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NISICHAWAYASIHK
CREE NATION

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APRIL 2016

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Dealing with Addiction

Medicine Lodge Shifts to Harm-Reduction Model

Nelson House Medicine Lodge (NHML) Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment Centre has been shifting to a "harm-reduction model."

Studies have shown that alcohol and drug addiction is considered a disease and not simply a weakness. A disease that many people live with and will battle for their entire lives. Alcoholics and addicts know there are good days and bad, but the struggle is never-ending and the disease is never cured. It never gives up. It is for this reason the Nelson House Medicine Lodge (NHML) Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment Centre has been shifting to a "harm-reduction model" to give residents and staff a better chance to have sober lives.

What does a "harm-reduction model" mean to the residents, staff and management of the Lodge? It means a new approach, a new way of thinking and a new way of handling and addressing the needs of individuals dealing with addiction.

Many alcoholics need the help and support of others to help find the path to sobriety. Addiction is a life-long challenge.

For years, the Lodge has considered adopting a new approach and "Better Practice" model. The recent accreditation review emphasized the need for a new way of handling and dealing with lapses or "slip-ups" for residents and staff dealing with the addiction illness.

When asked about the shift in approach, CEO Ed Azure said, "In the past, any use of drugs or alcohol while at the facility was handled with a zero-tolerance, complete abstinence approach. It was a cause for dismissal from the centre and the program. In fact, over the years we found this was actually pushing individuals away during their most critical time of need. Many of these individuals were coming to the centre for help and the zero-tolerance approach to their illness denied the healing they deserved. It distanced them from the needed supports and a chance for sobriety. We had to recognize every one of these individuals showed great strength by seeking help in the first place. After all, everyone deserves a second chance when pursuing a better life."

> **"Over the years we found this was actually pushing individuals away during their most critical time of need."**

Azure explained it is an evolving approach that the board and management hope to soon adopt as policy. "We now have a better understanding of the nature of the disease and the high risk of relapse for addicts. We also know the huge setbacks for those removed prematurely from the program. Now, when a resident or staff member is found to be drinking alcohol or abusing substances at the centre, each case will be reviewed by counsellors, treatment staff and management. This means, after only one incident, the individual may not be necessarily choosing to leave

Continued on page 3

OKIMAHKAN OTY'AMIWIN

From the Chief

Tansi! I hope all of you are looking forward to spring coming soon. While we are waiting, I hope you enjoy these last few weeks of ice fishing. But remember to be extra careful as the ice is getting soft in some places and we don't want harm to come to anyone. I also want to remind everyone that there is a NO BURN ORDER in place effective immediately until further notice. We all must do our part to avoid another horrible tragedy like the one that happened in our community last spring. We don't want houses, sheds, other buildings or grass fires in our community this spring. This is a very important safety issue for all of us.

This month I have been reflecting on our journey over the past 20 years. On April 8, 1996, the headline in the Nickel Belt News read "Nelson House Flood Settlement will spur development says councillor." It is always good for leaders to go back and see what they have said in the past. In this case, I am proud that we have been moving forward and implementing our vision from 20 years ago. At that time, I said that our goal was to use the NFA Implementation Agreement as the foundation to develop our community and take back control over our lives. As the lead negotiator in that deal, I saw it as a stepping stone that would allow us to grow and prosper over time if we invested in economic development, housing and other infrastructure.

It has taken time but I believe we are on the cusp of major improvements that will benefit our Nation. We have come a long way over the past 20 years. The 1996 Agreement, followed by the 1998 TLE Agreement, the 2006 PDA and the 2015 PDA Supplement 2 have allowed us to undertake many initiatives and plan for others. We own a hotel, a grocery store in Thompson and are building a new one in Nelson House. We operate our own Trusts and are increasingly less reliant on other levels of government for 100% of our funding. Today, we are about to undertake the most ambitious housing and infrastructure program in our Nation's history.

Therefore, I am so excited as I write this message to announce that after years of hard work and lobbying by NCN leaders, the federal government has finally approved the conversion of the Mystery Lake property subject to a final land designation vote. We have started planning the land designation voting process and the next steps we plan to take, to begin further development of this critical land. It is very important that everyone come out and vote so we can bring this important initiative to fruition.

We plan to build a number of new homes and renovate a number more over the next two years. We recently approved a $6.5 Million budget and have developed a strategy and discussed it with the Housing Authority on April 25th. We also expect the Federal Government to announce more funding for housing which will give us more flexibility on how to fund projects and certainly give us an opportunity to possibly renovate and build more homes. We will be presenting the details of the plan at the General Assembly on May 25th, so please come out and listen to how we plan to begin to address the housing problems in our community. We are also starting a process to investigate options for building a new multi-use complex and want to seek your input. We hope, if all goes well, to begin that project next year once all the preliminary due diligence steps have been completed.

We also need to focus on completing our Constitution and developing a number of laws. I believe it is a critical step for our Nation to have our Constitution. Our Nation is at the forefront of this issue which is currently being discussed by AFN and AMC. Our experience and knowledge will help to play a role in those important national and provincial discussions. When I appeared before legislative committees in the fall of 1996 I said: "We have started developing some of our own laws incorporating our own traditions, although this is difficult and time consuming. It is also sometimes hard for our people to remove the yoke of the *Indian Act* from our necks, but slowly we are trying and we are succeeding. We are proud of our achievements in the short time that the agreement has been operating, and we want others to know that when all parties cooperate, agreements such as ours can be reached and we can successfully implement these agreements and govern ourselves."

I believed in self-governance more than 20 years ago and I believe it is fundamental for our future as a Nation so we can prosper further in the years to come. We have asserted our sovereignty in practical ways and we are starting to see the benefits flow to our community. We need to take this next important step and not wait any longer. Therefore, Council has recently approved a plan to have further small group meetings about the Constitution and a vote in the fall. We will provide more details at the General Assembly. Please get engaged, take the time to review the information and support the approval of our own Constitution. This is another one of those very historical stepping stones that will benefit our Nation in the long run.

