



OKIMAHKAN OTY'AMIWIN FROM THE CHIEF Highlights and Recent

Activities in NCN

KITITAHWINAOW ACHIMOWIN

COMMUNITY

AMC Grand Chief Kyra Wilson Visits NCN

PUSIKONISOWINI ACHIMOWIN

BUSINESS

Kathleen BlueSky Honoured as 2025 AACSB Influential Leader

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2025

NCN Receives \$23 Million Advance Payment

On March 8, on behalf of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Deputy Chief Marcel Moody signed an advance Payment Agreement with the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs.

This contract means that NCN will receive more than \$23 million this year while litigation continues on the Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement. Thirteen other Nations have also signed an advance payment agreement.

NCN Citizens originally voted to approve the TLEA in 1998, but the conversion of our TLE selections to reserve lands has been delayed by Canada for years.

In 2018, an adjudicator determined that Canada had breached the TLE Framework Agreement. Our Treaty Land Entitlement Committee of Manitoba filed a Statement of Claim in June 2022, seeking billions of dollars for breach of the agreement, loss of economic development, land use and related matters. Canada filed a Statement of Defence in October that same year in response. The Agreement has been tied up in the courts since.

However, this Advance Payment Agreement came up very recently. Under its terms, NCN will receive \$23,195,876 this year, while negotiations continue. That amount will be applied against the final settlement amount, which Chief and Council hope to finalize and have available for community approval by the end of the year.

In the meantime, Chief and Council acknowledge the guidance and long-term vision and guidance of our late Elders D'Arcy Linklater Sr. (Kamunitowe Pemohtet – Spiritwalker) and Jimmy Hunter-Spence (Wapiski Ohow Ka apit – White Snow Owl Sitting), who worked so hard to get these matters resolved before their passing.

Gratitude also to Councillor Jeremiah Spence, our current TLEC Board member; his predecessor Regional Vice-Chief Willie Moore; past Chiefs and Councils; Lands, Environment

and Resources staff; NCN legal team; and Deputy Chief Moody who drove to Winnipeg on short notice to sign the Agreement.

This is a monumental day for NCN and Citizens are excited. On Facebook, Diane Linklater said, "Yup, was just saying D'Arcy must be

clapping from above," and Emily Spencegreen said, "Yes, uncle must be doing his happy dance."

Many Citizens discussed investing into new homes and programs for the community. Another suggested the nursing station should receive some funds, noting the need for a better health care

"We have excellent leaders who make wise choices," said Larry Tait.

Another Citizen reminded all that money is only one piece of the puzzle of success.

"If we all want a change in our community, it starts within the homes, and (we must) change the mindset," said Trent Linklater. "We all play a role in how this community can be a thriving place."



NCN's Deputy Chief, Marcel Moody signs Advance Payment Agreement for Treaty Land Entitlement ensuring NCN will receive an advance of \$23,195,876.00.

Chief and Council



Back (L to R): Kim Linklater, Vice-Chief Marcel Moody, Jeremiah Spence, Ron D. Spence. Front: Shirley Linklater, Chief Angela Levasseur, Cheryl Moore.



Tansi, Nisichawayasi Nehethowuk,

As we transition from winter's embrace into the promise of spring, I am filled with gratitude for our community's resilience and unity. Our collective strength continues to guide us through challenges and toward opportunities for growth and renewal.

Honouring MMIWG2S and Leadership Engagement

On February 14th, NCN
Citizens took part in a
powerful MMIWG2S
Awareness Walk in
Thompson, which started at
the University of Manitoba
Faculty of Social Work on
Station Road and ended at

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. This walk was a deeply moving demonstration of solidarity, remembrance, and advocacy for justice. I want to extend my highest praise and gratitude to NCN Citizens and U of M Social Work students Ariel Simpson-Linklater and Bailey Tays, who played a key role in organizing this important event. Their leadership and dedication ensured that the voices of survivors, families, and community members were heard, and their efforts will have a lasting impact.

That same morning, we were honoured to welcome AMC Grand Chief Kyra Wilson to NCN. Her visit allowed for important discussions on the challenges and priorities facing our Nation, reinforcing the need for collaboration in addressing the issues impacting First Nations across Manitoba.

Health and Wellness Initiatives

Our commitment to improving healthcare services remains strong. The fourth meeting on the NCN Nursing Station redesign took place this month, marking another step toward ensuring that our community has access to quality, culturally appropriate healthcare. These discussions are essential as we work toward a facility that meets the evolving needs of NCN Citizens.

Economic and Infrastructure Development

Economic growth continues to be a priority for our Nation. A significant milestone was reached with the first meeting of the NCN Economic Development Board. This board will play a vital role in guiding sustainable economic opportunities that benefit our community and future generations. By creating economic stability and growth, we strengthen NCN's independence and prosperity.

We also made strides in infrastructure development with the expansion of the NCN Thompson Bus Lines, which officially opened in The Pas, Manitoba. This expansion will improve regional connectivity, offering greater transportation access for NCN Citizens while also supporting economic growth in our Nation and beyond. Additionally, the NCN Northern Mining Workshop provided insight into responsible resource development, ensuring our Nation remains informed and engaged in opportunities that align with our values.

Cultural Preservation and Healing

I had the privilege of attending the MKO 9th Annual Healing Gathering, an event that provided space for connection, reflection, and community healing. As a Nation, our strength is rooted in our ability to come together, support one another, and reclaim our cultural practices.

Looking Ahead

As we move forward, let's continue to support one another, uphold our traditions, and embrace the opportunities ahead. Our unity is our strength, and together, we can build a future that honours our past and inspires future generations.

Ekosi,

Chief Angela Levasseur Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

WHERE IS THE CHIEF?

Thursday February 6, 2025: Returning from AFN UNDA Conference

Friday February 7, 2025: Reading to Classes at O.K. School (I Love to Read Month)

Monday February 10, 2025: NCN Thompson Bus Lines Announcement

Tuesday February 11, 2025: Regular Council Meeting Wednesday February 12, 2025: Meeting with Strategies North

Thursday February 13, 2025: NCN Nursing Station Redesign Meeting #4

Friday February 14, 2025: Reading to Classes at NNOC/MMIWG2S Walk

Monday February 17, 2025: Family Day/Louis Riel Day (Office Closure)

Tuesday February 18, 2025 – Friday February 21, 2025: Chief Levasseur's Annual Leave (Out of Office)

Monday February 24, 2025: NCN Northern Mining Workshop

Tuesday February 25, 2025: UCN Linkages Conference Wednesday February 26, 2025: UCN Linkages Conference

Thursday February 27, 2025: NRT and Fiscal Arrangements Meeting with the Feds/Nelson House Medicine Lodge Honoring Ceremony

Friday February 28, 2025: Nisi Trustee Meeting Monday March 3, 2025: Self-Government Agreement

Tuesday March 4, 2025 – Friday March 7, 2025: Chief Levasseur's Cultural Leave (Out of Office)

Monday March 10, 2025: Nisi Trustee Meeting Tuesday March 11, 2025: MKO 9th Annual Healing Gathering

Wednesday March 12, 2025: MKO 9th Annual Healing

Thursday March 13, 2025: MKO 9th Annual Healing Gathering

Friday March 14, 2025: Catching up on Phone Calls and Emails

For more information, please contact the Chief's Assistant, Rosena Lewis: 431-354-2148 or RosenaLewis@ncncree.com





KITITAHWINAOW ACHIMOWIN

mmunity News

AMC Grand Chief Visits NCN

On February 14, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Kyra Wilson visited Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation.

Her first stop was the new high school. Chief Angela Levasseur, NNCEA Director of Education Nic Campbell, NNOC Principal Valerie MacIntyre and NNOC Vice-Principal Natalie Tays gave Grand Chief Wilson a tour.

She had the chance to see stunning skateboard artwork, innovative 3D-printed designs, and the Traditional and Cultural Program in action with teachers Clinton Moore, Edward Moose and Pipon Moose.

Next she visited the Culinary Arts Program, led by Shane Scaife, where students learn about preparing traditional foods with modern influences, such as moose meat steam buns.

After the tour, Grand Chief Wilson participated in a student assembly and asked and answered questions.

She asked, "What would you do if you were in the position of chief and council?" One student responded, "If I were chief, I would provide my mom with a new house..."

Junior Chief and Council presented Grand Chief Wilson with flowers, and Chief Levasseur with a Valentine's card signed by students.

NNOC students and staff were so excited to host this important guest and show off their new building!



On February 14, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Kyra Wilson visited Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation. Her first stop was the new high school.

Read more about Grand Chief Wilson on page 15.











Asper MBA alum and Treaty One Development Corporation CEO Kathleen BlueSky honoured as 2025 AACSB Influential Leader

one of AACSB's more than



1,000 accredited business schools

worldwide.

