant.

More and more of the elderly are being moved to care facilities in the

city now. Councillor Constant recalls as a young person being able to spend time with many local Elders as they were more prominent in the community back then.

She added that a local Elders home would ensure a safe, comfortable and positive environment for the elderly, as they would be close to family, friends and neighbours. An opportunity to continue living in the community would be healthier and more positive than having to move to a city or town that would be unfamiliar, uncomfortable and removed from any familiarity, as well as being away from family and friends. It should also create employment for community members.

# AFN Chief Speaks To Graduates

Mattagami First Nation (FN) and Mattagami FN Education made history June 24 when National Chief of the Assembly Of First Nations (AFN), Perry Bellegarde visited the community and was featured at the 2015 Graduation Ceremony. On invitation from Mattagami FN Chief Walter Naveau and the Graduation Committee, National Chief Bellegarde spoke to a large audience in the community. His message was one of hope, hard work and traditional and cultural awareness.

"We were all so happy that National Chief Bellegarde came to speak at our graduation. He came because he understands himself just how important education is to our young people. He is such a powerful speaker and he moved everyone in attendance with his words," commented Mattagami FN Chief Walter Naveau.

While in Mattagami FN, National Chief Bellegarde was taken on a tour of the Mary Jane Naveau Elementary School, boated over the waters of Lake Mattagami with Mattagami FN Chief Naveau at the helm and visited with community members during his short stay.

"We had him over to our home for dinner and it was like having an old friend show up at the table. He is such a modest, humble and open man and he told me he was honoured to visit Mattagami First Nation," said Chief Naveau.

Meghan Moore, Acting Principal of Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School and Mattagami FN Education Director, Cathy Naveau explained that the students were amazed at the fact that the AFN National Chief came to speak to them.

"This was a huge success for the First Nation to be honoured in this way. We are all so proud of our graduates and this year was very special with National Chief Bellegarde providing the encouragement and guidance with his speech," explained Moore.

National Chief Bellegarde was presented a Star Blanket by the First Nation as a token of its appreciation for taking the time and making the effort to speak at the graduation ceremony.

"We presented him with the Star Blanket as it is in our belief a gift that offers him protection and will help to keep him warm and strong. We appreciate his monumental visit and I know that our children will speak of his visit for many years to come," said Chief Naveau.

Mattagami FN graduates for 2015 included: Grade 12: Tamara Mathieu and Michael Gregoire; Post Secondary: Zack



**THE MATTAGAMI FN 2015 GRADUATION WAS HONoured BY THE PARTICIPATION OF NATIONAL GRAND CHIEF PERRY BELLEGARDE, ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS (AFN). HE IS PICTURED HERE ON THE RIGHT ALONG WITH MATTAGAMI FN YOUTH CHIEF NATHAN NAVEAU (LEFT) AND ELDER MORRIS NAVEAU (CENTER).**

Naveau, Heather Naveau and John Naveau; Grade Eight Graduate: Nolan Naveau and Kindergarten Graduates: Aaralyn Echum and Nakiyah Turcotte.

The graduates have a great role model to look up to in National Chief Bellegarde. In 1984, He became the first Treaty Indian to graduate from the University of Regina with a Bachelor of Administration. In March 2012, he graduated from the Certified Corporate Board Training through The Directors College sponsored by the Conference Board of Canada and McMaster University's DeGroot School of Business.

National Chief Bellegarde was named AFN National Chief on December 10, 2014. He is from the Little Black Bear FN, Treaty 4 Territory, Saskatchewan. He served as Chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and Saskatchewan Regional Chief for the AFN. He has also served as the Tribal Chair of the Touchwood-File Hills-Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, Councillor for the Little Black Bear FN and Chief of Little Black Bear FN.



