



MISHKEEGOGAMANG Community Update

Chief Re-Elected, One New Councilor Comes on Board

Connie Gray-McKay was re-elected as Mishkeegogamang's chief on August 10, winning 92 of the approximately 300 votes that were cast in July's election. Thomas Wassaykeesic, David Masakeyash, Mary Anne Panacheese and Lauren Wassaykeesic were re-elected as councilors.

Michael Bottle got 107 votes to gain the remaining seat on Council. The new councilor will try to promote healthy lifestyles. He wants to help people keep active and busy through such popular community sports as baseball, soccer, broomball and hockey. Besides sports, he'd like to get people together for fun too, for example a community bingo night. Councilor Bottle is anxious to meet with the whole council to get his portfolio defined, so he can get to work. He'll be returning to his teaching job in Saugeen in September, and will come in to the band office as necessary for meetings and to fulfill his duties as councilor.

At the time of the election, Councilor Lauren Wassaykeesic was suspended over an alleged incident involving band funds. Wassaykeesic's suspension without pay will continue until the matter is resolved in court. She has been charged with Fraud Over \$5000, Theft Over \$5000, and Breach of Trust.

For a complete list of all candidates and votes received for both Chief and Council, check the Latest News page at www.mishkeegogamang.ca.



Sliding Through Summer

A happy camper beats the July heat with a waterslide at Missabay School during the Mish Adventures camp

Community Pulls Together During Fire Evacuations

The evacuations in July were a difficult and stressful time for the community, yet many positives came out of it too. "Overall it went really well - there were a few minor issues but that's to be expected," said Community Liaison Karen Kaminawaish. "People were pulling together and helping each other out. Anishinabe people come from a collective ideology, so we all kind of helped each other...people would watch each others' kids to give them a break, and the youth would step in and help out the mothers."

Karen was very grateful to the people of Sioux Lookout, who went above and beyond the call of duty to help Mishkeegogamang throughout the crisis. Hundreds of evacuees from Mish ended up there between June 21 and July 1, and the community welcomed them all.

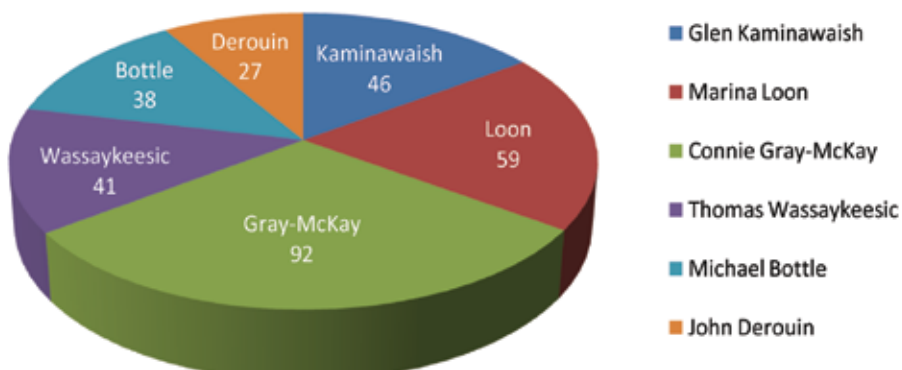
"Sioux Lookout really stepped up, having activities for the kids, traditional food for the elders, and opened the Mayfair Theatre a few times for movies," she said. "People were asking to be evacuated to Sioux because they heard how well we were treated, kids had slushies all the time, pop, and chips."

Of course, it wasn't all fun and games for the evacuees. "The biggest problem was the kids not being used to new surroundings and having to be in a closed environment, which put lots of stress on the mothers," said Karen. "Kids are used to running around wherever on the reserve, but now they were closed in a tiny room. I really felt for the mothers, especially the ones that have three or four tiny little tots."

Volunteers and Sioux Lookout town staff offered a lot of different activities to keep people occupied throughout the evacuation. The Recreation Centre and Friendship Centre had sports and activities like a powwow for the kids, the library had story times, movies, and free internet. Wellington Laundromat and the hostel offered free laundry facilities, and NODIN mental health offered counseling available at all times. Leaders from Lac Seul came with a bus to pick up youth for a Battle of the Reserves, organized by Chris Southwind and Elvis Trout, where kids played football, broomball, soccer, and baseball.

Special thanks go out to Florence Bailey, who was the food coordinator, and Yvette and Amy, who volunteered to oversee registration. "I don't know how they did it, they were registering names, booking them into the hotels, and having people moved so they could be close to their families," Karen said. 257 people ended up at the Sunset Inns and Suites, which did a great job, as did Dick and Nellie's Restaurant, which brought catered food to the hotel. The hospital also cooked traditional foods for the elders, Johnny's Food Market packaged food and kept it refrigerated, and the Legion was open for six days providing lunch and dinner. "The Sioux Lookout Mayor even put on a barbeque, which was a fun time," said Karen. "Everybody ate good, and some of the people did not want to come home!"

