



SAGAMOK ANISHNAWBEK  
**NEWS**

# Waab'gonii Giizis

Blossoming Moon | June 2026



# Table of Contents

## *Titles*

---

<i>Notices, Events and Programs.....</i>	<i>3-9</i>
<i>Moose Hide Campaign.....</i>	<i>10-11</i>
<i>Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Walk.....</i>	<i>12-14</i>
<i>Cyber Smarts 3.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Justice BBQ and Police Week.....</i>	<i>16-19</i>
<i>Students Explore Mining Careers With Epiroc.....</i>	<i>20-21</i>
<i>Mother's Day Tea.....</i>	<i>22-23</i>
<i>Aapji Gdo Mshkogaabwim – You are Strong, You are Beautiful.....</i>	<i>24-25</i>
<i>Mental Health Awareness Week.....</i>	<i>26-29</i>
<i>Porcupine Harvesting.....</i>	<i>30-31</i>
<i>Post Majority Update.....</i>	<i>32-33</i>
<i>Trades Fair &amp; Hydro One.....</i>	<i>34-35</i>
<i>Safety Day.....</i>	<i>36-37</i>
<i>Celebrating a Milestone in Charlene Sterling-Owl's Education Journey .....</i>	<i>38-39</i>
<i>Bear Wise &amp; E Bike.....</i>	<i>40-41</i>
<i>Talent Show.....</i>	<i>42-43</i>
<i>Niigaaniin BBQ.....</i>	<i>44-45</i>
<i>Indigenous Community Business Award.....</i>	<i>46-47</i>
<i>Biidaaban Attends MSS Powwow.....</i>	<i>48-50</i>
<i>Biidaaban Basketball.....</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>Medicine Walk.....</i>	<i>52-55</i>

# COMMUNITY JUSTICE NOTICE: DISCLOSURE & LEGAL AID

If you are charged with an offence and require disclosure, please contact the **Community Justice Worker** at **Gweyaksijigewin Teg Community Justice**.

**WE CAN ASSIST YOU WITH COMPLETING THE NECESSARY PAPERWORK. PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO SEEK ASSISTANCE.**



SAGAMOK JUSTICE PROGRAM | GWEYAKSIJIGEWIN TEG  
Millennium Center Unit 2, 610 Sagamok Rd, Sagamok, ON P0P 2L0 | (705) 865-1884

# ATV Awareness Week

RIDE SMART. RIDE SOBER. GET HOME SAFE.

- ▶ Always wear an approved helmet
- ▶ Use protective gear
- ▶ Never ride impaired
- ▶ Ride only where permitted
- ▶ Do not carry passengers
- ▶ Ride at a safe speed

[petahtegoose\\_barry@sagamok.ca](mailto:petahtegoose_barry@sagamok.ca)



**Drive safely – slow down  
and maintain the speed limit.**

*Speeding doesn't just put you at risk — it also endangers everyone in the community.*

More information, including **speed monitor device data**, available online:  
[www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com](http://www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com)



Happy  
Birthday  
**BRIANNA**

Love Autumn, Mom, and Dad



Sagamok Anishnawbek Insect Project 2026

## MANIDOONSAG WANI'IGEWAKI INSECT TRAPLINE

Are you interested in the **manidoonsag (insects)** that live in Sagamok? With the help of **BugQuest**, we'll be setting up malaise traps and collecting weekly samples from **May to October 2026**.

Contact LRE at **705-865-2421** to learn more.

## COMMUNITY NOTICE

Services with Rainbow District have been terminated  
Sagamok By-Law is responsible for Animal Control



Lindsey Cada  
By-Law Officer  
**705-863-0145**



## Apakwaanaajinh (Bat) Naming Contest



**We're looking for name suggestions for the bats netted and tagged in Sagamok this summer!**  
Chevaun Toulouse | 705-863-0169



## M'Sheekahn Tahkaamojeegewin TURTLE CROSSING SEASON

Ontario turtle nesting season occurs from mid-May to mid-July. **Keep an eye out for turtles crossing roads!**

If you spot a turtle on or near the road, you can help by moving it in the direction it is already going.

To learn more about turtle nesting season, visit  
[www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com](http://www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com)



# TREATY PAYMENTS

**DATE:** Friday June 19, 2026

**TIME:** 10:00AM - 4:00PM

**LOCATION:** Multi-Educational Centre

Government issued photo identification is required to receive payment.



Indigenous Services Canada / Services aux Autochtones Canada

Canada

## Funding Application Forms for Secondary Students

**IT'S TIME!**

Visit the Lifelong Learning Centre to fill out the application forms – **June 23 & 24 from 4-7PM.**

Josephine Toulouse | [toulouse.josephine@sagamok.ca](mailto:toulouse.josephine@sagamok.ca)



## MOCCASIN MAKING WORKSHOP

**JUNE 26-27 | 10AM-3PM**

Lifelong Learning Centre

Registration Required  
15 Spaces available each day  
Lunch Provided

Gail Trudeau • 705-863-2531 or [trudeau\\_gail@sagamok.ca](mailto:trudeau_gail@sagamok.ca)

## MUSHKIKI MIIKAN PATHWAYS TO MEDICINE



MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATION SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS LEARNERS  
**OPEN TO INDIGENOUS HIGH SCHOOL (GRADE 9 - 12) AND UNDERGRADUATE INDIGENOUS STUDENTS INTERESTED IN A CAREER IN MEDICINE.**

[www.mishkikimiikan.com](http://www.mishkikimiikan.com)  
[outreach@mishkikimiikan.com](mailto:outreach@mishkikimiikan.com)

## Learn Tai Chi for Elders

LUNCH & LEARN

and Strawberry Social

**JUNE 24 | 11:30AM-1PM**

Multi-Educational Centre

[sonnenburg\\_susan@sagamok.ca](mailto:sonnenburg_susan@sagamok.ca)



## SAGAMOK NIIGAANIIN SUPER CLINIC & BBQ

**FRIDAY, JULY 17, 2026**  
9:00AM - 4:00PM  
575 Sagamok Road

**NIIGAANIIN**

VISIT [WWW.SAGAMOKANISHNAWBEK.COM](http://WWW.SAGAMOKANISHNAWBEK.COM) FOR FULL DETAILS  
QUESTIONS? CONTACT SARAH AT 705-865-1395, EXT.200

## SAGAMOK READS

5-WEEK PROGRAM | MONDAYS STARTING JULY 6  
11AM - 12PM | Lifelong Learning Centre

For more information and to register, please contact Raven at 705-863-0883.