This summer will see road work in our community with the paving of the causeways. I am trying to determine if the new Pallister government will proceed with the paving our access road into NCN that was announced in the former government's throne speech. We also hope to develop a positive working relationship with the new government so that we can move forward with our new water treatment and lagoon projects. In closing, I just want to remind all NCN Citizens that we must all do our part if truly want to make a difference for ourselves and our community. Each one of us must accept responsibility for our own actions and the actions of our children. We have to get away from blaming others for what we have become. Change for a better and safer Nation starts with you and only you. We as your leaders are trying hard to overcome our issues by repairing our homes and building new houses to alleviate the overcrowded homes and deal with the homelessness, but we need your help. Each year we lose approximately 10 homes due to arson and vandalism that has huge negative financial social, health and social impacts on our Citizens. As your leaders, we are trying everything within our power to address our housing crisis but we need your support and patience. I urge you to take care of your homes and be mindful of the consequences of arson. If you get caught destroying your home or committing arson, the consequences could be dire for you, your families and the people involved.

As always I am interested in your feedback and ideas so please come out to the meetings and keep the phone calls and messages coming. The only thing I ask is that everyone try to be respectful of differing views and opinions and engage in positive ways.

Ekosani!

Chief Marcel Moody
Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

Save the Date

Topics: Housing Strategy, Mystery Lake Reserve Lands Update, Anti-violence Strategies, our Constitution and law making and more. (Subject to change)

Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
Annual General Assembly
May 25, 2016

All NCN Citizens are encouraged to attend this important meeting to hear more about the decisions of our Nation and the plans of Chief and Council. Stay tuned for locations, times and details online at NCNCREE.COM, Facebook or Achimowin radio.

KITITAHWINAOW ACHIMOWIN

Community News

NCN Citizen Natashia Moodie Nominated for Award

An NCN Citizen has been recognized for her diligent work in uplifting and inspiring the people of our community.

Natashia Moodie takes her place among 50 Manitoban women who have been nominated for a YMCA-YWCA Women of Distinction award. There are four other nominees in the same Community Champion category as Natashia, including Manitoban Keewatinowi Okimakanak Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson.

Natashia's latest project, The Beauty Within gained her recognition as a Community Champion.

Moodie lives in Thompson and performs as a singer-songwriter with her sister as Moody x2. She is well known for her leadership and optimism.

Her latest project, The Beauty Within gained her recognition as a Community Champion. The inspiring project focuses on pregnant Indigenous women in northern Manitoba. She raises funds for maternity photo shoots to acknowledge that transformative time in a woman's life. The idea came from Moodie's own experiences with pregnancy and the insecurities she felt about her changing body and role in society.

The Women of Distinction award recognizes "women who have initiated meaningful change in their own community... and have made a significant difference while being recognized as a source of strength and heart." Hannah Thorne submitted the nomination for Moodie.

Moodie is no stranger to accolades. In 2001 she was named the Miss Manitoba First Nations Role Model for Aboriginal Youth and received awards for her work against bullying, including a Manitoba Achievement Award and the Assembly of Manitoba Chief Awards for Outstanding Contribution to First Nations Recognition.

The Women of Distinction gala takes place on May 4th, with a dinner and awards presentation hosted by former Churchill riding Liberal MP Tina Keeper.

Natashia Moodie (Right) and her sister are a musical duo called Moody x2.

Natashia is also organizing an anti-bullying event in May 2016. She hopes to help others speak out against suicide and the effects of bullying.

Continued from page 1 "Dealing with Addiction"

the facility and may be given the opportunity to remain on 'the path to wellness.'"

Azure said, "We do take sobriety very seriously. Simply put, it now means in some cases we have a two-strike approach; drink once and you have run afoul of the substance abuse policy; drink twice and it is considered a sign you want to leave and accordingly you are removing yourself from the program."

Ed added, "After the first review we consider the circumstances – if the person is not deliberately choosing to leave the Lodge – we will ask them what the organization can jointly do to help."

"We do take sobriety very seriously. Simply put, it now means in some cases we have a two-strike approach."

Recognizing every individuals needs are different, Azure explained, "After the first foul, help may include increased counselling or support, offering travel to and from the facility and a working plan. If there is a second incident and the individual runs afoul of the policy, it will be their decision to decline help and their decision to leave."

Other addiction treatment centres successfully use similar models. The Medicine Lodge is also adopting this approach for staff and management.

Since the Lodge was established, many staff members have been hired at NHML after graduating the addiction treatment program. Many of these workers gained experience and skills and went on to other jobs and continue to give back to the community. NHML believes it is important to offer opportunities.

Part of achieving wellness is through sharing experiences and helping guide others. Azure explained, "We are all in this together. Every day with this disease it can be a battle. We must help each other and offer the best chance for sobriety and success."

Addiction is like most major diseases. Consider heart disease, it's partly due to genes and partly due to lifestyle choices. The same is true for other common diseases like adult-onset diabetes. Many forms of cancers are due to a combination of genes and lifestyle. But if your doctor said that you had diabetes or heart disease, you wouldn't think you were bad person. You would think, "What can I do to overcome this disease?" That is how you should approach addiction.

Addiction is not a weakness. Studies indicate that family history and genetics can make a person eight times more likely to become addicts as well, proving addiction is a disease. People who don't know about addiction will tell you that you just need to be stronger to control your use. Instead it is important to treat addiction like a disease and focus on stopping the use of addictive substances.

Women of Heart Awareness Campaign

Educating and engaging our youth are key components to breaking the cycle of violence in our Nation.

The Okawemateh Sakihewewin Circle (Women of Heart) hosted an anti-violence awareness campaign on March 18-19, 2016, during the Winter Festival. The campaign was held in partnership with the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and the NCN Family and Community Wellness Centre to raise awareness of the violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls and transgender women.

The participation from the Citizens of the Nation and the youth was amazing. Organizers encouraged everyone to remember that "change starts with each one of us, we all have the power and must do our part to end the violence." Increasing the conversation about stopping violence and educating others were the two key components of the campaign.