Breakdown of Votes for Chief



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Empowering Families at Beaver Lake



About fifty people from Mish attended the 31st Annual Family Empowerment and Gospel Forum at Beaver Lake Camp in Dryden on the last weekend in July. The objectives of the event are to encourage family togetherness, promote positive and inspirational gospel music, and for First Nations people to enjoy fellowship with other First Nations Christians. Hundreds of people from communities around Ontario were there to take part in activities like prayer meetings, sports, swimming, and gospel sing-alongs. There was a fireworks show every night, a bannock making contest, and workshops on topics such as Youth Issues, Elder Abuse, and 'How to exemplify honourable lives as parents.' Morning and evening gospel meetings were broadcast on Wawatay radio, and counselling was available for individuals, couples, and families.

"People have a great time and come up from locations like Thunder Bay, Kenora, Slate Falls, and Red Lake,"

said Connie Gray-McKay. "The whole idea of the camp is being together as a family, a common family of God, encouraging one another and just being together. Each night they had beautiful singing from seven till midnight, with preaching from nine to ten. I got to know about Beaver Lake as a counsellor for the kids camp, and every year now for the last 14 years we've sponsored children to go there and they hold spaces for forty kids from Mish. They come back and tell the other kids about how they have so much fun, and the kids say 'I can't wait till I'm 9 so I can go to Beaver Lake!' When something happens like that that impacts your life, you get a feeling that there is hope out there, that God is always there, and the counsellors are there for you and you can go to someone. The counsellors at Beaver Lake are so loving. We're going to go back next year and look forward to even more people from Mishkeegogamang coming out next year."



Hanna and her nephew Darius were all smiles at the Beaver Lake Family Camp on July 31st



Traditional Values and Modern Skills at September Youth Retreat

"This fall we're aiming to go out on a youth retreat for two weeks in mid-September," says Mervin Masakeyash. "We haven't decided on a location yet but we may fly out, or take a boat down Lake St. Joe or Pashkogogan." Any kids aged nine and over are welcome to join. "There are quite a few people that will help with the retreat and come out to share their values, and we'll ask an elder to be part of it in the evening to tell stories and share their knowledge," Masakeyash said. Participants will learn life skills, hunting, and techniques from Junior Rangers such as how to make a homemade camp stove out of a log. "We'll break up into three rotating groups, one doing preparation for our camps, another doing maintenance for the camps, and a third group goes out hunting, paddling, and so on," said Mervin. "We really encourage kids to come out and learn about traditional values as well as some modern life skills." Anyone who is interested should contact Mervin at 928-0066.



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Phone 807-928-2414

Researched and written by Rosetta Projects

rosettaprojects@telus.net

Phone 250-764-0472

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Mish Titans Win Broomball Tournament



The Titans taking home the hardware; bottom left: Making a rush for the goal on the way to the finals; bottom right: Winning the faceoff against the Slate Fall Freebirds in the final game of the tournament. PHOTOS BY ERIN BOTTLE



The Mishkeegogamang Titans were the winners in the Second Annual Women's Broomball tournament, held in Sioux Lookout Apr 14 - 17. Eighteen teams entered the tournament, which was organized by Michael Bottle and sponsored by the Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation. The Titans defeated the Slate Falls Freebirds (white and black jerseys) in the finals. The jerseys ordered for the Titans didn't arrive on time, so the suppliers sent courtesy jerseys which say 'Petries.' The Titans will have new jerseys when they defend their title at next year's tournament.

The Nibinamik (Summer Beaver) Native Stars won the B-Side against the Pikangikum 2 Extreme. On the C side the Sandy Lake Blazing Archers defeated the Lac Seul Silver Storm.

Mishkeegogamang First Nation paid for the ice time, and sponsors paid for individual trophies. Most of the rest of the entry fees were paid out to the teams to cover their expenses.

Mike Bottle put the Mishkeegogamang team together from a core group of his wife, daughter and nieces, other Mishkeegogamang women, and three imports from Kingfisher. The team was not large - sometimes there were only one or two spares, but the effort put forth was enough to win. Congratulations Titans!

Sports Shorts

A mixed-teams weekend baseball tournament that was held on the school grounds on the 13th and 14th of August, 2011 attracted four teams. A good crowd of spectators came out to cheer on the players. The teams were headed by Michael, Farley, Merle and Bruce. In the end, Michael's team prevailed against Bruce's team in the finals, and everyone had a lot of fun.

The men's soccer league wrapped up its round robin in August. The Bombers came in first with 17 points, while Domination had 13 points and Ten Houses had 9.

There are also three women's soccer teams: Ladyhawks, Chanimas, and Thunder. Watch for results in the next issue of the *Community Update*.

Who We Are As Anishinabe People

Ronald Roundhead in the first of a two-part series about families and spiritual values

First of all I'd like to acknowledge my family members in Thunder Bay and also the people of Mishkeegogamang. The community is grieving again - yesterday there was a tragedy in Thunder Bay that took an important member of my family, a little three-year-old girl, who had an accident with a vehicle and the child passed away immediately. That relates also to what I'm going to talk about here.