## Sagamok Treaty Day

Recognizing History, Ancestry, and Resilience

**FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 2026**  
**10:00AM - 4:00PM**  
Multi-Educational Centre

More Information:  
COMMUNITY WELLNESS WORKER | 705-863-2531

# SAGAMOK EDUCATION POW-WOW

"WEAVING THE PATH TO YOUR FUTURE"

**JUNE 19<sup>th</sup> | 11:00AM - 3:00PM**

**Biidaaban School**

BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIR    VENDORS WELCOME    YEAR-END DRAWS

**Come together and celebrate education, culture and the pathway to a brighter future!**

For more information, please call: **705-865-2387**



# BEADED STRAWBERRY EARRING WORKSHOP

**JUNE 22-23 | 10AM-3PM**

**Lifelong Learning Centre**

**Registration Required**  
**15 Spaces available each day**  
**Lunch Provided**

Gail Trudeau • 705-863-2531 or [trudeau\\_gail@sagamok.ca](mailto:trudeau_gail@sagamok.ca)

New Training Opportunity:

# SP 106 Wildland Fire Training

**JUNE 23-24, 2026**  
Lifelong Learning Centre

Register Via Email:  
[LLLC\\_intake@sagamok.ca](mailto:LLLC_intake@sagamok.ca)



# Traditional Healing

with Godfrey Shawanda

Traditional 1-on-1 Counselling Sessions

**JUNE 25 | 1:00PM – 8:00PM**  
**JUNE 26 | 9:00AM – 4:00PM**  
Saswin, 51 Kokoko Miikan

Info & Reservations: **Wayne Southwind | 705-863-2942**



# Women's Waab'Gonii Giizis

JUNE FULL MOON

**MONDAY, JUNE 29**  
6pm at Saswin

Light Dinner Provided!

Susan | 705-863-2838



# CATERING TENDER

**Event:** Sagamok Annual Traditional Pow Wow  
**Date:** Saturday, July 11, 2026  
**Location:** Sagamok Pow Wow Grounds

 **Meal:** Feast | 5:00PM

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:**  
WILD MEAT  
TRADITIONAL FOOD

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- Dishes & Cutlery
- Condiments
- Beverages
- Safe Food Handling Certificate

**DEADLINE: JUNE 26, 2026 @ 12PM (NOON)**

Please submit your bid to [southwind\\_wayne@sagamok.ca](mailto:southwind_wayne@sagamok.ca)

**ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE**  
 **250**



# Woodland Wealth

# Welcoming Wealth

Free Zoom Workshop  
**Saturday, June 20 | 10:30AM**

[www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com](http://www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com)



# SAGAMOK

ANNUAL TRADITIONAL

# POW WOW

SAGAMOK SPIRITUAL GROUNDS  
**JULY 10-11-12, 2026**

DANCER REGISTRATION DAILY  
 SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

*Honouring  
 Namissin and Noaguagabo*

HOST CHIPPEWA TRAVELERS

CO-HOST LITTLE CREEK SINGERS

EMCEE ALLEN MANITOWABI

FRIDAY, JULY 10 - EVENING CAMP SETUP & REGISTRATION

SATURDAY, JULY 11 - 12PM & 7PM GRAND ENTRY

SUNDAY, JULY 12 - 12PM GRAND ENTRY

For more information or to register  
 as a vendor, please contact:

**WAYNE SOUTHWIND 705-863-2942**



# YOUTH GYM NIGHTS

FRIDAYS @ 6PM | MEC  
 OUTDOORS

[WWW.SAGAMOKANISHNAWBEK.COM](http://WWW.SAGAMOKANISHNAWBEK.COM)

# YOUTH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

**TWO GROUPS**

**GRADE 8 & 9**

July 6 to 31

INTAKE: JULY 6

**GRADE 10 & 11**

August 4 to 31

INTAKE: AUGUST 4



**LIMITED SPACES AVAILABLE**

For more information, please contact Cheryl Toulouse at:

[toulouse\\_cheryl@sagamok.ca](mailto:toulouse_cheryl@sagamok.ca)

You're Invited! Biindigen!

# GRAND OPENING

## Z'Gamok Waaseyaankaan Teg



*Waaseyaankaan Teg is reopening its doors at a new location!*

Come tour the new space — a hub for Sagamok Anishinaabe Aadziwin language and culture. We invite you to join us in celebrating this place of enlightenment: a space for learning, sharing, and discovery.

Please bring a feast plate, wear your ribbon skirt, and be mindful of moontime protocols. Ceremony at 8AM!

Giveaways · Door Prizes · Activities · and More!

**FRIDAY, JUNE 19**  
**8:00AM – 4:30PM**

Lifelong Learning Centre



SAGAMOK ANISHNAWBEK  
**EDUCATION**

**Marjorie Southwind**  
ANISHINAABEMOWIN MANAGER  
southwind\_marjorie@sagamok.ca

# NOTICE



SAGAMOK ANISHNAWBEK  
Planning & Infrastructure

## WATER DISTRIBUTION SWABBING PROJECT



**THIS NOTICE APPLIES ONLY TO HOMES CONNECTED TO THE SAGAMOK DRINKING WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM.**  
Homes that use private wells are not affected by this project.

### To All Sagamok Community Members:

The Sagamok Water Department will be conducting a Water Distribution Swabbing Project beginning early June through to September.

**We will notify each section 72 hours prior to the work.**



### IMPORTANT: NOT THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY AT ONE TIME

The "Do Not Consume / No Water Usage" notice will apply only to identified areas on different days and weeks throughout the summer. You will receive at least 72 hours' notice before your area is affected.



### PROJECT OVERVIEW

Swabbing is a proactive maintenance program used to clean the inside of our watermains. A soft swab is sent through the pipes using controlled water flow. As it travels, the swab removes sediment, biofilm, and mineral deposits that can affect water quality, taste, and system performance. This process helps ensure we continue to provide safe, clean, and reliable drinking water to our community.