Leaders in the 2025 class have used their entrepreneurial skills to not only realize their business dreams but foster economic growth in their

communities, generate new value for existing organizations, and leverage innovative thinking to solve societal challenges.

"Kathleen is an incredible entrepreneur and visionary leader transforming the social and economic landscape here in Manitoba. As an alum, she has displayed generosity in her contributions to our students, speaking about MBA info sessions and supporting experiential learning here at Asper. This is a well-deserved honour, and we are proud to congratulate Kathleen," said Bruno Silvestre, Dean of the Asper School of Business.

BlueSky is currently CEO at Treaty One Development Corporation, the organization leading the development of Naawi-Oodena, the largest urban reserve in Canada. She has worked with First Nations her entire career, serving in high-level positions at the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and Nisichawayashik Cree Nation. Today, in addition to her role at Treaty One Development Corporation, she is CEO of her own practice, Seven Feathers Consulting, and co-founder of Wiijii'idiwag Ikwewag, a First Nations birthing support service.

"Kathleen BlueSky's work demonstrates how business schools can fuel solution-minded leaders to create new business ventures and solve complex challenges," said Lily Bi, AACSB president and CEO. "Through entrepreneurial approaches and visionary thinking, Kathleen BlueSky is creating meaningful change in the world."

Learn about the unique stories of each honoree

at AACSB's Influential Leaders page, and read more about

Kathleen is an incredible entrepreneur and visionary leader transforming the social and economic landscape here in Manitoba. As an alum, she has displayed generosity in her contributions to our students, speaking about MBA info sessions and supporting experiential learning here at Asper. This is a well-deserved honour, and we are proud to congratulate Kathleen.

Kathleen BlueSky's MBA experience and entrepreneurial journey.

The Asper School of Business has proudly been accredited by AACSB since 1999, the second-ever Canadian business school to earn this significant recognition.

AACSB International (AACSB) is the world's largest business education association,

connecting business schools, business, and lifelong learners to create the next generation of great leaders. With members in over 100 countries and territories, AACSB elevates the quality and impact of business schools globally.

Impactful entrepreneur and business leader recognized among 24 innovative problem-solvers

January 27, 2025 -

Kathleen BlueSky [MBA/15] has received recognition from AACSB International (AACSB)-the world's largest business education association-in its 2025 Class of Influential Leaders, a group of 24 outstanding entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs from AACSBaccredited business schools.

Now in its 10th year, AACSB's Influential Leaders member spotlight program highlights the value that business schools bring to business and society. All honorees from this year's class have a degree from





Creating First Nation Strategy for Mining

On February 24, Nisichawayasik Cree Nation hosted the inaugural NCN Northern Mining Workshop at the Ma-Mow-We-Take Friendship Centre in Thompson.

Participants shared ideas with other Nations who are currently being explored for minerals. The goal of the event was to begin working toward a Critical Mineral Strategy that all northern First Nations could agree on, and use collaboratively in the future, creating solidarity and power.

Chief Levasseur provided welcoming remarks. Speakers from Opaskwayak Cree Nation and Kiciwapa Cree Nation shared their vision of economic reconciliation.

Speakers who presented remotely included:

- Mining Model, Jason Batise, Wabun Tribal Council Mining Model
- Crown Consultation, Bruce McIvor, First Peoples Law

- Special Purpose Vehicle, Ian Bear, First Nation Finance Authority
- First Nation Resource Charge, First Nation Tax Commission
- Critical Minerals, Linda Murphy NCN LER executive director Gord Dumas and Development

Corporation director Ed Vystrcil talked about managing NCN resources through Land Use planning.

Thanks to PrairiesCan, a federal agency whose mandate in



part is to partner with First Nations toward a better future.

Showcasing NCN Land-Base Programs

On February 19, NNOC High School, OK Elementary, and Country Foods provided a day of traditional activities for special guests.

Tarra Drevet (Agrifood Index), Rheal Lafreniere (Bee Keeper), Wendy Carnegie (National Circle for Indigenous Agriculture and Food and Manitoba Agriculture), and Jayde Hobson (Indigenous Services) learned about NCN land-based education programs. The visit was a chance to build stronger partnerships between NCN and external organizations, and to foster new opportunities for Indigenous-led education and



cultural sustainability.

NNOC teacher Clinton Moore led a demonstration on wolf-snaring, emphasizing proper technique and high-quality materials to ensure humane hunting practices. He explained that intelligent, cautious wolves require carefully placed snares in a circular formation around a food source, and shared a cautionary story about a wolf that suffered a severe infection due to a faulty snare.

Land-based teachers from NNOC, OK School and Country Foods discussed ways to support and expand

traditional learning, and explained the need for a dedicated learning space where students could learn traditional harvesting and food preparation. They highlighted the value of networking with other northern communities to share best practices and strengthen Indigenous knowledge systems.

It was a successful day. One of



the guests said, "The needs of the people can only be defined by the people themselves. By working together, we can create solutions that empower Indigenous communities and ensure that these traditions continue for future generations."





Wisakejak: the Cree Trickster/Teacher

(Just some thoughts inspired by the wisdom shared by former AMC Grand Chief/Elder Dennis Whitebird, Sheldon Cote, the Three Wyndis, and also some inspiration from Traditional Knowledge Keepers like my late grandparents and our relative, Burnell Anderson)

Wisakejak is a well-known trickster in Cree stories.

Wisa is sometimes wise, sometimes foolish, always funny, and he teaches us very important life lessons.

These stories have been passed down for generations and are used to entertain, educate, and remind people about the values of love, respect, humility, and working together.

I am blessed that my late Grandparents Louis and Verna Bonner told me many stories...

Wisakejak plays many roles in our Cree or Ithiniw/ Nihitho teachings. Wisa is a trickster, a teacher, and a sly mischief-maker.

Wisakejak (aka the loving spirit) was given sacred laws by the Creator to share with the people.

But, being a trickster, he would often get distracted or make mistakes, showing us both the strengths and weaknesses of human nature.

Through his stories, our people learn what happens when you don't listen, act selfish, or fail to respect animals, water, Mother Earth and/or other human beings.

Some examples of Wisakejak Stories:

In Wisakejak and the Geese, Wisa sees geese flying and wants to join them. He convinces them to give him wings but ignores their advice. He ends up crashing to the ground, teaching us the lesson that greed and impatience can lead to failure.

In Wisakejak and the Great Flood, when a huge flood covers the earth, Wisakejak and some animals manage to survive on a raft. He asks the animals to dive for mud to rebuild the world. After a few animals attempt to dive for earth and fail; only the tiny muskrat succeeds. This shows us that even the smallest and least expected action can make a huge difference.

In Wisakejak and the Moon, Wisakejak's connection to the sky and stars are explained, showing us the Cree perspective on the universe and the importance of balance.

In Wisakejak's duck dinner, Wisa literally gets burned in the butt when he plays a trick on the ducks, geese and birds and is outsmarted by a nosey loon.

Our Wisakejak and Nanaboozhoo (Ojibway/Anishinaabe) stories teach us values like respect, teamwork, patience, and humility. They use humour and exaggeration to make the lessons stick in our minds forever.

Wisakejak, Nanaboozhoo, and Fighting the "Crabs in the Bucket" Syndrome:

The idea of "crabs in the bucket" is used to describe when our people pull each other down instead of lifting each other up.

In many of our communities, colonialism and historical trauma have led to division, chaos, competition, and struggles with gossip, full on character assassination, and lateral violence.

We are hurting one another instead of working together and living by our cultural teachings of love and respect.

Stories of Wisakejak and Nanaboozhoo can help break this cycle because they teach us important truths:

1) The Power of Working Together:

Just like in Wisakejak's flood story, success comes when people help each other. The muskrat, despite being small and weak, is the one who saves everyone. This teaches us that everyone has a role to play, no matter their status or abilities.

2)The Dangers of Greed and Ego:

Many trickster stories show what happens when someone is too proud, greedy, or selfish. People who try to keep others down often end up suffering themselves. Tapwi/Debwe!

3) How to Laugh and Learn from our Mistakes:

Tricksters like Wisakejak and Nanaboozhoo remind us that failure and foolishness are a part of life.

Instead of tearing each other down, our communities must focus on learning, adapting, growing, and moving forward.

By sharing stories like these in our schools, at community gatherings, and in our homes, we can help reinforce positive Nihîtho/Anishinaabe values.

Instead of competing against each other, let's focus on supporting one another, much like the trickster learns to do, after making several mistakes.

By embracing these traditional teachings, our people can fight the "crabs in the bucket" mentality and return to values of respect, unity, and mutual support: principles that have helped our communities survive for thousands of years.

Ekosi.