**THE STUDENTS OF THE MARY JANE NAVEAU MEMORIAL SCHOOL HAD A FUN TIME ON THEIR ANNUAL SCHOOL TRIP WHICH TOOK THEM TO SOUTHERN ONTARIO AND TORONTO. THEY ARE PICTURED HERE ON THEIR WAY TO THE TORONTO ZOO.**

# Keeping In Touch by Juanita Luke, Executive Director



**Juanita  
Luke**  
Executive  
Director  
Mattagami  
First Nation

With this issue of Mattagami Drum I want to congratulate our Chief Walter Naveau in his re election as well as all of our council members who were elected. The council members are Leonard Naveau, Chad Boissoneau, Gary Naveau, Jennifer Constant and Larry Naveau. I am very happy as always to be working with Chief and Council however this time is very special. Three of our councillors including Leonard, Chad and Gary have held the position of Chief. This means that they know what is involved in leading the community and they have great knowledge in how the political, bureaucratic and corporate systems work both Native and non Native. Combine that with the enthusiasm and well rounded experience that Jennifer brings us with the eager new energy from Larry and this council has got a lot going for it. Of course with the sitting of the new council I also give my thanks and respect to the Chiefs and councils that have represented Mattagami First Nation in the past.

It takes a lot of dedication and energy to sit as a Chief or Council member. This is not an easy job and we don't pause often enough to honour our leadership for all their hard work. I like to think that more and more of our members are running for leadership po-

sitions in part because of the Harmony Project process. The grassroots meaningful contact, transparency and accountability that is moving Mattagami First Nation ahead is very motivating and satisfying for so many of us.

For the first time ever, thanks to the Harmony Project process, our council members will be developing a formal work plan and providing it to our members. This is an idea that will help everyone focus and organize their energies. This process makes for better planning and productivity in the long run. Council will be doing quarterly reporting to the membership at Mattagami First Nation quarterly open houses.

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*I am grateful to  
our leadership,  
our staff and so  
many of our  
members who  
volunteer.*

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Myself and Candice Andress will be helping Council to produce the reports and in a way that is realistic with achievable goals. As part of openness and transparency council is also committed to establish a procedure to have public Council meetings and publish the minutes on our web site.

This openness and connection to our community members follows the traditions and cultural process that our ancestors lived by. It is interesting to note that the more we connect to our traditions and cultures through our Elders

and teachings the better our government becomes. We are fortunate that our Chief and Council have a good understanding of our ancestors ways in terms of culture and traditions.

It occurred to me recently when I was thinking about all the changes that are taking place in Mattagami First Nation that the Harmony movement or process has really been about decolonization. It is all about taking charge of things by ourselves. It is about self reliance and self sufficiency so that makes life here in our community very exciting. It has made me realize also how unique we are in our First Nation communities. Although, we share so many similarities with non Native municipalities and towns across Canada no matter what city or town we move to we will always be a Mattagami First Nation member and forever call this place our traditional home. People from non Native communities don't do that. That's quite a special relationship for all of us and where we come from.

As always I have so many people to thank for all their dedication and hard work in making our First Nation a great place to be from. I am grateful to our leadership, our staff and so many of our members who volunteer to run events that make us feel good about ourselves and promote Mattagami First Nation. During a recent bingo we developed as a means to gather our member's input as part of the Harmony Project I got a warm surprise. We handed surveys out to adults and children who attended to get their input on what they would like to see in our community. I found it really cute that one child's response was that they stated quite adamantly they would like to see a baby tiger in Mattagami First Nation. Now, how's that for a goal?

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## Remembering Amy McKay

The community of Mattagami First Nation was saddened at the sudden passing of Amy McKay and her baby Emma Chantal Rocheleau who both tragically passed away at the Timmins and District Hospital, April 13, 2015. Amy has many family and friends in the community. She was a very dedicated, kind person and she will be missed by everyone she worked with

and who knew her. She leaves her husband Remi Rocheleau and children Ryan and Ally. She is also survived by her mother Paulette McKay (Lee McKeown), father Paul Roy, siblings Julie McKay (Gord), Chris McKay (Alyssa), James McKay, Shawn McKeown (Cathy) and Cory McKeown (Teila). She was a much loved member of Mattagami First Nation.