### WORK AREA

Swabbing will take place starting at the water tower area, working our way down through the distribution system to our dead ends throughout the community. Please note, some areas will not be able to be completed due to the main size and the lack of isolation valves and hydrants.



### WHY NO WATER USAGE?

- Water usage can reverse the flow and stop the swab, preventing effective cleaning.
- It can cause the swab to break apart or settle, reducing its ability to remove buildup.
- It can push debris into services and cause blockages.
- It can compromise the water quality during the swabbing process.

**For the safety and integrity of our water system, we must all work together by not using any water when your area is notified.**



### IMPORTANT – HOMEOWNER & TENANT RESPONSIBILITY

**If you use water during the swabbing process and it causes your home service line to become blocked, the Sagamok Water Department will not be responsible for any resulting issues.**

Homeowners and tenants will be responsible for the cost to unplug their home service line.

**The estimated cost to unplug a home service line is \$650.00.**

*Please respect this process and help protect your home and our water system.*



**ABSOLUTELY  
NO WATER USAGE  
OR CONSUMPTION  
DURING SWABBING**

To ensure the swab moves effectively through the system and properly cleans the watermains, there must be no water usage of any kind.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Drinking
- Cooking
- Bathing/showering
- Laundry
- Dishwashing
- Flushing toilets

**Do not use any water during the swabbing process.**

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated as we work together to maintain a clean, safe, and reliable water system for our community. Miigwech.

Bimaadiziwin Radio:

# THE SAGAMOK HOUR

## 1-YEAR ANNIVERSARY STATISTICS

**FIRST AIR DATE: JUNE 21, 2025**

**TOTAL EPISODES TO DATE: 16**



**19** unique First Nations musical artists featured  
**29** appearances by Sagamok's own Young Warriors Drum Group



**31** Good News Stories Shared  
**33** Interviews Conducted



**Featured Community Storytellers:**

- Allen Toulouse
- Bradley Trudeau
- Harvey Trudeau



**Featured Community Voices:**

- Youth Voices: **13**
- Adult Voices: **16**
- Elder Voices: **12**



**38** Anishinaabemowin Words/Phrases Used

**16** Opening Prayers in Anishinaabemowin



**Educational Segments:**

- Sagamok Cyber Smarts: **7**
- Other Educational Segments: **36**

Throughout its first 16 episodes, Bimaadiziwin Radio continued to promote Anishinaabe language revitalization, celebrate First Nations music, amplify community voices, and share local stories and knowledge.

We extend a big chi-miigwech to our partners at VISTA Radio, CKNR 94.1 Moose FM and we look forward to many more episodes to come!

**Listen to All Previous Episodes, Anytime!**

[www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com/The-Sagamok-Hour](http://www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com/The-Sagamok-Hour)



Questions? Contact Bradley Trudeau, Radio Show Host:  
[trudeau\\_bradley@sagamok.ca](mailto:trudeau_bradley@sagamok.ca)



# MOOSE HIDE CAMPAIGN



On May 15, many departments gathered here in Sagamok to support the Moose Hide Campaign. Barry Petahtegoose, the Community Safety & By-law Coordinator, led the event, giving staff and community members a chance to stand against violence toward women and children. The day started with an early Sunrise Ceremony and a welcome from Gimaa, followed by an awareness walk. After walking from the Millennium Centre to Riverview and back, everyone enjoyed good conversation, some exercise, and a BBQ lunch prepared by Mark Assinewe.

In 2011 the Moose Hide Campaign began in British Columbia as a First Nations movement to raise awareness about violence against women and children. Unlike many initiatives that focus on broad public engagement, this campaign specifically encourages men to get involved. The Moose Hide Campaign condemns all forms of violence; it recognizes that women are disproportionately the victims of violent crimes. The goal is not to diminish the violence experienced by men, but to highlight the majority group that is most affected.

Barry spoke to the participants, sharing background information about the campaign and sharing his experience with it, including one year completing a day-long fast. He also encouraged participants to pin a square of moose hide, the campaign symbol, onto their clothing for the day. According to the campaign material provided, “Wearing this moose hide signifies your commitment to honour, respect and protect the women and children in your life and to work together with other men and boys to end violence against women and children.”

Chief Angus Toulouse also shared some words with the group, about fifteen people, and noted some recent statistics about violence in the community. He opened his speech saying, “There [has] been too much violence against our women.” Candidly noting the stark condition of many communities. He expressed concern about the continued presence of violence in Sagamok and reminded everyone that the walk is meant to help us face the harsh realities in our communities. “Our men need some support... to recognize that intimate partner violence—domestic violence of any kind—is not who we are. It’s really going back to the teachings to understand that there’s a way to deal with conflict or domestic issues that a couple or family may have, and violence isn’t it,” shared Chief Angus. He also expressed the need for programs and services to support men in dealing with the impacts of multi-generational trauma.



After the speech, we began walking. Clear skies and little wind are rarity on its own. However, having all that plus low humidity made it the perfect day for the awareness walk. In total, it lasted about 30 minutes. Staff enjoyed the ability to leave the office for a bit to discuss the event and get some exercise along the way.



Sometimes, protests aim to be loud and flashy. But activism can take on many forms. Even if it seems simple, taking time to gather people and participate helps keep the issue of violence against women and children in focus. When we show up and keep these issues in our minds, we are more likely to take steps in the right direction.

At the event, Wayne Southwind shared that he is working to start a men's program. They met for the first time on May 14. So far, only three men have shown interest, but Wayne hopes to grow the group to about ten. He is looking for ideas to get more people involved and welcomes suggestions. Anyone interested can contact Wayne for more information. Miigwech to Barry who organized the event, and to all those who participated!



# MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN WALK

On Tuesday, May 5, Sagamok community members gathered at the Multi-Educational Centre to honour Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit individuals (MMIWG2S). The event focused on raising awareness of the violence Indigenous women face and highlighting often overlooked stories. Bridget Perrier, a guest speaker, shared personal experiences to emphasize the real impact of neglecting these issues. The community came together for this walk to encourage ongoing engagement with the challenges affecting Indigenous women across Canada.