The organization's focus is on raising our children in healthy environments – free of the cycle of violence. It starts today in our own homes. Hurt people, hurt other people – we must change this, and find healthy outlets to release the pain and the anger and not act out using violence.

Resources to deal with victims and families dealing with violence are available in the Nation. Reach out to start on a healing journey to becoming a healthy individual, to create a healthy family and a healthy Nation.

Each one of us as individuals carries a beautiful gift within us, we need to love ourselves and nurture those gifts given to us by the Creator and use those gifts as building blocks to empower and support each another.

Remember LOVE SHOULD NOT HURT, when it does, it hurts our children too.

Each day remember and honour the seven sacred teachings and incorporate them into your daily lives

Organizers thank everyone for the continued support and are asking you to stay tuned for the upcoming *Sister's Closet* in May 2016. There will be free entertainment, food and clothing to support the women, girls and transgender women.

Thank You Message to Chief and Council
– Words from NCN Special Olympics Athletes

In February two young NCN athletes represented NCN and Manitoba at the Special Olympics Canada Winter games. Now back home in Thompson they have taken time to reflect and personally thank Chief and Council and their many supporters and fans for the great, life-changing experience. Here are their words and a message from their guardian Marlene:

Marlene said, "Thank you! We want to say a big thanks to everyone who supported us on our Special Olympic national trip. Especially the 'Good Luck Wishers' and the fundraisers. Thanks to the CIBC bank for the six month long book sale and Aurora dance Academy for the fabulous amazing dance performance. They have beautiful dancers. I also want to acknowledge the Skate Thompson skaters who came out and helped bag groceries at the Safeway campaign for Special Olympics, Safeway for your yearly help to special Olympics Manitoba, everyone in Nelson House, Thompson, across Manitoba and even from the west coast to the east and down to the States. We also thank the friendly people in Newfoundland and appreciate the welcome bags with the home made knitted scarfs (gold red green). They really were magical! WOW!"

Figure skater participant William Hart said, "I stayed at Marble Mountain ski resort. The ski hills were huge. It was beautiful. I was nervous to skate when I stepped on the ice and heard, Go William go! The force be with you, from my favourite cheerleaders and the Manitoba floor hockey team and coaches. I was pumped. I skated my best skate ever. In practice I had trouble with one move but I nailed it at the event. I was surprised when I saw all the gifts thrown onto the ice after my skate. There were stuffed Newfoundland Bears, moose, dogs and super heroes and another 'magical scarf.' A coach said I should have won the gold medal for the most gifts on the ice."

"The best thing was meeting two famous skaters from Canada and Flossie a huge Newfoundland dog. Big thanks to Coach Agnes for coaching me and coming with me. I had a great time but do not want to get up at 5 o'clock in the morning ever again."

Gold Medal winner in the 200-meter snowshoe event, Jemiha Hart's added, "I snowshoed at Blow Me Down Trails. I saw the face of Man in the Mountain. The mountains were beautiful. The weather was crazy. One minute it was nice, the next raining, then cold winds whipping snow in to my face, followed by white-out snowstorms then back to sunny again. The track was icy and snowy and it changed all the time. I enjoyed meeting Daisy, a Newfoundland dog. Daisy came to all the ski and snowshoe events. I also love the scarves we got. We all looked great and even the fans wore them. They were warm and colourful."

Jemiha and William in Newfoundland.

"My best memory was to hold the Manitoba flag when I received my gold medal for my 200-meter race. I was proud to be from Manitoba. My proud cheerleader was beaming with joy when she took my picture. I loved the huge balloon that was floating and bouncing above our heads at the opening games. I tried to catch it but it kept bouncing away. It was a thrill to see the Newfoundland search and rescue team propel down from the ceiling to start the ceremony to light the Olympic flame."

"We had a great time. We made many new friends and have plenty of happy memories, but we were happy to come home and not have to wake up every day at 5 a.m. We hope we made you proud Nelson house, Thompson and Manitoba. Chief and Council, thank you! So much!"

Portraits of Our Elders

Madeleine Spence
Nelson House, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (1933–2013)

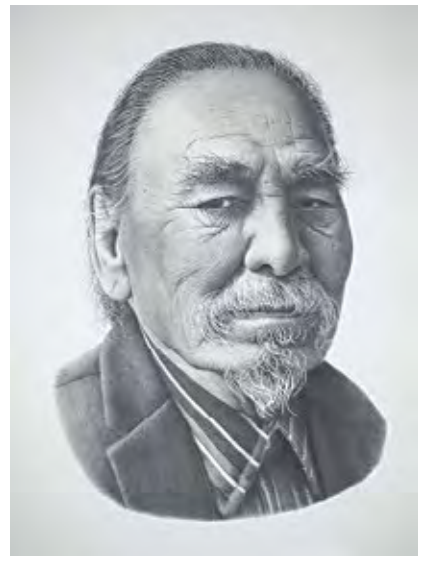
Madeleine was born in 1933 on a trapline near Suwannee Lake and was one of thirteen children.

She recalled how her relationship with her mother was particularly close. "I learned how to be a midwife, tan hides, perform beadwork, pick traditional plants for medicine and cook on an open fire. I also learned how to care for children because I had younger siblings." Her mother, Sarah Linklater, always stressed the importance of being kind and showing respect to everybody. And she remembered her dad, Lionel Nicholas, always laughing, even when he was hard at work.

At eleven years of age, Madeleine attended the residential school in Sturgeon Landing. She also worked in people's homes, doing various chores, throughout her teenage years. Then, with school complete, she returned home where "Wellington was waiting for me." Wellington and Madeleine had known each other since they were children, and began living together after the birth of their first son. They had a large family and fostered many children from the community.

"I've had a good life. When I think back, I wish I could return to the bush. To walk in the wilderness, pick berries, smoke meat, fish, tan hides, make bannock–those are my happiest memories."

Wellington Spence
Nelson House, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (1921–2012)



Wellington Spence was born in 1921, near Mynarski Lakes, and was one of eleven children. He was six years old when a nurturing relationship with the land began–it lasted a lifetime.