A child is very important to Anishinabe culture or any culture as I understand. It's written in a biblical verse that there was a messenger from across the big pond, by the name of Christ as we all know, and he said that little children like that, those are the only beings that dwell in front of my father. That reflects in our culture, that it is very important to take care of a child, from a development stage, meaning the fetus. That is very important in our spiritual and cultural teaching.

A child must be developed at an early age, and when I say early age, I mean inside the womb, the fetus. The carrier, the mother must find a way to abstain from any negative

thinking or negative way of talking. Sometimes I see young people, being a young parent, they tend to say the F-word when their kids are around, and they shouldn't say that. A child is so delicate, and it's very disturbing when I see young parents in front of their kids saying F-this and F-that. We should all be teaching young mother and fathers not to swear in front of their kids, that's our traditional teaching. A child must be developed under a positive approach all the time - that's relating to our Native culture and spiritual approach also.

Looking at the picture in the newspaper last month of my grandkid cutting up that moose meat, to me it's very important, not only for the development of a boy like my little grandson, Ishmael - it should reflect on a community level. We, us native people, 30 to 40 years ago and way back, getting an animal like that was not only about the survival of the village, meaning eating the fresh meat. Also there was an issue attached to that - when you put down an animal like that, obviously it's a gift from the Creator, our one God. We have to understand that getting

an animal like that, or the traditional food that we take from the animal, is not only a gift from the Creator, it also helps us, the Anishinabe people, as human beings, to have a special connection with the one God. Me, as an Anishinabe, I don't go out on the land with a fully loaded shotgun or rifle shooting anything in sight. Personally, I only take what I need. And when I get that, I understand that it's a cycle of spiritual practice, more like a connection from the Creator. And I understand that it's a gift from our one God.

Nowadays, slowly, we're beginning to move away from that. When I say that, we understand that from time to time in other First Nations, there's always some kind of development of hunting festivals, fishing derbies. But this community is probably the last community that tried to divert itself from that practice, any sporting activity for our sacred food. And I'm glad that Mish is not into that yet, as I speak. But sometimes I see a note saying that it's being initiated.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Ronald Roundhead and Frances Muckuck

Summer Fun with Mish Adventures



The Mish Adventures camp had a huge variety of activities for kids this summer, and about 80 youngsters from Mishkeegogamang took part in the fun. The camp was run by an organization called Speroway (formerly FTC Canada), which sent a team of twelve to help out, including two nurses, a teacher, and university students. These people are extremely dedicated, sticking it out through forest fire smoke and power outages when most would have turned around and gone home. One of the team members, Sacha Jarvis, even got a bus license so she could drive around the community and pick up kids every day for camp, and also took a school bus full of families to the

Beaver Lake Family Camp in Dryden.

"We were thrilled to be invited back to the community of Mishkeegogamang for the 5th summer," said Karen Ward, Speroway's First Nations Programs Coordinator. "This has become like home for me and a piece of my heart remains every time I leave here. It was such a privilege to be able to help out with food and equipment deliveries while we all endured power outages and forest fire smoke. It definitely was an Adventure in Mish this summer. Thank you, parents for allowing us to play with your children. We had a wonderful time and thank you for making us feel so welcome in your community."

Kirsti Hill, a staff member with Mish Adventures, describes what summer camp was all about:

Mish Adventures returned to the community this summer for another three weeks of fun-filled camp in July. Camp was held Monday to Friday for two age groups: kids (5 - 9) and youth (10 - 15). The younger group was divided into five teams – the Young Eagles, the Crazy Monkeys, the Flying Tigers, the Loud Lions and the Wild Kings. On many days older kids from the youth camp would volunteer to serve as helpers/junior leaders in the younger groups and are showing a great deal of leadership potential. This year camp days included sports, games, crafts, baking, swimming, music, gardening and story-telling.



Kids had the opportunity of creating tie-dyed shirts as well as making their own cushions. The slip 'n slide was listed as a favourite by most of the kids and laughing shrieks of delight could be heard echoing down to the water. The last week of camp held both the Crazy Olympics and Beach Day. An extra element was added to Crazy Olympics day this year as it was also Wacky Clothes day – with both counsellors and campers being spotted in wild, silly and colourful outfits. Olympic challenges included a few original ones as well as some favourites from previous years like the bunny hop and cotton nose.

Beach day was also a great success with a sandcastle building competition, face painting and lots of swimming. The Mish Adventures team included counsellors from British Columbia, Quebec, Manitoba and southern Ontario who were all committed to providing a fantastic experience and a loving and safe environment for each child. We can't wait for next summer!