Participants entered the Multi-Education Centre and saw a large mural made by Biidaaban students from grades 4 to 8. The mural spread awareness about MMIWG2S, using beautiful but sorrowful imagery. Three birch trees had “Respect,” “Zaagidwin,” and “Honour” written on them. Between the trees sat about seventy-eight faceless figures, each unique in skin tone, hair colour, and accessories. Red handprints encircled them, with words like “No more,” “Sister,” “Women,” and “Red Dress” on the palms.

The mural project was led by Colleen Toulouse, Student Success Program Coordinator. We caught up with Colleen to learn more about the mural. She first shared what Bernadette Southwind’s reminder had been to the students: “Everyone has a voice and is special in this community.” Colleen echoed Bernadette’s message and explained some of the mural’s artistic choices. Instead of focusing on a single person, students explored the idea of faceless dolls. This allows both the artist and the viewer to see whoever they need in the doll. This choice to show Indigenous people on a wide spectrum helped demonstrate a broader message: that Indigenous people are not a single identity group, figure or statistic, but individuals with distinct voices, identities and stories. The mural reminds us that everyone deserves to be seen, heard, and remembered as an individual.

The MMIWG2S event began at 4:00pm with a walk. People gathered outside the Multi-Educational Centre and walked through the community. Before leaving the gym, a table with clothes was set up. People were invited to take items that supported the cause. Residents wore custom hoodies from Amanda Kust of Windy Acres that read “No More Stolen Relatives.” The weather was clear and calm. When we arrived at Little Lake, with a crowd holding banners and wearing their marked clothes in support, about forty people stood by as Bernadette stepped forward to speak. Everyone gathered to listen. Bernadette spoke in Anishinaabemowin and English about the importance of keeping these women’s voices alive and sharing their stories. The group observed a collective moment of silence. The undisturbed waters and scenic view helped everyone reflect on loved ones, the lost, and untold stories. As we thought-on the continued violence against Indigenous women and how their stories are often ignored, we were reminded of the importance of giving space that allows for consideration.





After prayer, people returned to the Multi-Educational Centre with mixed feelings. While it was heavy to acknowledge that Indigenous women still face violence, and their voices often go unheard, there was hope, too. The walk showed Sagamok's continued commitment to sharing these stories and making sure they are heard. When silence and lack of attention are part of the problem, coming together as a community to share these stories can be the strongest response.

The walk ended with dinner. Everyone had time to sit together and talk about the event. Participants enjoyed turkey, buns, and cheesecake. People could have casual conversations or deeper discussions, sharing their thoughts and concerns.

Later, a guest speaker joined the event. Bridget Perrier, an anti-sex trade advocate, Indigenous activist, and survivor of abuse, spoke about her life. She drew from lived experience to describe the violence and exploitation Indigenous women face. Bridget advocated for prevention and continued support for structures, for survivors. While speaking about her experiences, she shared a very powerful moment: noting that her father was told not to say she was Indigenous, if she were to ever be lost, as police might not take her case seriously. Sharing moments like this, personal stories, helps end the cycle of violence by making the issue tangible, not just a statistic. Bridget inspired everyone and showed what it means to keep going through hardship. Like the walk, she urged everyone to keep fighting by sharing stories.

The annual MMIWG2S walk gives community members a chance to be more than passive listeners. It invites them to take an active role in continuing to hear and honour Indigenous women, whose voices are too often overlooked. By creating a space to remember, reflect, and support one another, this event reframes listening as a form of advocacy. Hosting this walk demonstrates Sagamok's continued commitment to uplifting the women most affected by neglect across many systems. Miigwech to everyone who attended, supported, and helped ensure these stories are heard, honoured, and carried forward with strength, care, and hope.



# CYBER SMARTS 3



In our last few segments, we talked about some of the common online risks out there. Today, we're going to look at something that helps protect you from those threats — **antivirus software**.

Every day, our lives become more connected to technology — we use it for work, banking, shopping, social media, even games. Because of that, it's more important than ever to keep our devices safe.

Cybercriminals are always coming up with new tricks to steal personal information or damage your computer. And the truth is, it's nearly impossible to stay protected on your own. That's where Antivirus programs act like a digital bodyguard for your devices. They scan your files, monitor activity, and block dangerous software — things like viruses, ransomware, and spyware — before they can do any real damage. Think of it as catching the bad guys before they even make it past your front door.

Data breaches can be costly – so, it can be argued investing in top quality anti-virus software could be your most important purchase each year. When selecting an antivirus software solution, it's essential to choose a product that offers comprehensive protection against the full spectrum of cyber threats. Here are some key features to look for:

- 1) Real-time scanning and threat detection - The software needs to be constantly scanning all files and incoming new files to detect problems **before they happen**.
- 2) Automatic updates- Cybercriminals are constantly developing new threats and exploiting newly discovered vulnerabilities. To stay ahead of these evolving dangers, it's crucial to choose an antivirus solution that automatically updates'
- 3) Compatibility with Multiple Devices- In today's multi-device world, it's essential to choose an antivirus solution that can protect all of your connected devices, including PCs, Macs, smartphones, and tablets. Look for products that offer cross-platform compatibility and the ability to manage multiple devices from a single, centralized dashboard.

And since antivirus software has access to your files and operating systems, you'll want to go with a trusted name. Some top picks include **Norton, Bitdefender, Malwarebytes, and McAfee**.

So, don't wait for something to go wrong — pick a reputable antivirus program, install it, and let it work quietly in the background while you go about your day. After all, peace of mind is priceless when it comes to your digital life.

Miigwech to Sagamok's IT and Communications Department for another segment of information to help us all stay safe in the digital world. This has been Sagamok **Cyber Smarts!**





MAY 28

MAY 14

# JUSTICE BBQ & POLICE WEEK

Sometimes, in an ironic way, crime brings people together, either by uniting the community over a shared concern or by encouraging them to work together to prevent it. In both situations, people show a strong sense of community and a desire to protect each other. On May 28, the Justice Department helped demonstrate this unity by holding a community BBQ for staff and residents. The event helped connect those who want to keep the community safe over a shared meal and conversation.