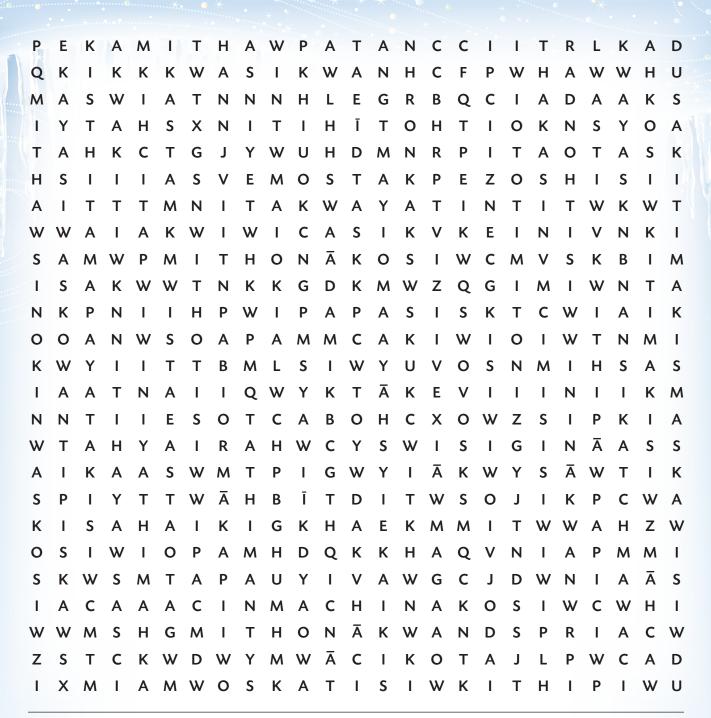
(Just some thoughts inspired by the wisdom shared by former AMC Grand Chief/Elder Dennis Whitebird, Sheldon Cote, the Three Wyndis, and also some inspiration from Traditional Knowledge Keepers like my late grandparents and our relative, Burnell Anderson)

Ekosi





YEAR-END WORDSEARCH: <ラゥィ dラ ΓΔ・α payākwāsi āyamiwina Common words/Simple commands



Adapted from the NNCEA nisicawayasihk asiniskaw īthiniwak ītwiwīna (NNCEA Rocky Cree Wordlist)

7

MITHONĀKOSIW (He/she is beautiful) MITHONĀKWAN (It looks beautiful) KIMITHWĀSIN (It was beautiful) PĪHKAN (Clean) WITHIPAW (Soiled) WININĀKWAN (Dirty) NITIH ĪTOHTI (Go over there) **NITIH AYAW** (She/he is over there) MĀHCA (Get going) PITA OTA (Bring it here) ASTAM (Come here) ASTA OTA (Put it here) **MWĀCIKOTI** (Not over there) **MWĀC IKOTA** (Not there) **NITAKWAYATIN** (Would like) KINWASKOSIW (Long) KAYASIW (Old)

KISIWIW (Loud) KITHIPIW (Quick) PAYATAKISIW (Quiet) CIMISISIW (Short) PAPICIW (Slow) KINWASKOSIW (Tall) OSKATISIW (Young) WANTIPISKAW (Dark) **IYATHIMAHK** (Difficult) IWICASIK (Easy) KISTHITAM (Favourite)

IWI OTOTIMIT (Friendly) KWASIKWAN (Heavy) THAKASIN (Light) WASTIW (Light [colour]) ATHIMAN (Hard) KITIMAKISIW (Poor) WITHOTISIW (Rich) AKWAKITIW (Expensive) **KISTITHITAKWAN** (Important) AHKOSIW (Sick) MASKAWISIW (Strong)

CAKIW (Tired) MACHINAKOSIW (Ugly) MITHAWPATAN (Useful) NOHTISIW (Weak) MĀKA (But) MITHAWSIN (Good) KIHCI TAPWIWIN (Absolutely) KAPI (Always) MAWACI (Especially) MWAC WIKAC (Never) KITIMAKI (Poor)

PAPASI (Quickly) NANSIKATCH (Slowly) ASKOW (Sometimes) WIPAC (Soon) SASCI (Suddenly) WISTA (Too) MOSTAK (Usually) MITONI (Very) KWAYASK (Well)

Water is Life – Let's Protect It

Corporations build pipelines through our lands to move oil with the full backing of our governments, but our people still don't have clean drinking water.

This isn't just wrong, it's a failure to care about our communities and to acknowledge the fact that First Nations people are human beings who have the right to live. That we have the basic human right to clean drinking water. It shows where their priorities really are.

Water is life, and without it, our people suffer.

Our people in Leaf Rapids, Manitoba (First Nations and non) have been suffering for a long time and it really upsets me. Those responsible for destroying our land and water with the Ruttan mine need to be held accountable and they must be brought to justice: I don't care how long ago it was or that no one cared about our land, our waters or our people when the mine was built. I am taking real Anishinaabe/Ithiniwak justice here!

Our land = our laws!!!

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) confirms that we have the right to protect our lands and waters.

(Creator confirmed this when he made us and Creator's law supersedes UNDRIP – but still...)

UNDRIP also says governments have to ask for our permission before approving projects that affect us. In addition, Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution states that The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) confirms that we have the right to protect our lands and waters.

there is a "Duty to Consult" First Nations people before making decisions that could affect our lands and waters in a negative way. And there is a duty to accommodate under these circumstances. Canada needs to stop breaking its own laws and we need to hold Canada accountable, now!

Getting back to UNDRIP – UNDRIP also says we have the right to clean, safe water. But instead of respecting those rights, they let our people go years – and sometimes decades – (like the town of Lead Rapids and many First Nations communities) without clean water, while oil and gas projects get approved and built with no problem. While mines are being built all over Canada...

In Anishinaabe/Ithiniwak teachings, water is sacred. It is alive. It has a spirit. It doesn't belong to governments or big companies; it is a gift from the Creator meant to keep everything alive.

If the water is poisoned, life itself is poisoned.

It is our job to protect it, not just for ourselves, but for our children and the next generations.

Our women – our SACRED life-givers – have always had a sacred duty to take care of the water. We share this sacred responsibility with our Two Spirit relatives and I call upon them now to RISE UP and lead the charge!!!!

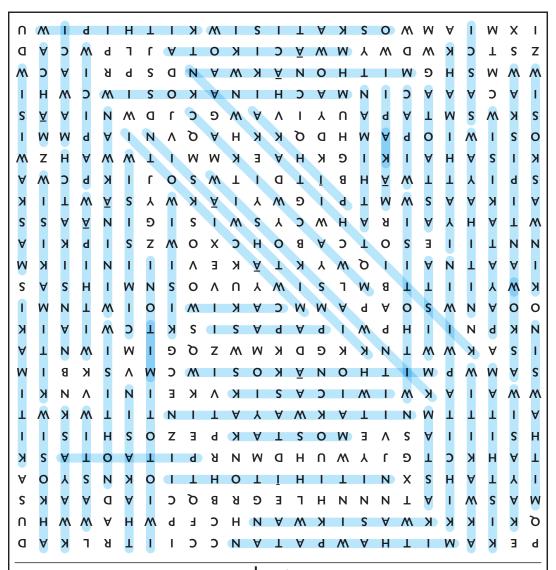
Since the beginning of time, Anishinaabe/Ithiniwak women and 2Spirit have prayed for the water, held ceremonies, and spoken to its spirit.

Today, they are still leading the fight, standing on the front lines, demanding that the government do what's right and give our people what should already be a basic human right. #waterislife

It's unbelievable that in a country as rich as Canada, First Nations and other human beings still don't have clean drinking water. This isn't about money or technology. It's about choosing to do the right thing. If they can build pipelines to move oil, they can build the systems we need for safe drinking water. Our people deserve clean water. Our First Nations Chiefs and Councillors DEMAND IT!!!

No more excuses. No more waiting. It's time to make this right!!!! #reconciliation

Solution below to puzzle on previous page



YEAR-END WORDSEARCH: <\diagraphic ommands
Common words/Simple commands



Dev Corps Asks for NCN Insight

On January 28, NCN Development Corporation hosted a community engagement event called, "Building Our Future Together."

NCN Dev Corps director Ed Vystercil led the discussion, using an interactive questionnaire app that allowed attendees to anonymously answer questions via their phones, which encouraged participants to speak boldly and provide real feedback. Students from the University of Manitoba helped facilitate the event.

The idea was to gather insights from Citizens about potential business opportunities near the new airport in Thompson.