At age seven he went to residential school, and he recalled how at 17 when he left school, "I was extremely angry and violent and for the next twelve years was in and out of jail for fighting."

In the 1950s, Wellington met an Elder in Dauphin, jailed for running a sweat lodge. "He spoke about what my grandfathers had taught me, the seven teachings and the laws of life. I absorbed his words, changed my behaviour, and was never in trouble with the law again."

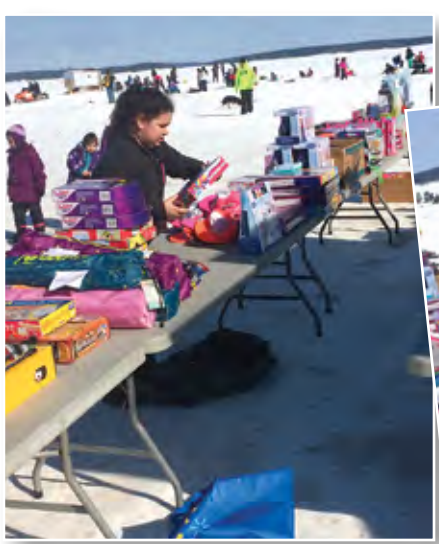
In 1955 Wellington began living with Madeleine Nicholas in Waboden. They enjoyed a long, loving relationship, and were blessed with eleven children of their own. Over the years, they fostered over 70 children and adopted two grandchildren. "Somehow we managed to feed and clothe them. Madeleine did a lot of sewing in those days."

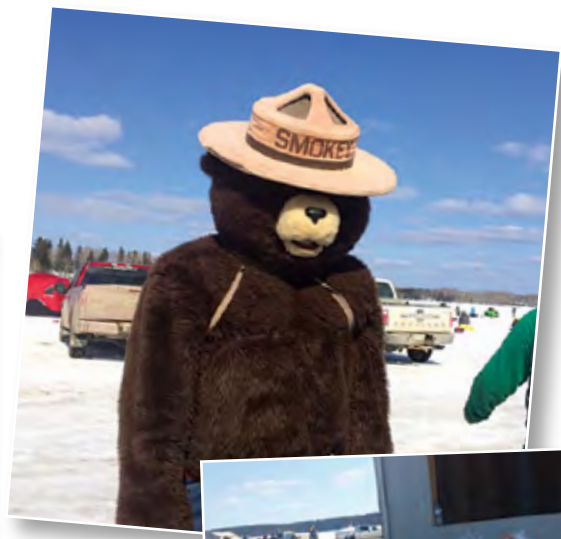
"I taught my children kindness, love and to respect all people."

You can view all 11 portraits at our 2-1100 Waverley office in Winnipeg.

Hooked On Fishing

R.C.M.P. 8th Annual Youth Ice Fishing Derby held on March 27th, 2016, at U.C. Bay





Land Code Workshops to Inform Citizens of Advantages

The December 2015 Achimowina newsletter provided details regarding the need for NCN to have a Land Code and Land Code Committee and the importance of the community vote. The article can be read on page 4 of the December Newsletter online at ncncree.com or by contacting the NCN Lands and Resources office. Workshops are also scheduled in May 2016 to inform Citizens of the advantages of having a NCN Land Code.

If the Land Code is approved by the Membership, the lands and resources (reserve land base only) will no longer be managed by the Minister of Indian Affairs under the *Indian Act*. Chief and Council have decided that NCN is a progressive community that needs to seek new directions on managing and developing our reserve land base outside of the *Indian Act* – and under our own Land Code and Land Laws.

This also strengthens our Land Governance and gives us law-making powers in respect of environmental, matrimonial, development, protection, use and possession of our reserve land. A land code, and subsequent land and environmental laws after the land code is ratified, is one very important and incremental step towards self-government.

Get informed and Involved

The Land Code Development Committee will be hosting upcoming workshops in May to talk about the Land Code and Lands generally. We will also be organizing radio talk shows, community surveys and future workshops to ensure the community becomes familiar with the Land Code development process.

Community workshops and dinner will be held on the following dates:

May 17, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the United Church, Nelson House

May 19, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Thunderbird House, 715 Main Street, Winnipeg

Dates for workshops may be subject to change. We will also be doing Community surveys in June and July 2016.
It is important that all members provide email addresses leading up to the ratification vote, and if your preference is to receive information via email, please email:
Email: ncnlandcode@gmail.com
NCN Lands and Resources Office
Box 393, Nelson House, Manitoba R0B 1A0
Phone: (204) 484-2970 Fax: (204) 484-2588
For more information please contact Jeremiah Spence at the numbers listed below:
Phone: (204) 484-2970 or direct line (204) 939-3805

The committee has had four meetings to date and consists of eight (8) members: Cheyenne Colomb (Spence), Colleen Hunter, Roslyn Moore, Darcy Linklater Sr., Willie Moore, Ron Spence, Greg Tays, and Bill Yetman (Chair).

Land Code Development Committee and Mandate

The Land Code will be drafted by a local Lands Code Development Committee appointed by Council. This will require a strong representative committee and involve ongoing community engagement through workshops, door to door visits, community surveys and other communication activities. The Land Code would replace 34 sections of the Indian Act as they pertain to land management of our reserve land. The committee is mandated:

- To review and develop a Land Code that is in keeping with the best interests of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation membership; and
- To review all relevant information and thereby develop a structured Land Code that will best represent the community's interests, needs and facilitate a community ratification vote.
- To develop and implement a communication plan and community engagement strategy to inform the community members throughout the developmental stage.

Lands and Resources Program Unveils Logo by Hannah Thorne

In the summer of 2015 the Resource Management Board put out a community logo competition for the Lands and Resources Program. There were a number of youth in the community that took the challenge and we thank everyone who submitted logos for your hard work and creativity. We take this opportunity to unveil the successful logo that was selected. The lucky winner of the logo competition was Hannah Thorne of NCN, congrats to Hannah for her work!

Hannah Thorne of NCN designed the new Lands and Resources logo.