The weather was perfect, and the day got off to a great start, with many Millennium Center staff visiting the Justice Department tables early. There were plenty of accessories on the tables in front of the BBQ, such as phone holders and day planners, so the Justice Department offered more than just food. The Justice team worked with Crime Stoppers to help run the event. Renzo Caron, Director of the Justice Department, said having them there was a great way to make “the day for networking” and gave “neighbouring departments a chance to work together and connect.” Offering the usual buns, burgers and hot dogs, there was a nicely cooked meal for everyone.

To celebrate Police Week on the 14<sup>th</sup>, the APS Sagamok detachment joined in by holding a BBQ for the community. This week is set aside to highlight the bond between officers and their communities. In Canada, Police Week ran from May 10 to 16 this year. Police services use this time to thank police for their service and hard work, and to connect more personally with residents in their area. The BBQ provided the opportunity for anyone to stop by for a quick burger or hot dog and converse with their local law enforcement!

When speaking with Sergeant Vern Macumber, he shared similar thoughts to Renzo. He said their goal is to “close the gap between the public and the police,” and that they want to be “proactively engaged with the community.” As Police Week continued, the Sagamok Detachment hoped to continue hosting BBQs, Q&A sessions, and community meetings in the future. However, beyond the celebration of this event, it was clear that this BBQ was just the catalyst for change. More engagement is needed, and these were just the first steps!

Many parts of our justice system are reaching out to the community. Both APS and the Justice Department want to connect with the people they serve. With the Justice Department working with Crime Stoppers and APS celebrating Police Week, our local law enforcement goal is clear: to be effective and proactive in preventing crime while encouraging a closer relationship with officers and support staff. Miigwech to the Justice Department and APS for taking real steps to connect with the community and for organizing events that encourage a forward-thinking approach to crime prevention.







# JUSTICE BBQ



# POLICE WEEK

# Students Explore Mining Careers at Epiroc Facility Tour

Submitted by Nikki Toulouse (Implementation Coordinator) and Jordan Bennett (Mineral Development Advisor) from Sagamok's Claims and Negotiations Unit.

Sagamok Anishnawbek high school students recently visited the Epiroc facility in Sudbury, Ontario, for an educational and inspiring industry tour. The group included eight female students and four male students who were given the opportunity to learn more about the mining and industrial sectors and explore future career opportunities available in Northern Ontario.

Students were guided through various areas of the facility where they observed daily operations, Mining Equipment, rebuilt and refurbished mining equipment, also the different applications in which they're used in the mining phases. Automation and information management. Also, very important workplace safety procedures. Staff members explained how innovation, technology, and teamwork contribute to the success of the mining support industry and emphasized the important role the sector plays in the region's economy.



Mike Dore had his team fully engaged with our students. He and his team were very well prepared for our students. They engaged in telling their own personal career paths into the lucrative mining industry was a great place to have a successful career. It was great for our students to see the opportunities in the industry. Not directly working at the mine sites. But different opportunities that support the mining industry.

Throughout the visit, students were encouraged to consider careers in the mining industry, including opportunities in skilled trades, engineering, heavy equipment operation, environmental services, Battery Electric vehicles, and technical support roles. Employees shared personal stories about their own career journeys and highlighted the many pathways available for young people interested in entering the field.

The tour also aimed to inspire more youth, especially young women, to pursue careers in mining and related industries. Students asked questions about apprenticeships, post-secondary education, and the skills needed to succeed in industrial workplaces. Many left the tour with a greater understanding of the industry and the rewarding career possibilities it can offer.



Teachers and organizers described the experience as a valuable learning opportunity that helped connect classroom education with real-world careers. By visiting local facilities like Epiroc, students gain insight into the growing demand for skilled workers and the many opportunities available within Northern Ontario's mining sector.

The Epiroc facility tour provided students with a memorable hands-on learning experience while encouraging the next generation to explore careers that support the future of the mining industry.



# Mother's Day Tea



Photos from the tea held in celebration of Mother's Day.





# Aapji Gdo Mshkogaabwim – You are Strong, You are Beautiful

April – May 2026

Deanna Southwind, Children’s Wellness Worker with Sagamok’s Child & Family Services, delivered a six-week confidence-building program at Biidaaban during April and May. Designed to help students develop a stronger sense of self-esteem, boost confidence, and build personal awareness of beauty, strength, and uniqueness, the program was something Deanna felt very passionate about. Aapji Gdo Mshkogaabwim was born of her vision, and brought to life through a collaborative effort with Biidaaban Leadership and Youth Mental Wellness Specialist, Raven Hammond.

When asked how the program’s development and purpose, Deanna offered the following:

“When I took on this role as the Children’s Wellness Worker in September 2025, I envisioned creating a program about Confidence Building that could help our children understand and recognize their unique strengths, thereby empowering them to take pride in who they are -- embracing their individuality and uplifting one another. The children will learn to build their confidence and inner beauty through this program. They will be working on speaking kindly to themselves and others, through nurturing their mindsets, helping them to thrive while living a healthier and positive lifestyle, and embracing this affirmation, ‘Aapji Gdo Mshkogaabwim – you are strong, you are beautiful’ throughout the six weeks.”

Deanna went on to share her sentiments at the program’s introduction on April 21:

“I am thrilled to collaborate with Raven Hammond, Student Mental Wellness Specialist, on this Confidence Building program, who helped me develop my thoughts and ideas towards this program. Raven and I first sat down together to discuss how I envisioned this program to be developed – initially structured into a once-per-week schedule for 6 weeks, for children ages 6-12 who wished to sign up. But after meeting with school representatives to discuss offering this as an after-school program and providing detailed information about what the program would entail and the proposed schedule, it was decided that the program would evolve into becoming part of Biidaaban’s curriculum. The initial vision has now blossomed into weekly sessions for all students from the early learning classes to grade 8. By empowering students with essential tools, nurturing, and workbooks [provided resource], students can focus on building their self-confidence and motivation, improving themselves and their peers both within the school as well as outside of the classroom. I’m grateful to be part of this initiative to create a sense of pride and self-empowerment in our children,” expressed Deanna passionately.