With this new space, Dev Corps aims to increase opportunities for NCN youth, diversify employment

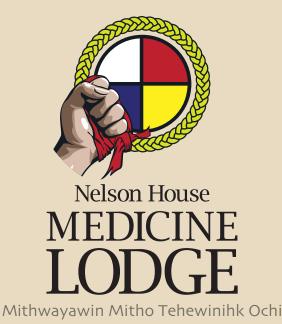
options, and empower our Citizens. Community input is essential to ensure that decisions reflect the needs, values, and aspirations of NCN.

Please plan to attend the next opportunity to provide

your ideas for NCN's future! Let's work together to take ownership of our future and ensure real change.







Nelson House Medicine Lodge Intake Dates

Referrals and registration are being accepted now for alcohol and drug treatment, prevention and aftercare services. Intake dates and administration weeks are as follows:

DEALING WITH ADDICTIONS? Call 204-484-2256

Treatment Schedule for 2025

January 6, 2025 -February 28, 2025 March 3, 2025 -April 25, 2025 April 28, 2025 -

June 20, 2025

June 23 - 27, 2025: Administration Week -No intakes July 2, 2025 -

August 22, 2025

October 20 - 24, 2025: Administration Week -No intakes

No intakes

August 25, 2025 -

October 17, 2025

October 27, 2025 -December 19, 2025 December 21, 2025 - January 2, 2026:

Christmas Closure

Treatment Schedule for 2026

February 27, 2026 March 2, 2026 -April 24, 2026 April 27, 2026 -June 19, 2026

January 5, 2026 -

June 22 - 26, 2025: Administration Week -No intakes

June 29, 2026 -August 21, 2026 August 24, 2026 -

October 16, 2026

October 26, 2026 -December 18, 2026

October 19 - 24, 2025:

Administration Week -

Christmas Closure: December 20, 2026 -January 4, 2027)

Fishing Derby a REEL Success

The annual NCN Fishing Derby, hosted by the RCMP, was held on March 2.

It felt less like a competition and more like a celebration. Caregivers were teaching their children how to properly tie fishing hooks, Community members stepped in to teach youth creative ways to fish, such as using water bottles, when they didn't have fishing gear. One lucky child who used the water bottle method won a prize, which included gaming consoles and other electronics. The RCMP partnered with Jordan's Principle to ensure every participating child received a sled and a warm lunch of hot dogs and Bannock. JP funding also supplied hooks, line and minnows.

As always, it was heartwarming to watch Nehetho traditional knowledge passed from one generation to the next. What a fin-tastic event!





MMIWG2S+ Walk in Thompson

On Valentine's Day, the streets of Thompson were filled with red as AMC Grand Chief Kyra Wilson joined community members, NNOC and U of M students, RCMP officers, MP Niki Ashton and Chief Levasseur in honouring missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people. The event was hosted by the University of Manitoba

Northern Social Work Program and led by NCN's Bailey Tays and Ariel Simpson-Linklater. Participants faced -37°C temperatures to honour those who have been lost and to demand justice and change.















NCN Kids Enjoy A Slice

More than 200 kids came out for a pizza lunch at the Norman Linklater Multiplex on February 11.

Staff from the Multiplex and OK School served up pizza, chips, drink and snacks, not to mention smiles, laughter, and excitement. Fueled up by their lunch, the children took advantage of our beautiful space and ran around playing games and burning off energy.

"That's so awesome," said Mare Chartrand on Facebook. "Children and youth need to feel the love and caring and get togetherness."



















Warning: New Deadly Drug Alert

A highly dangerous drug called Blue is circulating in Northern Manitoba, posing a serious threat to our community.

This toxic mix contains benzodiazepines and etonitazepyne, which is even stronger than fentanyl. It often appears as a blue or green powder, perhaps with a grainy texture, and has not appeared in our area until recently.

Symptoms include low blood pressure and/or heart rate, respiratory failure and unconsciousness. Overdoses from Blue are difficult to reverse,

even with naloxone, which is also called Narcan. Multiple doses may be required, and even then, may not reverse its impact.

If you see anything suspicious or someone overdosing, call NCN Ambulance immediately at 204-484-2911.

If you have any information about possession or trafficking Blue, please call FNSO at 431-354-2026 or 204-679-0226 or RCMP at 204-484-2288. Let's keep our community safe! Spread the word to do your part.



NCN Purchases \$10M FNFA Bond

On December 31, 2024, the first of four MB Hydro bonds that were issued to the Nisichawayasihk Trust matured, meaning NCN received a \$10 million payment. As part of the trust agreement, that money had to be reinvested into more bonds.

With advice from Chief and Council, the Nisi Trust Trustees invested that \$10 million into bonds with the First Nations Finance Authority (FNFA).

"We are thrilled to welcome Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation as the first Indigenous community investor in our debenture (bond) program," Ernie Daniels, President and CEO of FNFA

"This investment will enable us to undertake critical projects that enhance the quality of life for our members and promote economic prosperity. Being able to assist in funding Indigenousled projects across Canada demonstrates our solidarity with all First Nation communities in Canada," says Chief Levasseur.

said. "Their participation not only reflects confidence in our financial model but also contributes to the collective economic empowerment of First Nations across Canada.

We welcome inquiries from other Indigenous controlled entities to create an Indigenous circular economy in future offerings."

The remaining three bonds are valued at \$10 million each and will mature at the end of 2029, 2034 and 2039.

"Without changes to the Trust indenture, we can't cash or trade those, and we have to

hope MB Hydro continues to make those payments on time," says Busch. "The lawyers in the 90s locked up our options in the trust indenture."

There are several reasons for moving to a new entity, as opposed to staying with MB Hydro.

First, the FNFA currently has a credit rating of AA+ out of a possible AAA. This is slightly higher than MB Hydro, which is currently facing a debt of \$26.8 billion.

Second, the coupon rate of the FNFA bond is higher, meaning a higher interest rate. It beats the MB Hydro rate by 0.55%, which will create an additional \$55,000 in interest that NCN receives annually. (The Nisi Trust disburses about \$1.5 million into the NCN

community every year through the CAP/CIP process, which funds local programs, activities, and health, language and culture initiatives.)

Finally, FNFA currently has about \$3.5 B loaned out to First Nations, who pay those loans back through gaming revenue, tobacco rebate, fuel tax rebate, impact benefit agreements with mining companies, etc.

"An investment with the FNFA allows us to demonstrate our solidarity with other First Nations," says Frank Busch, Nelson House Development Corporation treasurer. "FNFA proceeds build schools, stores, and economic development. This shows that NCN cares and we're using our dollars to vote. NCN has this money stashed away in a trust fund that we have to re-invest and this is a socially conscious way to do that. We're considering our ancestors here, our teachings, it's not just about us. If we can help someone else, we do that."

"Investing in FNFA's bond program aligns with our longterm vision of self-sufficiency and sustainable growth," says Chief Levasseur. "This investment will enable us to undertake critical projects that enhance the quality of life for our members and promote economic prosperity. Being able to assist in funding Indigenousled projects across Canada demonstrates our solidarity with all First Nation communities in Canada."

NNCEA Policy 426: Donations to Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

There will be certain times when the community members/organizations will seek donations from the NNCEA organization. To promote a positive, caring image, the NNCEA chooses to support the families and community with donations via cheque, electronic funds transfer and/or purchase order. NCN Citizens, normally resident, will be entitled to this support. Each year, funds will be allocated to the budget. Qualified applicants are only eligible for two donations per budget year. If the budget gets expended, donations cannot be provided. Rates for various requests will be determined by NNCEA Senior Administration.

When a death occurs, the NNCEA will show its compassion by sending a wreath and/or flowers to the bereaved family. Upon occasion, support to NNCEA affiliates/partners will have to be extended.

Donation requests can be made for a wake and bereavement; travel off the reserve to attend a close family members' funeral/burial; for occasional/annual events for our children; for summer/winter festivals; for various traditional ceremonies in the community such as Sundances, powwows, etc. Due to the limited budget, private functions like memorial events, etc., are not eligible. Donation requests from people/organizations, off the reserve, are also ineligible.

Procedures:

- 1. Whenever a donation is needed, it has to be put in the form of a letter or email to the NNCEA.
- 2. The letter must be dated and provide the necessary details of the request: what it is needed for, when it is needed, what is needed (a cheque, purchase order or EFT) who the donation is to be made to, contact information.
- 3. The request will be reviewed as soon as possible by Senior Administration and a decision will be made and actioned. The family will be informed by the Human Resources Director.
- Senior Administration will put the necessary details on the letter of request and NNCEA Finance will be notified so the request can be processed.
- 5. Letter will be filed accordingly.