Working to Ensure Quality Housing for the Residents of Nelson House

To serve you better the Nisichawayasihk Housing Authority is working to ensure all homes are built to National standards. We also offer Citizens training/ education and make sure you are aware of roles and responsibilities as tenants. Home repairs, inspections and renovations are also managed so they can be completed in a timely manner. We continue to jointly work with the community's public works, road, sewer and water services and government to provide effective quality infrastructure and housing. Visit our website or contact us to read the roles, responsibilities and guidelines for new and existing tenants. Find out the appeal process, moving in and out procedures, visitor pass requirements and the maintenance program. You can also get available jobs and contract opportunities, maintenance procedures, applications for housing, news, information and more.

Quality housing is a top priority of our First Nation.

www.ncncree.com/housing-authority

Box Number: 363
8 Otetiskiwin Drive, Nelson House, MB R0B 1A0
Phone: (204) 307-7100
Email: ncnhousingauthority@ncncree.com

NOTICE TO NCN RESIDENTS

WE NEED YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS AND BOX NUMBER

It is important for all NCN residents to have current information of their address and box numbers recorded with the Housing Authority.

Without it residents may not receive information regarding repairs, maintenance or critical safety or health concerns.

Many homes and businesses have not been recorded at the Housing Office. All residents and are asked to call

(204) 307-7100

to inform our receptionist of mail box numbers or change of residency and address.

NISICHAWAYASIHK HOUSING AUTHORITY

Phone: (204) 679-7723 or (204) 307-7100 Fax: (204) 484-2392

NCN Athletes Travel to Winnipeg to Build Skills

The Atom and Novice team from NCN recently attended Hockey School in Winnipeg for one Week from March 28 – April 1, 2016. The skills camp was held at the Canlan Ice Sports Arena, 1871 Ellice Avenue. The five days consisted of dry land workouts and icetime each day. Afterwards the kids still had energy to enjoy activities such as movies, Lazertopia (laser tag), Skyzone (trampolining) and shopping at the mall. Thank you to all of the parents and chaperones for their dedication and commitment. NCN Parks and Recreation and the Gilbert McDonald Arena Staff made travel possible and organized the trip.

Nelson House girls basketball team.

The NCN Parks and Recreation department also hosted and organized a very successful "March Madness" Basketball tournament on the weekend of April 1-2, 2016. Boys and girls teams from Nelson House, competed against Cross Lake, Norway House, OCN and Garden City in round robin play, followed by a semi and final match for the title.

The OCN Wolverine were winners in the ladies competition. On the males side, Norway House took the title. Both NCN teams enjoyed a fun-filled tournament and great competition.

The NCN boys team lines up for the free throw against Garden City (above). NCN Atom Hockey team (below).

Medicine Lodge Meets High Standards and Gets Three-Year Accreditation

The Nelson House Medicine Lodge (NHML) recently received a three-year accreditation, ensuring its services will be available through 2018. With the resources to help 125 people in a year, the endorsement means that, almost 400 Citizens could receive top quality service, guidance and support in dealing with addiction issues.

The new accreditation comes after the facility was closed from 2013 to 2015 for extensive renovations including new roofing, HVAC improvements, repair of structural damage and improvements to offices and residential rooms. During that time, management had to reapply to the Canadian Accreditation Council (CAC) for permission to continue its mandate.

"The accreditation is extremely tough to get, but it confirms the NHML has residential drug and alcohol treatment that is bona fide and legitimate," says CEO Ed Azure. "Our services meet the international standards for operation, staffing, facilities, governance and management to properly address the addiction issues that confront Indigenous people."

"The accreditation is extremely tough to get, but it confirms the NHML has residential drug and alcohol treatment that is legitimate."

The Nelson House Medicine Lodge is the only National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) treatment facility in northern Manitoba, and has successfully led people to healthy living since 1989. Using traditional cultural and spiritual practices, with contemporary techniques and treatments, the NHML leads participants through stress management, relapse prevention and aftercare.

Many NCN Citizens are aware of the kNOw Alcohol and Drugs program, an addictions treatment course for both men and women. Since launching, the revamped 8-week kNOw program continues to boast an impressive 85 per cent program graduation rate.

Having the official nod means the NHML can ideally attract more people to use the facility, both locally and across Canada and focus on improving services.

Accreditation confirms the Medicine Lodge's high standard of programming available to people dealing with addiction.

"The integrity of the program is connected to the CAC accreditation. Now that it is in place, our focus can shift to improving the organization and our programs even further," Azure says.

One notable plan includes contract beds for partner organizations in the area. Representatives from legal, judicial, health and treatment, and counselling sectors can book contract beds annually to remain at their disposal. Having accredited, top-of-the-line services and lodging available at all times, instead of scrambling for last-minute accommodations is a huge advantage for all social services in northern Manitoba.

It is this kind of broad outlook that makes the Nelson House Medicine Lodge a unique and crucial component of our growing NCN community.

If you, or someone you know is dealing with alcohol or drug related addictions and is ready to make a positive change, call the Lodge at (204) 484-2256 for more information.

OKIMY'WINI ACHIMOWIN

Government News

Message to NCN from Hart, Manitoba Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations

Good day NCN Members.
To ensure transparency, I just want to disclose my salary and travel expenses as Manitoba Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations. I was elected on July 23, 2016. My salary up to March 31, 2016 was $58,841. My travel as Regional Chief is still being calculated but will be in the range of $22,000. This includes costs of flights, hotel and meals for my travel. In the future, I will disclose immediately if adjustments are made.

On the federal level I hold seven Portfolios. I am responsible to all of our 634 First Nations. My portfolios include, housing, water, infrastructure, ICFS, First Nations Gaming, food security and alternative energy.

This will continue to be the responsibilities I have in the Manitoba region. I will be working and advocating for 63 First Nations.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Ekosi,
Kevin T. Hart
Manitoba Regional Chief
Assembly of First Nations

KAKI PI ISPATHIK AKWA ISI TWAWINAH

History and Culture

Learning from Our Past

Understanding the Great Law of the Creator

By D'Arcy Linklater

We can all learn from our past. Learn from the wisdom of those who have walked the hard path before us. There are many great lessons in the words and stories passed down from our Elders – signs and messages from our ancestors that can be heard by those with open ears to listen.