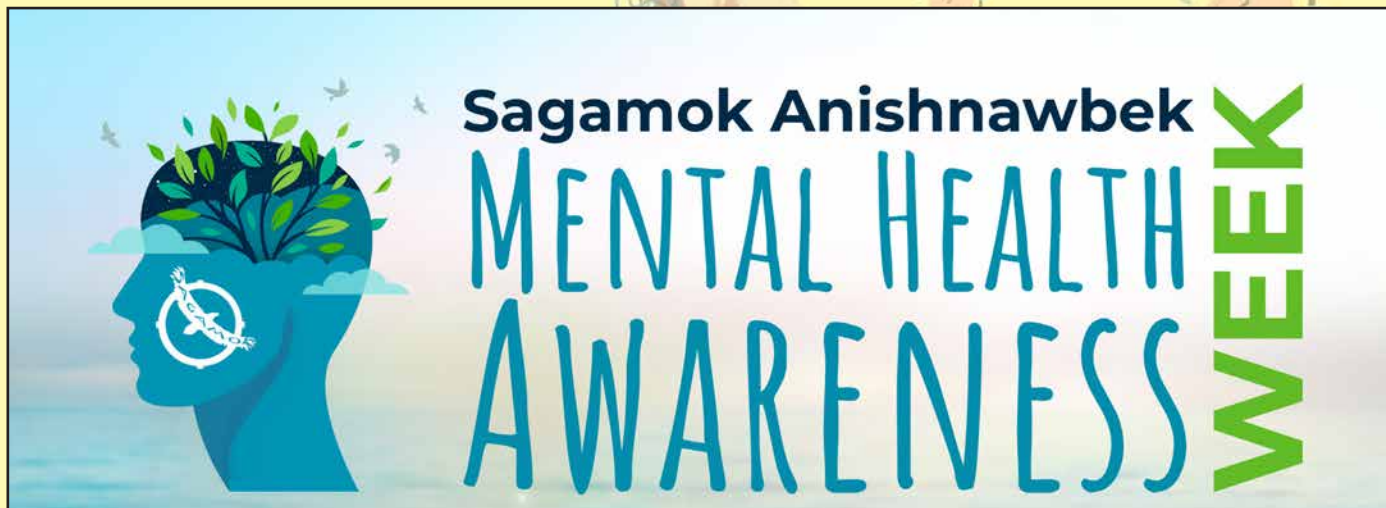
The program was offered Tuesday through Thursday during the morning instruction blocks, with Deanna and Raven visiting classrooms together to provide guided instruction and support to each class. A key component was actively listening to students' responses during discussions, as well as activities focused on building self-confidence. Deanna provided the following summary about her observations and general feelings about the program's success:

"Over the six weeks, it was truly inspiring to engage with the students, equipping them with valuable tools to enhance their confidence and unlock their full potential, and having Raven as a mentor and having her help make this experience incredibly empowering and to help me learn more within my role as the Children's Wellness Worker. I look forward to working together more with Raven in the future, creating programming for the children."

Youth Mental Wellness Specialist, Raven Hammond, offered, "The confidence-building program has been well received. The students engaged in thoughtful discussions on building their self-esteem. Some of the activities included drawing and games that promoted wellness."

A Biidaaban-wide Pizza Party was provided by the Child and Family Services division of the Child & Family Advocacy Unit (CFAU) on May 22 to celebrate the success and conclusion of the six-week program. Miigwech to everyone who was involved in creating this empowerment program and in making it available to help students build their confidence, recognize their unique gifts and abilities as individuals, and provide them with the tools to inspire themselves and their peers towards reaching their full potential.





This year's Mental Health Awareness Week took place from May 4-9. Hosted by Sagamok's Community Wellness Department, with strong collaboration from other Departments as well as community partners, the week was full of meaningful events, engaging activities, and open conversations designed to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and support the well-being of the Sagamok community.

The week kicked off with an **Opening Ceremony** on Monday morning, followed by an **Information Fair and BBQ** in the late afternoon/early evening. On Tuesday, May 5, the Community Walk and Dinner for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People took place as a pilgrimage from the MEC down to the Little Lake and back.

For the remainder of the week, community members were invited to participate in a number of programs, including:

- Beading and Bannock
- Youth Floral Painting Workshop
- Children's Mindfulness and Gratitude Activities
- Elders Music Bingo at the EEL
- Focal Point Artistry Painting Class

Monday's Information Fair and BBQ was particularly impactful as part of MHA Week 2026. The thoughtful timing of the event, 2:00-5:30pm, ensured a strong turnout as some folks came for late lunch and others were part of the after school, early dinner rush. Regardless of what meal they were satisfying with the delicious spread of BBQ classics, everyone had access to the same important resources.

Representatives from Sagamok's on-site mental health and addictions services were of course on site, including the new Youth Wellness Hub (YWHO), Peer Support Workers, Education's Student Mental Wellness Program, and the MINO Clinic. We were also fortunate to have staff and volunteers from a number of external organizations join this year's Information Fair, including some first-time visitors to Sagamok.



Edie Fairburn, Guidance and Career Coach and Raven Hammond, Student Mental Wellness Specialist, representing Sagamok



Valerie Ross and Lauren Abotosaway representing Indigenous Health Services, part of Health Sciences North.



Tash Toulouse representing Chiefs of Ontario NIHB Navigators



Terri Sharpe, Darla Jones, and Cheryl Fairbairn representing Maamwesying's HART Hub.



Michelle Steinke, Bridgette Douglas, and Dwayne Douglas representing Northern Therapy Practice



Kaitlyn Jones and Darlene McNaughton from Sagamok's Youth Wellness Hubs of Ontario



On the 9th of May, Mental Health Week was wrapped up at the Multi-Education Centre (MEC). Hosted in collaboration with the Community Wellness Department, as well as the Family and Community Support Services Department, community members were invited to a square dance and dinner to celebrate the week's end.

The event was met with heavy rain, which slowed its start. However, those who came found plenty to enjoy. The evening kicked off with music from Mike and Brian Larocque, who played Billy Ray Cyrus's "Achy Breaky Heart." People clapped along as the music began. With the smaller crowd, people were timid to start, but things picked up after Fredrick Toulouse took the microphone. He said, "We are all here to enjoy ourselves, and it's important to remember to have fun." After that, everyone felt encouraged to dance. Providing encouragement and even jumping in the middle of the dance floor a few times to energize the attendees, Fredrick made a great emcee!