Message from Chief Gray-McKay



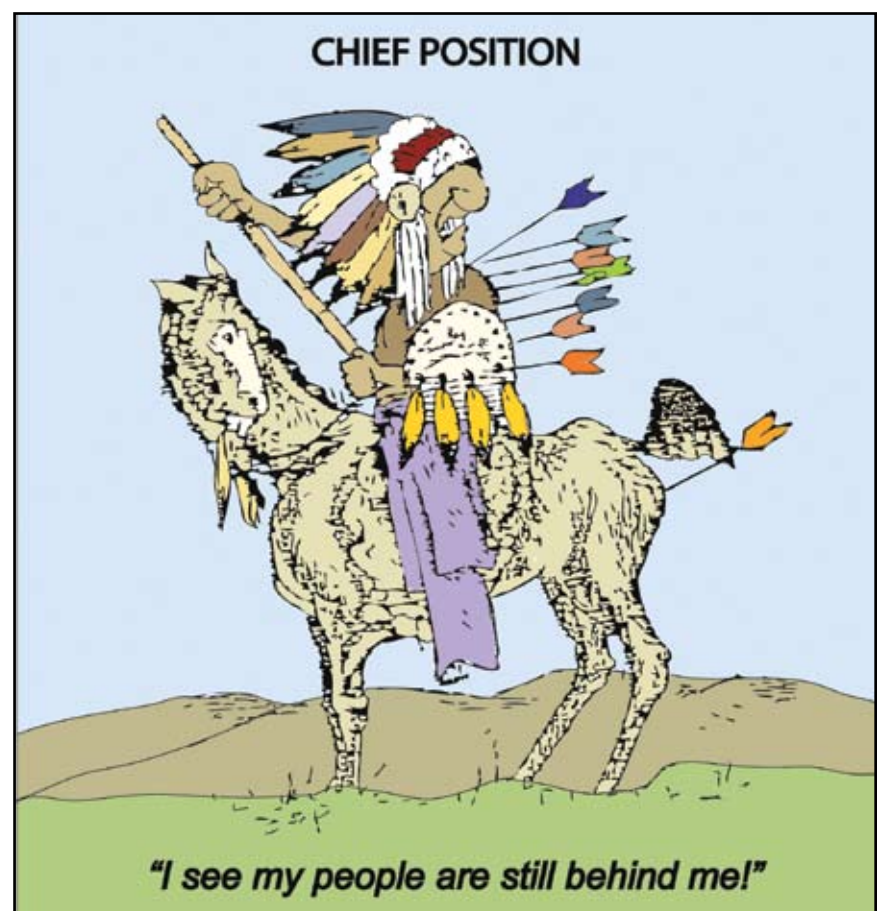
Politically, this last year has been a real challenge, but I like a challenge. Overall, we met our goal to stabilize financially. Once you stabilize the community's financial situation, you can start looking at what we need to do to empower people and build the management structure. We completed a lot of tasks. David Masakeyash kept the land claim going despite the political mumbling and grumbling. Maryanne Panacheese did a fabulous job of staying on top of as many of the social and child welfare issues as possible. The hiring of Kevin Houghton, a professional chartered accountant, has made a big difference in ensuring that reporting requirements are met by the various funding agencies so that cash flow problems are not an issue as they were before, and also so that we're not losing money due to reports not being submitted on time.

Our next big goal is to try to get a band manager in place, as well as an economic development officer. And we need to begin training our managers. What really needs to happen in this community is that the band staff needs a big shakeup – we've got a big payroll and people aren't taking their jobs seriously. And who suffers when that happens? The ones that don't have any jobs. We need a band manager because nobody here wants

to be the bad guy – everybody wants to be the good guy. Are you here to do your job, or are you here to collect a cheque? It bothers me when people come to me about management issues, and they're the managers themselves. Maybe they need to pull their socks up and set an example by

their own behaviour and show the type of leadership to be a manager.

In spite of the government's lack of funding for the community, the band has persevered and continued to try to meet the goals and objectives of our community's needs. The fire crisis is an example of the community's resilience and strength, and how a community that's often perceived as dysfunctional can pull together and be strong. Mishkeegogamang has historically been a place where people came and sought wisdom from our visionary elders. That may have gotten lost through the turmoil of the 70s and 80s, which was a result of the government's continuous assault on our way life through residential schools, forcing us on reserves, the welfare act, displacing us off the land and attempting to assimilate us and eradicate our culture. My vision is that Mish can become that place again – a place of strength rooted in a strong sense of pride in who we are as Anishinabe people.



Record Year for Fires in Northwestern Ontario

The fire situation around Mishkeegogamang may have finally calmed down in August, but it's been a record year for forest fires in northwestern Ontario. By August 23, with more than two months left in the fire season, 706 fires in the region burned 622,029 hectares of forest. That's 6,220 square kilometers, which is more than the previous record set in 1961, when 6,211 square kms were charred. Nearly ten times the amount of forest has burned this year compared to an average fire season.

Other years have had a higher number of forest fires yet burned less bush – 1976, for example, had 2,092 fires in the northwest region between April and August. This year, a few massive fires have contributed to such a large amount of territory being burned. The fire called Sioux Lookout 35, which got as close as 9 kms from Mishkeegogamang, grew to 1,120 square km. Sioux Lookout 70, near Musselwhite mine, has been measured at 1,410 square km.

There are a few key reasons why so much land has been consumed by wildfires this year. There were a relatively low number of fires in recent summers, which left the boreal forest full of dead wood that added fuel to the flames. Most of the fires burning this summer have been caused by lightning, which often occurred without any significant rainfall to douse the flames early. Dry conditions, high winds, and ample fuel combined to create a 'perfect storm' which allowed fires to grow extremely fast – one fire grew from 100 square km to 700 square km in a single day.