Today, more than ever, it is important for our young people and even our adults and leadership to listen. To know and understand the connections to our past and the deep-rooted principles that have guided us as enduring Indigenous Nehetho people. It is the teachings of the Great Law of the Creator that must be passed on to all of our Citizens to help us understand where we came from, where we belong and who we are.

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For many of us, our grandfathers who in turn had it passed from their grandfathers shared these teachings since a time immemorial. It is now our duty to share it to our children or risk losing part of our identity.

My grandfather repeated these lessons when I was young and soon they became stuck in my heart. Later on in my life, I started to understand what he was talking about.

CUSTOMARY LAW PRINCIPLES:

Nisichawayasihk Nehetho Nation and Kihche'othasowewin

The Nisichawayasihk Nehethowuk traditionally live by reference to Kihche'othasowewin (the Great Law of the Creator), which is underpinned by spiritual and philosophical beliefs, values, principles and goals. Nisichawayasihk Nehethowuk customary law is the sum total of these beliefs, values and norms. All combine to guide and direct the conduct of ethiniwuk (individuals), ka'esi minisichik (the family), ka'esi anisko'wahkometochik (the extended family), ka'esi mamawe'minisichik (the clan) and ka'esi'pisketuskan'nesichik (the nation). In this way social order is maintained by doctrines that reflect Kihche'othasowewin.

Ceremonies are an important part of Nisichawayasihk Nehethowuk customary law and are performed primarily to seek guidance, reconciliation, restore harmony, reverse the potential of misfortune and achieve balance (tapiskochinikewin) with one's surroundings.

Events like the Great Binding Law Ceremony allow NCN Citizens to learn the Great Law of the Creator, Indigenous belief and culture.

We are guided by principles. The principles of Nisichawayasihk Nehethowuk customary law are as follows:

Kwayaskonikiwin (reconciliation), which means that the conduct of a person must be reconciled with Kihche'othasowewin. Everything placed on N'tuskenan was placed for a purpose. The plants and animals gave our people all their gifts in exchange for respect. Now, the laws that are hidden in every leaf and rock have been violated and the agreed upon laws and customs are no longer followed. These laws might be ancient but not archaic, but eternal. All the human races are subject to the same laws. For every action there is an equal reaction. Thus humans who do not respect creation and the Great Law will be penalized; accidents, sickness, disease, heart attacks, insanity, and even death will happen to the violators.

Kistethichikewin (respect), which means that the conduct of a person must be based on the sacred

Traditionally Cree people lived according to their own laws and the laws of the Creator. Customary principles guided and protected the Nehetho.

Families and community provided a circle of support around every child.

responsibility to treat all things with respect and honour. In the context of the duty to consult, Kistethichikewin means that a person must show respect to all the four orders of creation. The four orders of creation includes N'tuskenan or some will refer as Mother Earth as the first order with her life blood, the water (nepi). For without water, there would be no plant, animal, or human life. The plant kingdom is the second, for without it there would be no animal or human life. The animal kingdom is the third. Last and clearly the least important is the human kingdom. It is we who owe the greatest duty of respect and care for the other three orders. That was a covenant of unity at the time of creation. Without the four orders, we will perish. And so, our role is not to subdue but to learn how to interact so that we can try our best to accommodate (nuheputhehiwewin) ourselves to the existing relationships and the interdependence. According to our Nehetho world view mankind's interests are not to be placed above those of any other part of creation.

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Tawinamakewin (consent), which means that a person is welcome. In this context, Tawinamakewin means that an entity requesting access to the land and its resources has a duty to consult including consideration of the well-being of the inhabitants. Therefore, the inhabitants will consider the request for access.

Aski Kanache Pumenikewin, which means that the conduct of a person must be in accordance with the sacred duty to protect N'tuskenan (the land, life, home and spiritual shelter entrusted to us by Kihche'manitou [the Creator] for our children michimahch'ohc (since time immemorial). There is a duty to respect and seek Ethinesewin. Our human duty is to strive constantly to attain a state of mind and spirit that both acknowledges and manifests understanding at every instant and in every act.

Ethinesewin, which means traditional knowledge, including the influence of moons and seasons on climate, weather, animals, plants and Ethiniwuk (individuals) as well as seasonal. Our special gift as Nehetho people involves understanding the complex relationships between the four orders of creation and all the things that exist within them.

N'totumakewin (the art of listening), which means that a person must seek not to be understood but to first understand. N'totumakewin establishes a duty to teach as well as to understand and to share as well as to seek Ethinesewin

Ayakwamisiwin (to be cautious about life), which means that a person must be cautious of his/her actions where there is uncertainty. Our special responsibilities involve preserving the health of N'tuskenen, (N'kawenan-our mother) her lifeblood, and the plant, animal and human kingdoms. Where there is certainty, there is uncertainty. Where there is reality, there is unreality. There is the reality of the tangible and the intangible. The physical and the spiritual world are real and these two aspects are of one reality. Yet, there are laws which govern each of them. Violating the spiritual laws can affect the spiritual world. A balanced life is one that honours the laws of both of these realities.

O'chinewin, which means that what a person does to nature will come back to that person. Creation sustained each other and was responsible for each other. This was the law that was agreed upon. The animals ate the plants and herbs, and the humans ate the animals. When we eat the flesh of the animals, we were getting good medicine and natural power for a long and healthy life. If there is a violation then there will be reciprocity.

To Nisichawayasihk people, our land has been entrusted to us by Kihche'manitou (the Creator) for their children since time immemorial.

Aniskowatesewe Kanache Pumenikewin, which means that a person must act in accordance with the sacred responsibility to protect heritage resources; to protect our sacred sites; to protect our ancestors resting places and their tools.