When people arrived at the MEC, they found a table full of accessories and items to choose from. There were notepads promoting mental health messages like "Strong, Smart and Fearless" and "Yes, you can do it," as well as lanyards that read "Talk about it." Other items included rubber wristbands, pens, buttons, and rubber ducks, all with similar positive quotes. The green rubber ducks were especially popular with the kids, showing up on tables, stair steps and random locations throughout the evening. Many were in circulation, and you could hear the ducks "squeak" in the distance throughout the MEC periodically.

Members, guests and staff all wore country-themed outfits for the occasion. Present was a wall decorated with "wood" wallpaper and "Yeehaw Let's Party" banners, which stood next to the stage so that participants could take photos with a country backdrop. Many families took advantage of the backdrop and snapped lots of fun photos!

The evening was lively, with kids running around and playing with the trinkets and accessories. Staff and guests enjoyed the music and spent time chatting. With roughly 20 community members in attendance, a community post was put out to remind others about the event. Just in time, many more community members seemed to pour in right around the time of catering. Which, I am sure, was a relief for staff, as quite a bit of food had been prepared. Miigwech to Paula Swift for the suggestion to make a reminder post—we were able to remind many community members and increase participation. For those who waited and recently joined during the rush after the post, a variety of food was offered, including salads,

potatoes, and bread. There was also a range of drinks, including coffee, soda, and water. Many were eager to eat a wide selection of desserts, such as blueberry pie and cupcakes.

Later in the evening, names were drawn for prizes. Some of the winners included Kaitlyn Jones, Amanda Hardisty, Scott Toulouse, Isabella Abitong, Jaylin Jones, and Tristen Bennett. Despite the rain, it was clear from those who took the time to stop by that the event fulfilled its purpose: to have a fun time and relieve stress. It's important to take time away from mental strain and create spaces where community members can rest, focus on their mental health, and connect with each other in positive ways. Miigwech to all those who stopped by and took the time to help the community take a much-needed break during Mental Health Week.



# Porcupine Harvest



On May 28th, the New Community Hall came alive with the buzz of sharing knowledge at a porcupine harvest event. It was a unique opportunity for community members to learn about the traditional uses of gok (porcupine) quills. The event covered everything from learning about the animal to actually plucking the quills. Participants got a rare look at each step of the harvesting process, including collecting, sorting, washing, and drying. Although the work at the harvest was hard, it was rewarding as it allowed community members to create culturally significant and beautiful art.

The event began with everyone gathering around the porcupine, sharing lighthearted conversation about its shape and size, what its life might have been like, and making jokes about what it would taste like. Generally 2 to 3 feet long, the Porcupine can weigh up to 40



pounds. Typically, with light brown hair, the porcupine can appear blonde because of its densely packed quills, and the Porcupine present at the event matched this description closely.

People took turns pulling out hair and quills, then sorting them into different boxes. Amy Southwind showed the different types of quills, including underbelly hairs, hardened quills, and immature ones. At first glance, it seems like porcupine fur and quills are fairly uniform, but when harvesting, you need to be mindful, as some quills are soft and not fully developed, so you need to be careful about what you pick. Quills can't be pulled randomly; each quill needs to be carefully selected based on size and thickness.

At some point in the evening, a box got knocked over, spilling all the collected quills. While standing in the kitchen of the new community hall, a sudden burst of laughter could be heard from outside. Everyone joked about the real person responsible for knocking over the box, while no one claimed they did it—they made jokes and teased each other.



Theodore Toulouse stepped up right away to start picking up the quills before they got lost. Luckily, there was no wind.

Later, Myna Toulouse took the quills into the kitchen to prepare them and explained how to choose the right quills before washing them. She pointed out that porcupine quills have different amounts of oil. Myna picked out a quill with an orange center and said it was not ready when it was plucked because it contained too much oil. When it was compared to other quills, it was easy to see the difference between a “dry” quill and an oily one. The dry quills were lighter and closer to white. Myna explained that quills vary greatly depending on oil content, as they “are like tiny fish scales”. Moisture makes them too soft, while dry quills become stiffer. After washing the quills with water and soap, they are placed on a tray or rack with tongs and spread out to dry. Although drying times vary, quills often take several days to dry before they are ready for use. Once they are dry, the quills are sorted, and fabric dye is used to colour them, often in different groupings. This way, several colours can be used in one crafted piece.