Eligible Donations	Rates
a. Donation for individual Wakes/Funerals/Burial	\$300.00
b. Donation for travel to attend a family members' funeral/burial, per family, in Manitoba	\$300.00
c. Donation for travel to attend a family members' funeral/burial, per family, out of province	\$400.00
d. For occasional/annual events for our children.	\$500.00
e. Summer and/or winter festivals	. \$2,000.00
f. Traditional/cultural ceremonies for the community:	
– Sundances	. \$2,000.00
– Pow-wows	. \$2,000.00
g. Support to NNCEA affiliates/partners (wreath/flowers, etc.)	\$300.00

NNCEA Policy 803B: School Closure Due to Cold Weather

Background: The Board intends that its schools operate in accordance with the laws and the annual school calendar. Students cannot afford to miss school. Year after year, there have been multiple cold weather school closures. In an effort to reduce lost school days and lost instructional time, it has become necessary to repeal all previous versions of NNCEA Policy 803B. At a duly convened meeting of the NNCEA School Board, as noted above, it was decided that both NNCEA schools will remain open. Central office and NNCEA schools will remain open. Buses will continue to transport students. All staff are to be at the workplace. Assigned staff will be on duty and classes will be held.

Parents must decide if sending their child(ren) to school is in their child(ren)'s best interests when

temperatures are -40°C or colder with the wind chill. This is called parental discretion. Parents are encouraged to dress children appropriately for weather conditions. Any child(ren) not dressed properly will be taken home.

Should the temperature and/or weather become an endangerment during the school day, the School Principals will:

- Make a recommendation to the NNCEA
 Director of Education (Assistant Director if the Director of Education is unavailable) who will make the final decision.
- 2. The Director of Education or delegate will inform the NNCEA School Board Chair, the NNCEA Board of Trustees, educational leaders, bus supervisor promptly via text, email and/or phone call.

- 3. Prior to the school closure, notice will be posted on the local websites (NNCEA) AND social media (Facebook) by ICT personnel and/or School Administration so the community/staff/bus drivers are informed/aware.
- 4. All NNCEA students will be transported home safely.

Student Awards Not Affected by Cold Weather Closures

Student's attendance will not be affected by these decisions since year-end awards will be issued for excellent attendance. Students whose attendance range is between 90 – 100% for the school year will qualify for excellent-attendance awards. This process takes into consideration absences due to unforeseen circumstances.



Nisichawayasi Nehetho Culture and Education Authority Inc. School Board Meeting Dates for 2024-25

Please see below dates for the NNCEA School Board Meetings for the 2024-2025 Academic Year as per Motion #2023-08-29-19

DAY/MONTH/YEAR	TIME	LOCATION
Tuesday, September 24th, 2024	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, October 29th, 2024	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, November 26th, 2024	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, December 17th, 2024	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, January 28th, 2025	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, February 25th, 2025	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, March 25th, 2025	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, April 29th, 2025	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, May 27th, 2025	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, June 24th, 2025	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, July 29th, 2025	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre
Tuesday, August 26th, 2025	5:30 pm	Alice Moore Education Centre

Celebrating the Process of Sobriety

Ten people celebrated a new beginning on February 27. They have successfully completed the Medicine Lodge's drug and alcohol treatment, prevention and aftercare program.

The event celebrating the participants' sobriety started with an opening prayer, and remarks from the Medicine Lodge staff, who praised the graduates' progress. They shared the challenges of the program, noting that not all participants had been able to complete the hard work required to graduate, and praised the ten grads for their dedication.

Graduates were local, and from other northern communities. One participant came from Ontario, which is proof of the reputation of the NCN Medicine Lodge. Many graduates were traditional regalia for the celebration.

Special guest MKO Grand Chief Garrison Settee said in his speech, "You have to keep your eyes on the road ahead. If you spend too much time looking at the rearview mirror, you'll get lost or risk a crash. Always move forward."

Past graduates shared their stories and offered encouragement. One said, "When you are sober, you have the clarity to think and plan for the future."

Family and friends of the graduates also spoke, sharing stories of gratitude and love. One woman thanked her husband for participating and giving their family the gift of more time together.

It was an emotional ceremony and the beginning of a new, hopeful future for these participants. Your NCN community is proud of you!



Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation Celebrates AMC Grand Chief Kyra Wilson's Inspiring Victory

The Chief, Council, staff, and citizens of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) extend our heartfelt congratulations to the newly elected Grand Chief, Kyra Wilson, of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

We are incredibly proud to have had the honour of nominating Grand Chief Wilson, recognizing her unwavering dedication, strong leadership, and commitment to advancing the rights and well-being of First Nations.

This historic achievement marks a significant milestone for the communities she represents and reflects her vision for a stronger, more united future for Manitoba First Nations.

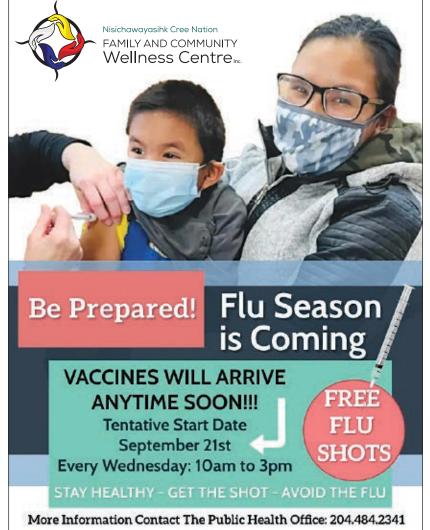
The Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation is proud to celebrate this momentous occasion and looks forward to working with Grand Chief Wilson to build a more inclusive and prosperous path forward for our people.

> We stand in full support of her leadership and wish her success as she embarks on this important journey.

Congratulations Grand Chief Kyra Wilson!!!

Ekosi, Kinanaskomitinawaw, Chief Angela Levasseur and NCN Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation





15

Interview on Restorative Justice

Interviewer:

Zachary Anderson

Interviewee:

Chief Angela Levasseur, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

Duration:

10-15 minutes

Introduction

Zachary Anderson:

Tansi, Chief Angela Levasseur. Thank you for taking the time to join me today to discuss restorative justice. As an Iskwew and the leader of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, your insights are invaluable to this topic.

Chief Angela Levasseur:

Tansi, Zachary. Thank you for inviting me. This is an important discussion, and I'm happy to share my perspective.

Interview Questions

 What does restorative justice mean to you as a Cree woman and as Chief of NCN?

Chief Levasseur:

Restorative justice, from a First Nations perspective, is about healing and restoring balance. As an Iskwew, I see justice as interconnected with our traditional valueskindness, accountability, and reconciliation. As Chief, I also understand the need to create a system that moves away from punishment and instead focuses on restoring relationships within our Nation. Restorative justice allows us to uphold our traditional laws while ensuring our people are

supported, not cast aside.

2. How does restorative justice align with Cree teachings and traditions?

Chief Levasseur:

Cree teachings emphasize wahkohtowin—our kinship and responsibilities to one another. In our ways, when someone does harm, they are not removed from the circle but are brought back in through accountability and healing. Our ancestors practiced justice through community involvement, not isolation. Restorative justice reflects these values by ensuring that everyone affected—the victim, offender, and the community—has a voice in the process. This aligns with our understanding of mino-pimatisiwin, the good life, which is about maintaining balance and harmony.

3. What are some challenges in implementing restorative justice within our communities?

Chief Levasseur:

One of the biggest challenges is overcoming the influence of the colonial justice system, which has conditioned many of our people to equate justice with punishment. Another challenge is ensuring that we have the necessary resources—trained facilitators, Elders, and support services—to guide the process effectively.

Restorative justice allows us to uphold our traditional laws while ensuring our people are supported, not cast aside.
Restorative justice is about healing and restoring balance.

Lastly, trust needs to be rebuilt. Some victims may be hesitant about reconciliation, and offenders may struggle with accountability. But if we approach restorative justice with a community-driven, culturally grounded mindset, we can overcome these barriers.

4. Can you share an example of restorative justice in action within NCN or other First Nations communities?

Chief Levasseur:

Yes, we've seen successful models of restorative justice in various First Nations communities. For example, instead of sending youth offenders through the formal court system, some communities hold healing circles where the youth, their family, the victim, and Elders come together. They discuss what happened, how it impacted everyone, and decide on ways to make amends. I've seen cases where young people took responsibility, apologized, and worked to repair the harm—whether through community service, cultural teachings, or

other acts of accountability. These approaches lead to healing rather than lifelong criminal records.

5. How can restorative justice empower our youth and reduce recidivism?

Chief Levasseur:

Our youth need to feel seen and supported, not discarded. When we involve them in restorative justice, we teach them accountability in a way that builds them up rather than tears them down. Many times, their actions stem from trauma, lack of guidance, or feeling disconnected. Restorative justice helps them understand the impact of their actions, develop empathy, and strengthen their ties to the community. In turn, this reduces repeat offenses and gives them a path forward, rather than pushing them deeper into a cycle of crime and punishment.