Kanatethechikewin, which means that the conduct of a person must be in accordance with the sacred responsibility to ensure that Ethinewikuna (human remains) and Aniskowe Apuchetawina (artifacts; the things we use while here on Earth) must not be disturbed. Also Asehewewin, which means that what a person does to Ethinewikuna (human remains) and Aniskowe Apuchetawina (artifacts; the things we use while here on Earth) will affect that person's whole being.

NehethoTipethimisowin (nationhood), which means the exercise of sovereignty. The conduct of all persons must be consistent with Kihche'othasowewin (the Great Law of the Creator) and must reflect decision-making roles in accord with Nehetho Tipethimisowin.

To Nisichawayasihk Nehethowuk (the people from where the three rivers meet and who speak nehethowewin: the language of the four winds), n'tuskenan (our land) has been entrusted to us by Kihche'manitou (the Creator) for their children michimahch'ohchi (since time immemorial).

Voice of Our Youth

Let Your True Self Show

Kiya Spence, Grade 10 Student

This was a motivational speech that Kiya wrote for a presentation to the Grade eight class. The younger students visited the high school to hear the speeches.

Tansi, my name is Kiya Spence. I am from Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation in Nelson House, Manitoba. I go to NNOC High school and I am currently taking 20F ELA.

I am here to inspire you grade 8s and other kids in our community. Don't ever be afraid of who you want to be. Let yourself shine! Let yourself show everyone who YOU are! When you express yourself and accept who you want to be: the world will know! Choose your path, and set your goals. We are ALL talented, but most are afraid to show it. Stop hiding under that rock! Crawl out and take opportunities.

A lot may say we have nothing to do here in NCN, but think again! We can show others how talented we are by expressing ourselves with music: like guitar, piano, drums, or bass guitar.

"Be who you want to be, go where you want to go, do what you want to do. Let yourself shine and let your true-self show. One day when you show your dream, the world will know."

Play or do anything to just figure out who you are. It takes time, I know this... I started playing guitar at the age of 12. I did not know what to do at first, but I knew that I was interested in guitar.

I wanted to learn how to play and it took quite a few months. My fingers hurt really badly at first, but I didn't quit. I wanted to keep going, so I did.

Now through these past few years, I am writing songs on the guitar. I've also been dancing since the age of 3. I stopped dancing at the age of 17, I had my days I had my fun, I had my spotlight since I began. It was hard to show who I am.

If it wasn't for my fans, the crowds, my peers, and my community: I wouldn't be who I am today! I pushed and pushed myself to my limit, and something new came along so I started off writing songs. When I heard my first beat, my foot went with the rhythm. I started getting into it and those beats spoke to me as well. So I spoke right back! I expressed my feelings and I expressed what I've been through. Nothing is easy. Think of it as going through a challenge and facing that challenge.

We all have talent; let's try our best to stay balanced. Life is hard just don't give up!

I've been through a lot and I'm still fed up. FED UP with my grieving. I'm still fed up with my struggles, I'm fed up with my last relationship, I'm fed up with my problems, but I found a way to solve it all!

I keep on going even when I wake up I bring my smile everywhere I go!

Keep your strength, follow your path, keep on going, you're not alone, I understand.

Environmental Issues in the Boreal Forest

Rosena Lewis, Nisichawayasihk Neyo Ohtinwak Collegiate, Grade 10 student

"The boreal forest is the lungs of the earth." – Unknown.

This quote is a very true statement. Without our boreal forest, we would not have clean oxygen to breathe. So why do we pollute it? Why have all these tar sands in the ground? Why have so many hydroelectric dams to pollute our water? Why do we let development destroy the habitats of innocent animals, leaving them helpless; leaving them to become endangered? Many of the animals meet the same devastating fate. Why do we, as humans, let other humans destroy our main source of life? Why do we allow mining industries to put so many toxins on the earth? Why do we allow logging companies to take away our main source of oxygen? We allow it because we are not informed. We need to protect this forest at all costs, not only for mankind, but also for the wildlife.

For instance, the impacts of mining and logging industries have caused many different species to become endangered. If this continues, our children will not see all the beautiful species of birds, animals and plants. There are over 300 different species of birds that breed in the boreal forest, including the whooping crane, which is now endangered due to habitat loss. (www.borealbirds.org); (www.banffnationalpark.weebly.com)

Along with many other four-legged species, the woodland caribou is also near extinction. Their habitats in the boreal forest are destroyed due to development, leaving them with nowhere to nurture their young, who are their only hope for a future. Not only are they losing their homes, they are also losing their source of food and clean water, which will cause them to die from either starvation or dehydration. That lady's slipper flower is one of the many plants that grow in the boreal forest. Sadly, it is yet another plant near extinction. If deforestation is to continue, so will the loss of many plants, animals and many other species. (banffnationalpark.weebly.com)

In the years 1990 to 2008, over 46 million acres of wood was harvested in Canada. That is nearly 2.5 million acres per year, 65% of which came from the boreal forest. If these rates rise, we will not have any trees left. (www.borealbirds.org). Without any trees in the forest, we will not have anything to clean our carbon dioxide. Logging also destroys the habitats of wildlife. Without our wildlife, human beings as a species will not have our natural resources to survive off the land. Much of the boreal forest has been licensed to logging companies (www.cpaws.org). Similarly, about 20% of the boreal forest is now covered by industrial concessions, including: hydroelectric power dams, hydro carbon developments, and mining sites.

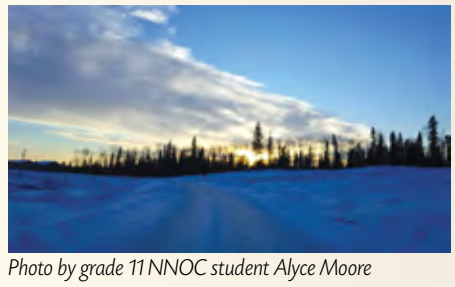

Photo by grade 11 NNOC student Alyce Moore

Although some mining sites are small and isolated, but they still have an enormous impact on the environment. The roads, waste and tailings ponds that are left behind after mining has been completed destroy the earth. In order to have a mine, you have to cut down many trees in order to create roads that will lead to the mine. With over 70% of the boreal forest open for mineral exploration, this leaves us open to yet another big threat. (www.cpaws.org). Toxic tailings ponds are destructive. They hold many toxins that can make the animals, plants and humans alike very sick. For example, in British Columbia a few years back, a tailings pond erupted leaving much of the wildlife sick. Many people in the area were evacuated from their homes. (Lewis, Ron, Sr.) Throughout the boreal forest, there are over 7,000 abandoned mines; 3,000 of which are within a kilometer of a lake, river or stream.