The fire closest to Mishkeegogamang, SLK 35, is now classified as 'being held.' "That means the perimeter lines have been worked with pumps and hose as well as patrolled by fire crews and scanned by infrared scanners," said MNR Fire Information Officer Christine Rosche. The fire near Musselwhite, SLK 70, was still listed as 'not under control' in mid-August, but crews were making good progress targeting and extinguishing hotspots. "With things quieting down and crews moving off of the larger fires we have had, the focus is on equipment retrieval in preparation for new fire starts," said MNR Officer Michelle Robinson.

Pashkogogan Lodge September Intake

Mishkeegogamang's Pashkogogan Healing Lodge is offering a program on September 12 – 28. Pashkogogan Lodge provides treatment that is committed to supporting families in overcoming addictions and trauma and regaining a strong spiritual connection to the land. There are four log cabins at Pashkogogan suited for year-round comfort. The program can accommodate 5 families or 30 people in total, including children. Counselling and sharing circles form an important part of the program.

People that complete the program leave with a follow-up and aftercare plan. Referrals are made to existing services in their home communities to ensure they receive support and ongoing care. For more information on Pashkogogan Family Treatment Program, please contact the Resource Centre at 928-2407.



Firefighters from Mish at Sioux Lookout Fire 35 on July 28; below: Green shoots of grass pop up on SLK 35 PHOTOS BY MNR

Community Reaction to the Fires

Connie Gray-McKay

It's a piece of the heart of the community that's been burned, and it is going to take time to renew. A few years from now you're going to have blueberries there, moose attracted by new shrubbery, a natural sense of renewal, but the loss is still hard. Even now, knowing that this fire is still going, it's a bad feeling. The biggest thing is to recognize that there's a reason for it and to look for the deeper purpose of it. Sometimes we get too comfortable with the way things are. I would hope that people get the deeper message out of all of it. When you get that deeper message, that's when your lifestyle changes.

Temius Nate

It's sad because it moved a lot of wild animals. One of the only things animals can't endure is fire – some rabbits will panic and get burned. It's really sad that this fire got away. I'll never understand why they watched it burn and let it get away on them. But there is re-growth – that's the way nature works, it'll re-grow, but the fact that it happened so close to the community is kind of disturbing. People that live off the land, that really hurts, so when something destroys it they obviously don't appreciate it. They have every reason to question people and ask why they watched it burn for a few days and let it get away from them.

Ronald Roundhead

We all know it's a cycle of life, it's Mother Nature, it's a cycle. Every 40 or 50 years, one area gets cleaned out by our one God – this will go another 50 years in a cycle. Also, it's good for

some of the animals when there is forest fire, and good for the fish and aquatic life, because the ash goes in the water and the fish eat that, and the fish taste different after that.

Karen Kaminawaish

There's a lot of green out there, but a lot of black too. That's how our people live, hunting the moose, catching the sturgeon, and using the different barks and roots. I've heard people say "It's just trees, they'll grow back," but it's not just trees, it's a livelihood. What are the elders going to eat, how are they going to survive? What if your trap line is gone, what if your traditional hunting territory is gone? It's all burnt up, it's just black, so what are you going to do? In the white man's world, you have insurance, but there's no such thing as insurance in the bush. You just got to start over from scratch.



Mervin Masakeyash

The fire was a future heads-up for us. Me and Ronald Roundhead sat down and talked about it – there's going to be things growing back and fresh land that people will use for these young guys in the community. A lot of things will grow in there, a lot of plants and herbs growing that will attract a lot of animals. It's up to us, the educators in the community, to teach people. It's up to us as men to educate these young guys to live off the land. Everything will be grown back, and these young guys can use this fresh sheet of land to learn.

MCC sends Meat and Blankets after Fires

Five hundred beautiful quilted blankets have been sent to Mishkeegogamang from the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) as a gesture of caring after the fires of this summer. The new handmade blankets, which come in many different colours, thicknesses and sizes, were made by contributors to the MCC across Canada.

MCC asked community leaders about people's needs during the fire, and were told that evacuation centres

were very well equipped, but that the needs would be felt most keenly when people came home. Some bedding may have been smoke-damaged, and because of the power outage, freezer meats were spoiled. So, besides the blankets, MCC also sent 32 cases of canned pork. MCC has its own canning facilities, from which it ships canned meat all over the world for disaster relief.

Lyndsay Mollins Koene is the Aboriginal Neighbours Coordinator for

MCC Ontario, based in Timmins. This is the first time she is working with Mishkeegogamang. She says MCC hopes to maintain a long-term relationship with the community. Besides sharing resources in emergencies, MCC also wants to help with economic justice, capacity building and community development.

"This is a new relationship because of the fire," said Lyndsay, "but we don't want it to end there."