6. What role do Elders and community members play in the process?

Chief Levasseur:

Elders are the heart of restorative justice. Their wisdom, guidance, and ability to share traditional teachings create a space of respect and learning. They help both the offender and the victim find a way forward. Community members also play a crucial role—they provide support, hold people accountable, and ensure that healing happens collectively. In our ways, justice isn't about isolation; it's about bringing people back into the circle in a good way.

7. Looking ahead, how can NCN and other First Nations strengthen their restorative justice initiatives?

Chief Levasseur:

We need to integrate restorative justice into all levels of governance—whether it's within our schools, policing, or community governance. Investing in training for facilitators, creating culturally relevant programs, and ensuring access to land-based healing are key steps. We also need to advocate for legislative changes that recognize and respect our inherent right to practice our own justice systems. This is about self-determination—reclaiming our ways and ensuring they guide us into the future.

Closing

Zachary Anderson:

Chief Levasseur, thank you for sharing your knowledge and vision. It's clear that restorative justice is not just a process—it's a return to our roots and a way to strengthen our people.

Chief Angela Levasseur:

Ekosi, Zachary. This is an important conversation, and I hope it inspires more people to learn about and support restorative justice in our communities.



Giant Retailers Stop Selling Bladed Weapons

Proving that collaboration and political pressure can make changes, retail giants Amazon and Walmart have both decided to stop selling machetes both online and in stores.

It's great news for NCN Chief Angela Levasseur, who worked with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and Manitoba Justice to lobby the stores to ban machetes, often referred to as "long-bladed weapons."

"We approached these companies last fall to discuss how easy it was to purchase these items for inappropriate purposes, especially online," says Levasseur.

Originally, new rules came into effect at the end of December, which required stores to sell only to adults with photo ID, and to keep those record sales for two years. There were no stipulations for online sales.

But this month, both Walmart and Amazon decided to

stop selling machetes both online and in-store in Manitoba.

NCN has seen escalating violence, including two machete attacks, over the last year. In November, Chief and Council declared a state of emergency, which included a youth curfew and increased vigilance of vehicle inspections at the community checkstop.

"There comes a point when you have to address the source of the problem farther up the chain. We're happy and relieved that these companies heard our concerns and followed through," says Levasseur. "I'm thankful to Manitoba Justice Minister Matt Wiebe and his team, and to AMC Senior Political Advisor Natalie Ballentyne for their hard work. This was a team effort that will make our community safer."

Amazon and Walmart have both decided to stop selling machetes both online and in stores.



Attention NCN Citizens: Prevent Sewage Blockages!

There have been lots of service calls to attend to clogged pipes that could be prevented by people not flushing certain items in toilets, drains and sinks. These items not only clog up the house plumbing pipes but also cause blockages in the main sewer lines, lift stations and manholes that end up as sewage backups in homes and buildings.

PLEASE DO NOT PUT THESE ITEMS IN THE KITCHEN AND BATHROOM SINKS, SHOWER AND TUB DRAINS, AND TOILETS:

- disposable diapers and baby wipes metal and wooden items
- paper towels and any thick paper products like cardboard
- socks
- dish cloths and face cloths
- plastic toys and combs
- plastic containers including little condiment packets of ketchup, relish, vinegar and mayonnaise
- anything latex or rubber (rubber/ latex gloves, condoms, etc.)
- hygiene products such as sanitary pads and tampons
- Oils and grease pour unwanted grease into a container that will go into your garbage, not down your kitchen sink.



No.		IISICH	AWAY	A S I H K	CREE	NATIO	O N
où	SC	_	4-2 OL	025 YEA DAR	R (
Month	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Aug 24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sep	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
2024	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
Oct	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2024	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31	1	2
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Nov	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2024	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dec	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
2024	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Jan 2025	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
2023	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Feb	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
2025	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	1
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Mar	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
2025	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
Apr	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2025	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	1	2	3
May	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
2025	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Jun 2025	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
2023	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
July 25	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Thursday-Friday, August 29-30, 2024	Professional Development (2)
Monday, September 2, 2024	Labour Day Holiday
Tuesday, September 3, 2024	First Day of Classes
Friday, September 27, 2024	Flex Day (1)
Monday, September 30, 2024	Truth and Reconciliation Day
Monday, October 14, 2024	Thanksgiving Holiday
Tuesday-Friday, October 15-18, 2024	Flex Days (4)
Friday, November 8, 2024	Aboriginal Veterans Day (1)
Monday, November 11, 2024	Remembrance Day
Friday, December 20, 2024	Last Day of Classes before break
Monday, December 23, 2024	First Day of Winter Break
Friday, January 3, 2025	Last Day of Winter Break
Monday, January 6, 2025	Classes resume
Monday, February 17, 2025	Louis Riel Day
Monday, February 24, 2025	Aboriginal Justice Day (1)
Monday-Friday, March 24-28, 2025	March Break
Monday-Friday, March 31 – April 4, 2025	Flex Days (5)
Friday, April 18, 2025	Good Friday Holiday
Monday, April 21, 2025 Friday, May 16, 2025	Flex Day (1) Flex Day (1)
Monday, May 19, 2025	Victoria Day Holiday
Wednesday, June 25, 2025	Last Day of Classes
wednesday, June 25, 2025	Last Day of Classes
OK School Term Dates	
Term 1	September 3, 2024 to November 29, 2024
Term 2	December 2, 2024 to March 6, 2025
Term 3	March 7, 2025 to June 25, 2025
OK School Report Card Writing Day	
Term 1	December 2, 2024
Term 2	March 3, 2025
Term 3	June 9, 2025
OK School Student Led Conference	
Term 1	December 10, 2024
Term 2	March 11, 2025
Term 3	June 17, 2025
	3410 N/2023
NNOC Term Dates	
Term 1	August 29, 2024 to January 31, 2025
Term 2	February 3, 2024 to June 25, 2025
NNOC Report Card Writing Day	
Term 1	November 22, 2024
Term 2	April 14, 2025
ABIOGRA (G. INEL)	
NNOC Report Card Night	Name
Term 1 – Part 1 Term 1 – Part 2	November 28, 2024 February 6, 2025
Term 2 – Part 1 Term 2 – Part 2	April 23, 2025 June 23, 2025
Kindergarten Graduation	June 19, 2025
Grade 6 Farewell	June 23, 2025
Grade 12 Graduation	June 24, 2025
otal School Days: 193	Motion #2024-03-28-10: The NNCEA
30M x 193D = 63,690	School Board of Trustees approve the
60M x 179D = 64,440	2024-2025 Academic Calendar.

Successful Fur Table in Thompson

On March 6, trappers from around Northern Manitoba gathered for the Thompson MTA Fur Table.

There were fur buyers, trap sales, crafters and displays. Activities kept the kids busy, and some participants went home happy as raffle and door prize winners.

"This is always a great event," says NCN's Ron Spence, who serves as the vice-president of the Manitoba Trappers Association. "There are education sessions to ensure our local trappers stay at the top of their game and there are opportunities for them to swap ideas and share information. We also make sure there's a chance for interested people, particularly our youth, to learn more about trapping to get in touch with our traditions and to see if it's a viable way for

them to make money."

The main purpose of the event, which started in the late 1970s, is to ensure northern trappers have access to appropriate prices for their raw pelts. Licensed fur dealers gather to inspect each trapper's lot and offer a quote. The trapper receives several offers at once and can choose the best.

At this year's event, 59 trappers participated with an average of 29 pelts. The total estimated value of pelts and castor at the event totalled almost \$150,000, which is an average value of \$2,455 for each trapper.

There are typically two Fur Table events over the year. The first is traditionally held before Christmas, so that trappers can provide for their families over the holidays. A second date toward the end of winter was added to tide trappers over the summer months.

At the March 2025 Thompson Fur Table:

	•	
Species	Pelts Sold	Average Price/Pelt
Marten	1,438	\$82.75
Lynx	46	\$256.18
Mink	41	\$8.34
Red Fox	38	\$28.13
Beaver	35	\$24.49
Ermine	19	\$2.50
Wolverine	19	\$401.25
White Fox	11	\$53.34
Cross Fox	10	\$35.56
Otter	9	\$32.00
Wolf	7	\$275.00
Muskrat	7	\$1.67
Fisher	7	\$47.00
Coyote	1	\$40.00

Be sure to attend the Manitoba Trappers Association AGA!

April 11 and 12, beginning at 1 pm CANAD INNS POLO PARK

1405 St. Matthews Ave., Winnipeg, MB

- Hear about new initiatives from MB Conservation, industry updates and resolutions to government.
- Zone Director elections and presentation of financial statement.
- Trap sales, fur market updates and information sessions.
- Entertainment and live auction.
- Trapping demos, pelt preparation competitions, contests.
- Banquet, guest speaker and award presentations.