Another issue that negatively affects our waterways is the development of hydroelectric dams. This not only affects the water, it also affects the land. In order to produce power, hydroelectric dams need water, and lots of it. They have to flood some areas, causing soil erosion. (www.borealbirds.org). Hydroelectric dams also block migratory fish from accessing their spawning grounds up or down rivers. (www.borealbirds.org). As a result of major flooding in Alberta and Saskatchewan, we face the threat of having the tar sands leaking into waterways all over Canada.

The tar sands region is the size of Florida. It's almost like a mining process; works extract bitumen (an oil) from the land (www.borealbirds.org). This process includes a lot of clearcutting, meaning a lot of trees are cut down to reach the oil in the sands. There are many health concerns when it comes to the tar sands. Not only do tar sands emit greenhouse gases, they also emit sulphur oxide, nitrogen oxide and particulate matter (www.greenpeace.org). This process also includes the use of tailings ponds; some are so huge that they can be seen by the naked eye in outer space. (www.greenpeace.org). Tar sands are very dangerous for the environment; they are destructive and unsafe for all living things.

There are many issues in the boreal forest. We face big threats from the loss of wildlife, logging, mining, hydroelectric dams and tar sands. There is hope for our future, however. An historic agreement was made by twenty major logging companies and nine environmental groups to protect 170 million acres of the forest. In closing, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." -Mahatma Gandhi

Employment Opportunities

HEALTH CARE AIDE

Employer: Nisichawayasihk Personal Care Home

Start Date: To be determined

The Health Care Aide (HCA) is a member of the Nisichawayasihk PCH. Working under the direction of the Registered Nurse and/or Licensed Practical Nurse. The HCA is responsible for performing and assisting with duties related to meeting the Residents personal needs in accordance with the established polices and procedures. The HCA must be able to function effectively in a dynamic and demanding environment utilizing the nursing process of assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation.

Qualifications:

- Grade 12 education or equivalent
- Health Care Aide Certificate from a recognized Educational Institute
- Current BLS/CPR or willing to obtain same within three months of commencing employment; maintenance of certification is required
- Willing to obtain Safe Patient Handling within three months
- Willing to obtain Non-Violent Crisis Intervention within three months
- Knowledge of the techniques and procedures of patient/resident care related to activities of daily living

FULL JOB DESCRIPTION AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

We thank all candidates for applying. For more information please contact:

Sarah Nicholas
snicholas2014@gmail.com
Box 460
Nelson House, MB R0B 1A0
(204) 484-2350

FULL-TIME MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL

Employer: Nisichawayasihk Personal Care Home

Start Date: To be determined

Salary: Negotiable

If you are looking to build relationships with residents and staff in our twenty four bed long term care facility. You will have great input into decisions and policies affecting residential care, and varied leadership and educational opportunities to enhance your skills.

Qualifications

- Trades designation as recognized by the Province of Manitoba (preferred)
- Certification in Facilities Tech
- Ability to read blueprints and schematic drawings and diagrams
- Ability to use Computerized Maintenance Management Systems
- Operate equipment and tools common to the trades such as welding equipment, power tools, etc.
- Valid Class 5 Manitoba Driver's license
- Ability to exercise and make high quality maintenance related decisions
- Ability to work independently or cooperatively with others
- Ability to organize and complete multiple and diverse work assignments, even in stressful situations
- Demonstrate physical ability to do hard work, work at heights, in high temperature areas and in enclosed spaces
- Must possess a dependable, consistent and reliable work record including attendance at work
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Adaptable, flexible and demonstrates initiative in problem solving
- Strong customer service ethic, tactful and demonstrates a courteous manner
- Must provide a criminal record check

Bernadette Weber
E-mail: nhpchome@mymts.net
Fax: (204) 484-2011
Mail: Box 460 Nelson House, MB R0B 1A0

TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFT INSTRUCTOR

Employer: NCN Trust (Jack Moore Traditional Program)

Deadline: Friday, May 13, 2016

Start Date: September 2016 – School opening

Wage: $600 Bi-Weekly

The Traditional Instructor will report directly to the Coordinator. The successful Candidate for this position must know how to make NCN's Traditional Handicrafts; beading sewing, making Mukluks/moccasins and be able to teach students one on one and in a classroom setting.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Work as a team member
- Organize and Instruct Traditional Handicrafts in a classroom setting
- Work independently and as part of the Team, Cooperate with colleagues, other organizations and outside the community.
- Make other orders in timely fashion
- Act as a professional role model for NCN and maintain standards of ethical conduct
- Perform duties as assigned

Qualifications:

- Must be able to give instructions in making handicrafts
- Working with children would be an asset
- Must be able to speak Cree and English

If you are interested, please forward your cover letter and resumes to:

Morley Moore, Traditional Coordinator
Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation – Trust Office
Phone: (204) 484-2604 Cell: (204) 307-0492
Fax: (204) 484-2588
Email: morleymoore@ncncree.com

Please provide all necessary documentation as required to be considered for this position.

Lake Water Levels

Footprint Lake 60-Day Water Level Forecast

Forecast April 1 – May 31, 2016

On April 1, 2016 the level of Footprint Lake is forecasted to be 796.2 feet. The level of the lake is expected to fall 6 inches to an elevation of 795.6 feet by the end of April.

During the month of May the level of the lake is expected to rise 3 inches to an elevation of 795.9 feet by the third week of the month, then fall 2 inches to an elevation of 795.8 feet by the end of the month.

Travel on or near the lake is not recommended during the spring melt. Extreme caution is advised.

NISICHAWAYASIHK CREE NATION

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