# Community Events Promote Mattagami FN

## 16th Annual Mattagami Live Release Walleye Tourny Held

The 16th Annual Walleye Live Release Fishing Tournament, held on June 6 and 7, 2015 was better than ever. The event run by the Mattagami First Nation Fur Council, is part of the Northern Ontario Walleye Trail, a series of fishing tournaments held in northern Ontario during the year.

"This was a great success for our community and a fun way to bring visitors and friends into our First Nation. We are grateful to all the participants as well as our many sponsors who supported our event," said Councillor Larry Naveau, event organizer.

He coordinated the event along with Mattagami First Nation members Jessica Echum, Chad Boissoneau and Eileen Boissoneau. This year's event doubled in size from last year to a grand total of a \$44,000 prize board that was awarded during the two day event. The increased size of awarded prize amounts has made the Mattagami First Nation Walleye Fishing Tournament the largest fishing tournament in northern Ontario. The tournament annually brings in fisherman and visitors from throughout northern Ontario, as well as from southern Ontario and the northern United States.

A total of 122 teams competed for a series of cash prizes this year. The top finisher for Day One was the team of Yves Boissoneault and Tim Caron with a weight of 15.54 pounds. Day Two top weight went to the team of Garneau and Salmonson with 12.99 pounds. The overall total weight went to Tory Garneau and Craig Salmonson with a combined two day total of 26.44 pounds, making it the third year the pair have won this event.

Some of the sponsors for the event included: IAM Gold, Mattagami First Nation, Lakeshore Gold and Lacroix Construction. The Annual Walleye Live Release Fishing Tournament is one of several fishing events that take place on Mattagami Lake during the year.

## Third Annual Mattagami Fall Classic Coming In September

The Third Annual Mattagami Fall Classic Walleye Tournament will be held on September 12 and 13 in Mattagami First Nation. The event is being hosted by the Mattagami First Nation Fur Council led by Councillor Larry Naveau and Jessica Naveau.

The two day event is another multi prize event for the top ten placements. A grand prize of \$8,000 will be awarded to the number one spot, as well as \$4,000 for second, \$3,000 for third, \$2,000 for fourth, \$1,000 for fifth, \$900 for sixth, \$800 for seventh, \$700 for eighth \$600 for ninth and \$500 for tenth place positions. Daily prizes are also being awarded for daily finishers with amounts of \$1,000 for first, \$500 for second and \$250 for third.

A steak dinner will also be provided for anglers on Saturday, the first day of the event, as well as sponsor draw prizes and a beer garden for adults all weekend.

For more information on this event please contact:

**Larry Naveau at 705-363-0165 or  
Jessica Naveau at 705-221-4248**

## 13th Annual Beaverfest Held on May 2, 2015

Mattagami FN hosted its 13th Annual Beaverfest event on May 2. The event which was led by Larry Naveau, FN Council member and traditional hunter and trapper, is held annually as a way to recognize and encourage the traditional hunting and gathering traditions of the community.

"This year's event was a success and we had many people come out to learn about our culture. We had food sampling as we prepared traditional foods like beaver and there were a lot of people who had it for the first time," said Councillor Naveau.

At estimated 350 people attended the one day event with visitors arriving from cities, towns and other First Nations in northern Ontario. The event also featured skinning demonstrations

as well as fur preparations by Mattagami FN traditional trappers and members of the Timmins Fur Council.

Councillor Naveau explained that the event was developed to celebrate Aboriginal culture and also to encourage and support young people in the community to maintain these cultural activities.

"Teaching traditional culture to our youth is an important part of maintaining our heritage. This event is not just about gathering food or preparing material, it is also an opportunity for us to teach the traditional values and lifestyle of our people. It teaches them about learning to respect the land and its animals and live in harmony with nature," said Councillor Naveau.

The event was started by Elder Leonard Naveau, who as a past Chief is a prominent member of First Nation Council and he is also the father of Councillor Larry Naveau. Elder Leonard Naveau started the event with local members of the community and friends from the Gogama Fur Council.



## Mattagami FN Drum

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