Learn more at manitobatrappers.com













Community Protection Law: Your Feedback Required!

Chief and Council are looking for feedback from Citizens on their proposed changes to the NCN Community Protection

There are four main proposed points:

- **Eviction Hearings:** if someone receives an eviction order, they must request a hearing within 7 days.
- **Banishment Hearings:** Currently, a person must wait 5 years before requesting a hearing to return. The proposed change would allow that request to be made after 30 days.
- **Hearing Process:** The proposed change would allow victims and affected people to submit written statements to the Peacekeepers Tribunal as they make their decision about banished people.
- **Restorative Justice:** Currently, there is no specific mention of alternative justice methods. The proposed change would allow the Peacekeepers Tribunal to consider restorative and reparative justice to help reintegrate people into the community.

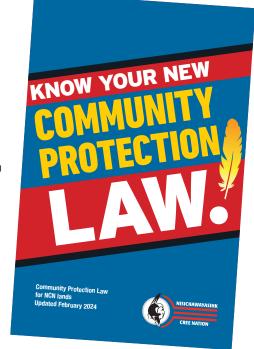
"This is a democratic government, and we want to hear from the people. Our Council went back and forth, we discussed, we debated, and we feel it's time to bring our people home," Chief Levasseur told the crowd at the Moore headdress ceremony. "Our people are suffering. A lot of them are unsheltered or homeless. Yes, let's bring them home, but at the same time, we have to make sure our Citizens are safe."

Right now, the proposed changes are available at the noncree.com website for your review, in both legal and plain language.

Soon, an online survey will be uploaded there, with paper versions available at the Government Office, so you can make your opinion known.

Watch for an announcement about a CPL meeting in the upcoming weeks.

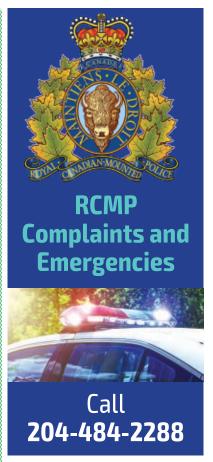
The NCN Justice Portfolio is held by Councillors Kim Linklater and Jeremiah Spence. Reach out to them for more



questions and comments about the Community Protection Law.

Where the Burntwood, Footprint, & Rat Rivers converge, Our ancestors' spirits still emerge. Guardians of N'tuskenan so wide, In unity and strength, we abide Nisichawayasihk, our land so true, With sovereignty, we will renew. From ancient roots to future's light, We rise as one, with courage bright Asiniskaw Nihithowak stand tall, Honouring teachings, answering the call. Through Othasowewin, we reclaim, Our governance, our rightful name Nisichawayasihk, our land so true, With sovereignty, we will renew. From ancient roots to future's light, We rise as one, with courage bright Together, strong, we pave the way, For generations' brighter day. Honouring our sacred ground, In unity, our voices sound Nisichawayasihk, our land so true, With sovereignty, we will renew. From ancient roots to future's light, We rise as one, with courage bright

By Chief Angela Levasseur Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation







Ceremony for New AFN Regional Chief Moore

On March 18, Citizens gathered to celebrate NCN's own Willie Moore as he received his headdress in acknowledgement of his new role as AFN Regional Chief.

The pipe ceremony was performed by Elder Clifford Hart, with an opening prayer from Elder Ella Moose-Hart. Red Cree performed the grand entry and Moody x2 performed the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

Moore was crowned with

his headdress by Elders Clifford Hart and William Elvis Thomas, former Chief Jim Moore and Councillor Cheryl Connie Constant.

Many esteemed guests shared their remarks with the crowd, including SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, MKO Grand Chief Garrison Settee, AMC Grand Chief Kyra Wilson and AFN National Chief Cindy Woodhouse-Nepinak.

NCN Citizen Joseph Bighetty spoke in tribute to Chief Moore, and finally, Chief Moore addressed his hometown crowd for the first time as AFN Regional Chief.

Congratulations, Willie! NCN is proud of your diligence and dedication.



During the March 18 ceremony, Trina Sipihko was presented by Chief Levasseur with art made in her honour. It is a mixed media piece called, "Still I Rise."



In a special moment during the March 18 ceremony, Trina Sipihko was presented by Chief Levasseur with art made in her honour. It is a mixed media piece called, "Still I Rise" by artist Andrew Closs.

In 2022, Sipihko sang a powerful message in Cree to the tune of O Canada to Pope Francis. He was in Maskwacis, Alberta to offer an apology from the Roman Catholic Church for the harms it committed to Indigenous people.

NCN Draft National Anthem and Tribute song to Willie Moore

"Buckoose"

(Tribute Song to Willie Moore)

From the heart of the North where the rivers run free, A leader was born, with a vision to see. From NCN to the Nation's call, Standing tall, standing strong for us all.

Oh, the voice of the people, the heart of the land, Walking with wisdom, a steady hand. From coast to coast, they know his name, Buckoose, he's changing the game.

Oh, Buckoose, your spirit flies high, Like the eagle in a painted sky. With every step, you light the way, For the people, for the fight, come what may.

From council halls to the sacred ground, He lifts us up, never lets us down. With fire inside and a guiding light, He walks with truth, he stands for rights.

Oh, the voice of the people, the heart of the land, Walking with wisdom, a steady hand. From coast to coast, they know his name, Buckoose, he's changing the game.

Oh, Buckoose, your spirit flies high, Like the eagle in a painted sky. With every step, you light the way, For the people, for the fight, come what may.

Through the trials, through the years, He stood his ground, he calmed our fears. A warrior's heart, a leader's soul, Guiding the young, making us whole.

Oh, Buckoose, forever strong, Your voice will echo in our song. For the people, for the fight, You are the fire, you are the light.

By Chief Angela Levasseur, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation



Celebrating Hard Work With Assiniboine College

At the end of March, Assiniboine College hosted a celebratory feast for its NCN students who are currently enrolled in its Continuing Studies Education Assistant program. At the students' request, they enjoyed a turkey dinner and played bingo. Assiniboine hoodies and beautiful locally made moccasins were given away as prizes.

"It was a heartwarming day filled with laughter, connection, and community pride," says Dana Brand, program coordinator.







Inspiration: Iskwew Air

Hard work and an unshakeable belief in her dreams have pushed Teara Fraser beyond what she thought was possible.

Fraser, a Metis woman born in Hay River, Northwest Territories, is the first Indigenous woman to launch an airline, which she's called Iskwew Air. It is a Cree word that means, "woman." She says giving this name to her airline is an act of reclamation of womanhood, matriarchal leadership, and language.

The flight industry is extremely male-dominated, with less than 10 per cent of pilots being female. Still, Fraser took a flight over Botswana, Africa, and decided she would become a pilot.

She got her operating license in 2019, and managed to steer her way through the pandemic. Iskwew Air flies in the BC interior. Many of its employees are Indigenous people from across Western Canada.

Giving back and environmentalism are all important to Fraser. She created a program called Give Them Wings, which provides mentorship and flight training to young people. The company offsets its carbon emissions by buying credits from the Great Bear Forest Carbon Project, which helps to protect protected forests.

"Culturally, we're taught to do good with the knowledge



and skills we've been blessed with," Fraser told Travel + Leisure magazine, which recently honoured her in its Global Vision Awards. "I always say that getting my wings gave me wings for everything else in my life. It gave me courage and inspiration, and taught me the value of hard work—and the feeling of triumph that comes from it."









The Detrimental Effects of a Society Disconnected from Our Creator God

True peace and

purpose do not

come from the

physical world

but from a higher

power. When we

humble ourselves,

seek spiritual

guidance, and

live according to

divine teachings,

we experience a

fulfillment that

no drug, drink, or

distraction can

In today's world, people from all walks of life – regardless of age, race, or creed – are experiencing a deep spiritual emptiness. Many are searching for meaning, purpose, and fulfillment, yet they often seek it in the wrong places. The disconnection from our Creator, God, has led society into a state of spiritual crisis, leaving individuals lost and vulnerable to destructive habits.

A Society Searching for Fulfillment in All the Wrong **Places**

When people do not have God in their lives, they instinctively try to fill the void with worldly distractions. Some turn to drugs – cocaine, crack, methamphetamine, opioids - hoping to escape their pain or experience temporary happiness. Others drown their emptiness in alcohol, gambling, overeating, excessive use of electronics, or an addiction to social media. Yet, no matter how much they consume, win, scroll, or indulge, the emptiness remains.

This is because the void within the human soul is not physical but spiritual. It cannot be filled with material things or temporary highs. Only a true connection to the Creator can bring lasting peace, purpose, and wholeness.