Reaching Exceptional Abilities and Connecting Hearts

The REACH camp had 70 kids from Mish come out over two weeks of activities this August, the first week at the main reserve and the next at Ten Houses. "REACH is a program designed to encourage children, youth and young adults to reach towards their full potential through coaching, mentoring, and team building," said organizer Matt Eckhardt. "Our passion is to see hearts join together through community in order to accomplish goals which were once deemed unattainable. Through collective learning, our hope is that the exceptional abilities of all individuals will facilitate growth and sustainability which will continue to flourish into the future."

Staying involved with the community is one of Matt's key goals for REACH. "We'd like to build into the community and help youth year-round, rather than just in the summer," he said. "We want to keep that relationship going with the school, and come alongside students and help them get into universities and colleges." Matt's wife, Amie Mariana Sider,

was also part of the REACH program. Amie is the founder and director of NationWares, an international non-profit organization that works to help connect people with new employment opportunities.

Another husband-wife duo, Scott and Tracey Matthews, made up the other half of the REACH team. Scott drove the community school bus and picked up 40-50 kids, aged 3-14, for activities on the main reserve. He also helped organize games that included soccer, human bowling, cheese head, capture the flag, bird house building and more. Human bowling, where kids act as bowling pins and players throw a huge ball to knock them over, was a big hit at both Ten Houses and the Main Reserve. "The kids loved it and it was pretty hilarious," Tracey said.

Tracey, who has a degree in Fine Arts,

ran an art program that took place at the Red Roof church and the band office. About 15 kids aged 10-14 took part in the art school, creating collages, acrylic paintings, drawings, and thank-you cards for the NationWares and Christian Horizons donors who made the program possible. "Art is a positive way to engage students in meaningful and tangible self-expression," Tracey said. "Our hope is to provide these youth with the skills required to enhance their abilities and grow to their full potential. We combined traditional and modern methods of art practice to help them create conceptual and heart-filled works. We believe these

young people are creative, talented artists and designers who could use visual art as a means for sustainability. Art is a proven form of therapy for persons with exceptional needs and instills feelings of accomplishment and pride in their work."

The REACH team also partnered with the band office for the Beautification Project and created three hand-painted rain barrels that will be used as waste bins in the community. "This project inspired youth to take ownership of their work and give back to their community," Tracey said. "We're getting really positive reactions from the kids."



'Cheesehead' was a popular game at Missabay School during the REACH camp; right: Going for a strike in human bowling; above: Jesse paints a rain barrel for the Beautification Project

Wind Beneath Our Wings

Reflections on the Fire Evacuations from Chief Connie Gray-McKay

The evacuation worked out well – our evacuation plan was based on common sense. We made a list of Phase 1 people, elders, people who use puffers, kids born before 2008, and we listened to the recommendations of the Ministry of Natural Resources. First there was a smoke threat that presented enough of a threat for a Phase 1 evacuation. When the evacuation reached Phase 2, the smoke was pretty bad, we couldn't see from one hydro pole to the next. Five of us stayed to man the phones in the band office and answer peoples' questions: Donna Roundhead, Robbie Bottle, Jeff Loon, and NAPS Sargeant Merle Loon. We had some people from the Canadian Rangers here who wanted to help people but they had to leave as well. We also got on Facebook and found out

some people had hidden from the evacuation.

We had some laughs too, we were all in it together and it was good to see people working together. Taking care of the elders was a big priority, and we had security for them at the evacuation centers. No one will ever realize how difficult a journey it is to be a leader until they've done it – you carry the people through the fire, the fire of adversity. We have to have a common sense of safety and health about it, and we need cohesiveness if the tough decision to evacuate has to be made. If people don't want to go anywhere, I'm not going to force anyone to go unless there's a very serious fire threat. I'm not going to fool around with people's lives.

It was tough driving home at night and not seeing

anybody, nobody walking around. It's the people that make a community – even though we have difficulties, and people aren't always the best of friends, they're still our people.

One of the saddest things for me was that every morning I'd wake up, look towards the garden, and my daughter's bike was in the garden in the same spot every day, and I realized it was going to be like that one day. It just showed a clear sense of the loneliness that was there with the whole community evacuated. It really reminded me how much joy those little girls give us - the reason why we do anything is those little kids, and when they're not there it takes the wind out of our sails a bit. It's their smiles that keep you going, the wind beneath our wings.

First Responder Vehicle for Mish

On July 31, Mishkeegogamang was excited to welcome an ambulance and two stretchers to the community. This ambulance was driven from Toronto to Mishkeegogamang by Paul Burston from Christian Horizons and Jamie Lee from Hillside Community Church. Volunteer videographer Jerome Tan went up to tape this journey and the stories of community members.

A 2003 Ford Econoline E350 diesel two-stretcher ambulance was donated by an Ontario company called Elite 911. Elite 911 has been in business for over 18 years, specializing in the sale of quality new and used ambulances worldwide. Jake Hasson is the president of Elite 911. Ferno, a global company providing professional emergency healthcare products, donated two Ferno 35X stretchers.

The ambulance was donated in response to an expressed need from Chief Connie Gray-McKay earlier this year in discussion with Kerri-Jean Winteler at Christian Horizons. Chief Connie Gray-McKay was encouraged to know that people listen and respond to the community needs.