The Rising Epidemic of Spiritual Emptiness:

We see the consequences of spiritual disconnection everywhere:

Mental Health Crisis

Anxiety, depression, and suicide rates are climbing at alarming rates, especially among young people. When individuals feel they have no purpose, life loses meaning.

Addictions and Escapism

provide. Substance abuse and gambling are at epidemic levels, often tearing families apart. Many seek relief from their suffering, but worldly solutions only lead to deeper despair.

Social Division and Conflict

Without a moral foundation rooted in faith, communities



fracture. People argue, discriminate, and tear each other down rather than uplift and support one another.

First Nations Must Reunite in Respect for All Spiritual

Spiritual division has also taken root among Indigenous peoples. Some First Nations individuals discriminate against others based on their religious or spiritual beliefs-whether they follow Christianity, traditional teachings, or other faiths. This division is contrary to the values of any true spiritual path. Respect, love, and unity are fundamental principles in all sacred teachings, whether from the Bible, the Seven Sacred Teachings, or other spiritual traditions.

First Nations have already faced centuries of colonization, residential schools, and cultural suppression. Now, more than ever, unity is needed, not division. Whether one prays in a church, at a sweat lodge, or under the open sky, the Creator calls for love and understanding, not judgment and discrimination.

The Only Path to True Healing

If society wants to heal from this epidemic of emptiness, the solution is clear: reconnect with God, our Creator. True peace and purpose do not come from the physical world but

from a higher power. When we humble ourselves, seek spiritual guidance, and live according to divine teachings, we experience a fulfillment that no drug, drink, or distraction can provide.

It is time for all people - First Nations and non-Indigenous alike - to recognize that spirituality is not a source of division but unity. We must encourage each other to seek God in a way that speaks to our hearts rather than judging how others find their spiritual path.

When we return to the Creator, we will find healing, purpose, and the strength to overcome life's struggles. Only then can we truly live in balance and harmony.

Chief Angela Levasseur Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

NCN Thompson Bus Lines Celebrates Grand Opening of New Depot in The Pas

In a significant step towards enhancing transportation services across Manitoba, NCN Thompson Bus Lines proudly announces the grand opening of its new depot in The Pas in partnership with Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN). This expansion represents a major commitment to regional connectivity and economic reconciliation, ensuring better access to essential transportation services for communities in both the North and South.

The new OCN/The
Pas depot is strategically
positioned to serve as a
central hub for passengers
and freight services,
bridging remote and urban
communities across the
province. With many
northern communities
facing challenges related
to transportation access,
this development will offer
more reliable and affordable

travel options, ensuring that residents can connect with family, medical care, employment opportunities, and education more efficiently. Additionally, by improving freight logistics, the depot will help businesses streamline their supply chains, supporting economic growth in the region.

Chief Angela Levasseur of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) expressed her gratitude for this milestone, stating:

"We are deeply thankful to OCN and The Pas for their warm welcome and support in this expansion. This collaboration exemplifies our shared vision of fostering economic growth and enhancing the quality of life for our communities."

NCN Thompson Bus Lines has long been dedicated to addressing the unique transportation needs of northern Manitoba. Many First Nations communities remain isolated due to limited travel infrastructure, and this expansion is a crucial step toward ensuring that residents have the mobility they need to access essential services, cultural gatherings, and employment opportunities across the province.

Ed Vystrcil, CEO, Nelson House Development Corp said, "By providing safe, reliable, and efficient bus services, NCN Thompson Bus Lines is integral in connecting the North with the South, fostering a stronger sense of community, and promoting economic development. This expansion also aligns with broader efforts towards economic reconciliation, ensuring that Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities alike benefit from improved transportation infrastructure."

As operations commence at the new OCN/The Pas depot, passengers and businesses can expect enhanced service options, greater convenience, and a continued commitment to serving the needs of northern

and southern travelers alike. NCN Thompson Bus Lines remains steadfast in its mission to connect Manitoba, ensuring that all residents can access the transportation services they deserve regardless of where they live.



For more information about routes, schedules, and services, please visit https://www.thompsonbus.com/

Thompson Bus and Freight – Your community based bus service in Northern Manitoba.

Thompson Bus offers bus, freights and charter services from Thompson to Gilliam, Cross Lake, Split Lake, Wabowden, Ponton, Grand Rapids, Sant Martin, Ashern, Eriksdale, Winnipeg and beyond.

www.thompsonbus.com









The Dangers of Cocaine and Crack Cocaine

By Victoria Goudreau

I remember before I tried cocaine and eventually Crack cocaine, I asked people what it was like. They said it's like a burst of energy, a rush that takes your breath, it's the best feeling ever, I don't know how to explain it really.' And they were right, but now if someone were to ever ask me what it's like, I would tell them..

It's like spending every single penny you ever had, on drugs. It's like going days without eating even though you were starving, but you needed dope more.

It's like having to lie to every family and friend you had ever had

It's like waking up hating yourself from the shame and guilt. It's like never attending any family event because you were too high or too sick.

It's like everyone eventually stopped inviting you to events. And even talking to you.

It's like crying yourself to sleep every single night because your children got taken.

It's like knowing you have one more chance to get better before your child gets adopted and still choosing that bag.

It's like asking others how your own blood child is doing. It's watching everyone around you succeed and yet you're crumbling.

It's like everything was on your drug dealers time. If they said five hours. You'll wait five hours in a car.

It's like stealing everything worth value for dope. No matter how sentimental it was to you, or someone else.

It's like losing so much weight you can't fit into any of

It's like losing everything you've ever owned in your entire life.

It's like nobody believing a word you said, even if it was

It's like being a prisoner inside your own head.

It's like contemplating suicide every single day.

It's like never being scared to die, because that's what

It's like trying to shut your brain up for even five minutes. It was worth that little time of peace.



It's like seeing your family cry for you to stop, only for you to leave and go get high. Because stopping wasn't an option. It wasn't possible.

It's like you'd do absolutely anything for more. And you did.

It's like everyone hating you no matter where you went, because they knew you were a drug addict.

It's like giving your ENTIRE LIFE AWAY.

So if you're ever curious like I was, please at least know the truth. CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT, and it WILL KILL YOU TOO"





Annual General Meeting and Conference

April 11 & 12, 2025 Canad Inns Polo Park 1405 St. Mathews Ave,. Winnipeg

Time

April 11th 1:00 pm Doors Open

April 12th **AGM** 9:00-12:00 pm Open to members of MTA.

1:00 pm Doors open for general attendance

5:30 pm Dinner, Auction, Pelt Contest Awards

Presentations Demos Trapper Auction Pelt Contest Kids Activities Trap Sales

GO TO WWW.MANITOBATRAPPERS.COM ON MARCH 14TH FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION AND HOW TO REGISTER



Remember the Dangers of Ice

NCN Citizens have relied on ice for food, transportation and recreation since the beginning of time. Unfortunately, we have come together as a community again and again to mourn people we have lost to the ice.

It's important to acknowledge the dangers of our waterways. Review ice safety with your family members, particularly those who are beginning to hunt, fish and trap.

The most important rule is to get an update on your specific route and to be fully prepared for an emergency.

Other safety tips include:

- Check ice thickness.
- Watch for cracks and open water.
- Avoid ice near river mouths and fast currents.

Review ice safety with your family members, particularly those who are beginning to hunt, fish and

trap.

Always inform someone where you're going and when you'll return.

- Carry safety gear, including throw rope, ice picks, and a whistle.
- Never go alone. Always travel with a buddy.
- Use a snowmobile with caution. Go slow, stay alert and stay sober!
- Stay updated with the website hydro.mb.ca/waterlevels

With proper planning, our waterways will always bring us joy and allow us to continue our traditions on the ice.

Water Flow and Level Updates

- Notigi Outflow: expected to stay at 24,900 cfs until the end of March
- Odei River Flow: decreasing from 260 cfs to 100 cfs by the end of March
- Footprint Lake Level: remaining steady at 795 feet

Before you travel on ice, please contact Wilson Moore at 204-670-4236 for the most recent

information about ice conditions.

If you go through the

- Do not panic.
- Focus on your breathing.
- Face the spot where you fell in
- Your buddy (on knees) should throw rope to you from as far away as possible.
- Stay horizontal in the
- Kick while your buddy pulls you out.
- Do not stop too soon!
- Roll away instead of standing up to walk.
- Seek shelter.
- Get out of your wet clothes immediately.







Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation General Delivery Nelson House, Manitoba ROB 1A0 Phone: (204) 484-2332

Fax: (204) 484-2392 www.ncncree.com

Do you have a suggestion or an Achimowina story idea?

We would like your comments, feedback or news stories. Please contact achimowina@gmail.com

NCN on Facebook!

Stay current with NCN's latest news, events and updates on your computer, smartphone or device from our official NCN Facebook page @nisichawayasihk.