"I think it would be nice for people to know that these vehicles

are not appearing just out of the blue," said Chief Connie, who noted that Christian Horizons has sent many truckloads of items over the years. "Someone does the asking, and people work very hard to get them here. We need to be grateful for those people, like Kerri-Jean is amazing.

The North South Partnership for Children (Mamow-Sha-way-gikay-win) and Christian Horizons Central District staff donated the funds required to get the ambulance to Mishkeegogamang.

Because of greater regulatory requirements and costs, the vehicle will not be used as an official ambulance, but rather a First Responder Vehicle. First Responders need two days of training in CPR and five days of training as a First Responder. They don't need a special license to drive the vehicle, but are required to have regular re-training as First Responders. The band plans to identify candidates for training, and get liability insurance for the vehicle.

The ambulance arrived full of donated baby equipment such as baby bouncers, strollers, high chairs, an exersaucer, jolly jumpers, play mats, baby swing, bathtubs and an assortment of baby toys.



Paul Burston and Kerri-Jean Winteler start up the new ambulance in Toronto



In addition to the ambulance, Christian Horizons also sent a truck full of items for the community

Albert Wavy Calls it a Day



Albert Wavy in his backyard in Pickle Lake

They say that a leader leads by example, and Albert Wavy has certainly shown his children how to work hard. Wavy retired from his job at Missabay School this summer after 20 years of service, and the 67-year-old has been working steadily since he was a boy. Albert's kids – Jesse, Allan, Kenneth, Grace, Leonard, Jack, Dale, and the late Wayne Wavy – turned into hard workers as well. "I'm proud of my kids, they're keeping up their families," he said.

Mr. Wavy started working at a very early age. "I was about 9 or 10 when I got my first job at a camp in Doghole Bay. I didn't get paid, just started myself in the kitchen, cleaning up and washing dishes, and they gave me the leftover food so I was happy with that," Albert said. Not long after landing that first job, Albert took up a new occupation. "My stepdad Isaac, who was raising me up, quit working on the hydro power line after 13 years, so in 1953, me and my dad went into trapping for the next two summers."

After learning the ins and outs of trapping beaver, marten, lynx, and otter, Albert suddenly found himself laid up with a serious illness. "I went into the hospital for a couple of years with TB, and came out when I was about 16 and got hired on fighting fires every summer the next three or four years," he said. In 1962, Wavy started working for the Pickle Crow gold mine. "They

were pulling out a lot of gold and the job paid every two weeks, not much though," Albert remembers. "After room and board we cleared about 40 bucks a month."

Looking for greener pastures, Wavy quit gold mining in 1964 and went back to Doghole Bay to work in a fish plant and trap. In 1965, he was building bridges at Rat Rapids and Cedar Rapids, and the year after that he started working in a sawmill. His next job was at the Umex copper mine, where he spent about 11 years working full-time, operating bulldozers, forklifts, and loaders. "I liked it there, we had a good group of guys working there and everybody got along good," said Albert. "We got lots of overtime, holidays paid time and a half, and every two weeks I'd make about \$700 which was a lot back then."

When Umex wound down its mining operations, Wavy began working at Missabay School as a janitor and stayed for there for 20 years. "I liked that job too," Albert said. "There were a lot of different things to do and lots of moving around." After completing his last day at the school on June 3rd, he turned his attention to the bush and the three cabins he's fixing up. "When I worked I didn't have much time to do a lot of hunting, and it's one of my favourite things to do." Congratulations to Albert on his well-deserved retirement, and happy hunting!

High Gold Prices Brightening the Outlook at PC Gold

The buzz at PC Gold over the last several months is good news for Mishkeegogamang. Success with the exploration means more potential jobs for the community. Success will also mean the potential for the Band and its membership to acquire meaningful exposure to a land-based business, and industry, with a bright future.

PC Gold has found gold on several different areas of the property, including the original minesite, and is now focused on advancing Pickle Crow step-by-step along a development pathway toward a possible (although as yet by no means certain) return to production.

Historically the operators at Pickle Crow focused only on the narrow high-grade veins. The mine, which operated from 1935 to 1966, produced 1.47 million ounces of gold. But the low price of gold in the 1960s – \$35 an ounce – along with increasing depths and higher costs forced the closure of the mine. The closure left considerable volumes of moderate and low-grade gold resources in and around the mine. Mining these lower grade resources is potentially viable today because of new techniques and a much higher gold price – now around \$1,800 an ounce.

A report prepared in April for PC Gold by independent consultants estimated that 1.26 million ounces of gold are still present in or near the old mine. This includes a higher grade underground component of 1.1 million ounces averaging 5.4 g/t gold, considered a good grade in the business, which in turn includes a high grade vein component of 600,000 ounces averaging 9.3 g/t

gold. “This high grade vein component is essentially the same material the old timers mined,” says PC Gold President and CEO Kevin Keough. The rest of the resources are a lower grade, which the old timers couldn’t make money on, but at \$1,800 per ounce gold today, a good return is possible.

“Although we had plenty of challenges getting it done, our initial resource estimate confirms the value of the Pickle Crow gold mine asset and provides an excellent foundation for moving the Pickle Crow project forward,” said Keough.

“A future ‘new Pickle Crow’ could, with success, be larger than the historical operation,” Keough added. “We’re looking forward to keeping the Band well informed as we further advance these plans. We expect we could have as many as four drills turning in the months of October and November, before breaking for Christmas.”

In late July, PC Gold announced another promising gold discovery at Central Pat East (CPE), which is located two kilometres away from the Pickle Crow mine. “The work we’re doing at CPE has given us the strongest results of any target we’ve ever drilled outside the core mine trend,” said Keough.

“We were however happy to be able to extend help to Mish band members more directly affected by the fires than we were,” said Keough. “PC Gold provided room and board at our Lakeview staff lodge to some 25 fire refugees living in the vicinity of Pickle Lake who had nowhere else to go, and we’ll do it again if circumstances necessitate.”

Truck Arrives from Christian Horizons Loaded with Beds, Toys and Supplies

On August 2, 2011, a Gardewine truck arrived in Mishkeegogamang loaded with over 30 feet of food, furnishings and supplies for the community, coordinated and collected by Christian Horizons. This truck was loaded in Toronto by a few dedicated volunteers on Monday July 25. It held baby clothes and equipment, 20 new twin beds and mattresses, children’s and adult clothes, children’s new toys, bikes, Home Depot wood projects for kids camp, 6 skids of food and some other furnishing items.

The truck full of donations was unloaded and distributed by community members and community partners. Speroway helped distribute food. The Elder Home and the Safehouse each received 10 new twin beds and mattresses. Maxine coordinated the distribution

of all baby clothes, supplies and equipment.

Christian Horizons is very grateful for generous donors including: Crate Designs, Daily Bread Food Bank,



Chelsea Ottertail and Tanya Bottle arranging clothes from Christian Horizons at Mamo-Ombiggi-Owsowin

Giant Tiger Bradford, Haven on the Queensway, Home Depot Oakville, In Storage Self Storage Arrow Road Toronto, Khi Community Salvation Army Milton, Kraft Canada – Peak Freans, Little Treasures Clothing Company, Living Waters Assembly West, Oakville Parent Child Centre, Peg Perego and SafetyNet and CYAN in Oakville.

Christian Horizons is currently fundraising and collecting donations for another shipment likely in

the late fall or winter months. The goal for the next shipment is to include donated computers for the school as well as new books and teacher curriculum materials for the school.



Welcome back to school to all the teachers and students at Missabay!

Who we are as Anishinabe

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But somehow there’s a reluctance from Mishkeegogamang members. I guess they remember from the 70s and 80s, the elders used to voice out: “Do not tamper with what is sacred. Do not mess around or horse around with what is sacred from the Creator, which is our traditional food. Take it, receive it in such a way, with honour, and make sure you use everything, make sure you put away the bones where they should be. The bones of an animal should be hung on a tree, where it’s clean, or put away the bones, gather them up, put them back in the water.” That’s our practice.

Now, in any dump, sometimes we see a moose head, it’s sad to see that, being put away in the garbage. Sometimes I see a moose hide in a garbage site, it’s sad. But, that doesn’t mean we can retract from the teachings – all of us need to put our hearts together and re-emphasize the practice that was in place since time immemorial. To me, it’s a spiritual practice. At my age, it takes time for me to understand what the elders were talking about. At my age, I’m beginning to understand what it was. Seeing my grandkid with that moose, it’s an honour, and it tells me spiritually that he’s not going to be the only grandkid that we’re going to try to teach. I’ve got five young boys who I’m prepared to teach what I know. I wish...for them to carry on our practice and also our culture, and also understanding who we are, understanding our connection with our one God.

Me, as an Anishinabe person, I go out there on our traditional territory, every spring and every fall. That doesn’t mean that I go out there and shoot until the gun barrel is red. We only take what we need, based on what I say. Hopefully our elders, before they all leave for the Anishinabe traditional paradise, we call it, hopefully they will leave something behind – how we should approach and understand who we are as Anishinabe people.

To be continued. In the next issue of the Community Update, Ronald Roundhead talks about why Anishinabe spirituality is not for sale.

Sioux Lookout Fire Chief Goes to Bat for Mish

Sioux Lookout Fire Chief Rob Favot did everything in his power to help the people of Mishkeegogamang during the evacuation. “Some of us were calling him The Short Guy,” Karen Kaminawaish said. “He’s short, but if someone was misbehaving and needed a talking to, he would set them on the right path. Nobody wanted to get a talking to from The Short Guy. We never saw him lose his cool though, he was very professional and very caring.” When Sioux Lookout was faced with several communities needing some place to send evacuees, Mr. Favot made sure that people from Mish would be “at the front of the line” so they could join family and community members who were already in Sioux. “We were really honoured how he went to bat for the Mish people,” Karen said. “It was a ‘we’ thing, it wasn’t a Rob thing or a Karen thing, it was all of us working together. I really was impressed the way people helped each other out – that’s our way of life, that’s how we live.”

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