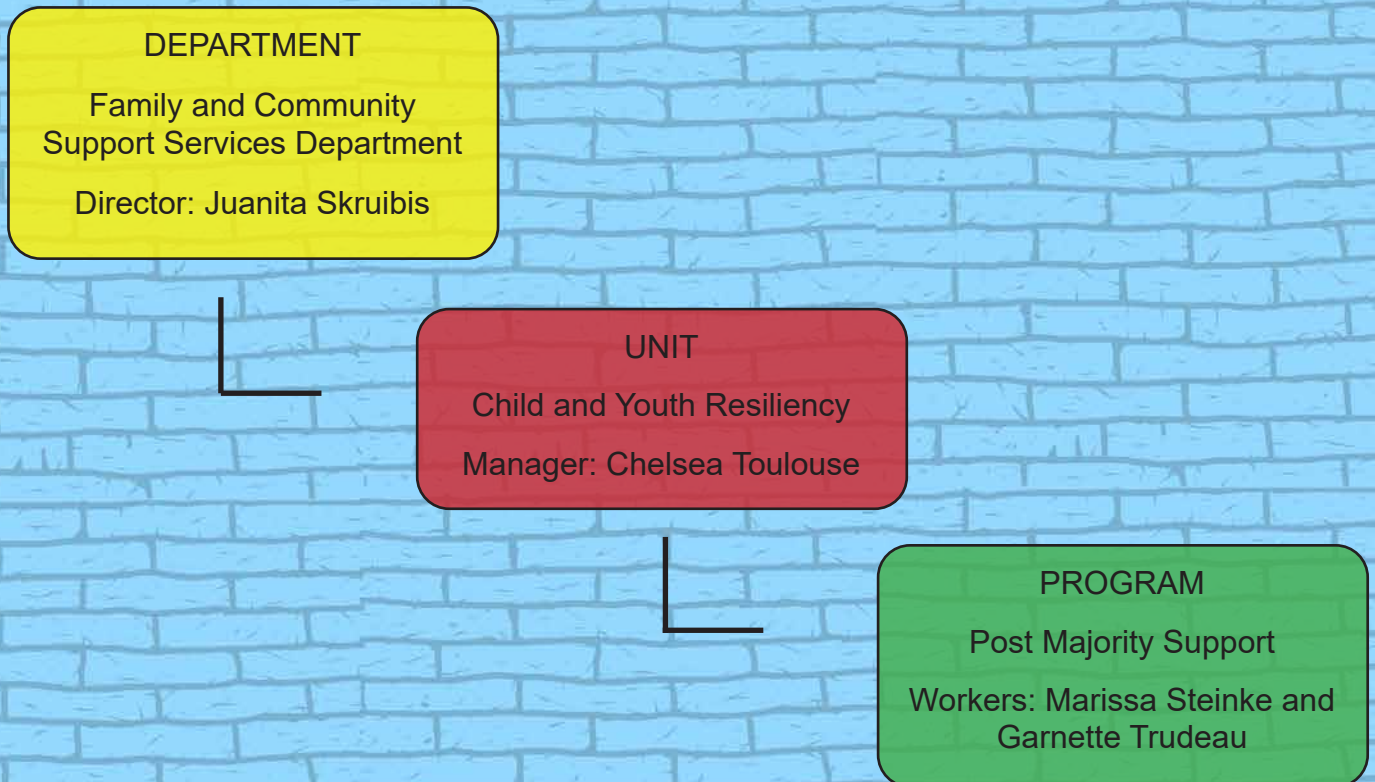
Before the event finished, Myna took out a bag of tools, loose materials, and medallions. Showing some of the designs made with quills, she explained that the bases of these medallions were made of birch bark. Then she gave me a quick demonstration, explaining that after collecting strips of birch bark, they are cut into different shapes. For a medallion, a circle is cut. Then, using a hole punch, holes are made all around the bark. With the dried quills, you weave and shape different patterns into the birch. With practice, very intricate and ornate designs can be achieved with little material. It was wonderful to see the many different types and styles of medallions Myna had. From patterns depicting a silhouetted man raising his fist, to flowers, to abstract patterns, the range of possible patterns and designs was a treat to see.

By the end of the evening, everyone left feeling they had learned something valuable. Many people said the practice is not as common as they would like, so they were glad to take part in learning how to collect, sort, and wash quills. This introductory session was multi-dimensional, showcasing not just the creation of new beautiful art but also for the preservation of traditional knowledge. Miigwech to everyone who participated. A special thank you to Theodore Toulouse for picking up the quills when they were knocked over during the event! And to Myna Toulouse for the demonstration!



# POST MAJORITY UPDATE

Did you know that Sagamok has a program dedicated to supporting Sagamok youth transitioning out of care? It's called the Post Majority Support Program, and here's how it is structured in the organization:



Post Majority Support was launched in 2022/2023 and became operational in 2023/2024. The program's main objective is to assist Sagamok youth, ages 18 to 26, as they transition out of care, and from teens to adults, ensuring they have the necessary supports in place for a healthy transition. The program serves clients both on and off reserve, with the goal of helping youth to build independence.

This support can look like:

- Obtaining ID, status card, health card, SIN, or passports
- Navigating post-secondary education options, applications, and services
- Setting up banking services, cell phone contracts, and auto-payments to help build credit
- Attaining pre-employment certifications, for example, First Aid
- Covering the costs for off-reserve youth to attend cultural programs and events

One of the program's proudest achievements has been helping clients experiencing homelessness secure safe housing and begin building a landlord-tenant relationship. And the support isn't always one-directional: Post Majority clients have given back to the community through service, including helping to prepare the grounds at Saswin and volunteering at the Greenhouse during Earth Day.

Post Majority Support collaborates with staff from the Child and Family Advocacy Unit to identify children who will age out of care up to 2 years in advance. If a Youth Voluntary Service Agreement is put in place, Marissa and Garnette can start working with youth as early as 16 or 17 years old. Naturally, some youth are reluctant to accept support; however, Marissa and Garnette continue their outreach to ensure youth understand what is available to them. "We keep checking in with them," Garnette shared. "We want them to know we'll be here when they're ready."

The Post Majority Support Program is another example of where Sagamok's cross-departmental collaboration shines. Marissa and Garnette don't need to be the experts in every area that a youth may need support. Instead, they are experts in the programs and services available both at Sagamok and through community partners. This allows them to point youth in the right direction, and stay connected through the process, walking with youth as they navigate these services.

In the next several years, we expect to see more demand for Post Majority Support, because more youth are aging in to the program than are aging out, and the current client base is younger, i.e. more 18 to 21 year olds than 22 to 26 year olds. The team is also working on improvements to the program, including developing service plans with each client to help them work towards long-term goals. This work has already started, even with youth who have not yet aged into the program. Connecting with 16 and 17 year olds preparing to leave care will allow the Post Majority team to proactively assess needs and strengths, identify gaps, and offer effective support and resources.

If you have any questions about the Post Majority Support Program, we encourage you to connect directly with the Child & Youth Resiliency Team:

Chelsea Toulouse, Child & Youth Resiliency Manager

[Toulouse\\_chelsea@sagamok.ca](mailto:Toulouse_chelsea@sagamok.ca)

705-863-0754

Marissa Steinke, Post Majority Support Worker

[Steinke\\_marissa@sagamok.ca](mailto:Steinke_marissa@sagamok.ca)

705-863-1123

Garnette Trudeau, Post Majority Support Worker

[Trudeau\\_garnette@sagamok.ca](mailto:Trudeau_garnette@sagamok.ca)

705-863-2761

# TRADES FAIR & HYDRO ONE / WAASMOOWIN JOB FAIR

What is the biggest challenge to getting a job? Is it where you live, experience, or education? Before all of that, hearing about the opportunity comes first. After all, how can one get ready for a specific job or field without first knowing the job exists? This Spring, on May 21, Sagamok Community Members had a chance to learn about many job opportunities by talking directly with trades organizations.

Held in the Multi-Education Centre, the Trades fair welcomed people with tables and booths as they entered, each set up to encourage community members to ask questions. After an opening prayer by Margaret Toulouse and an introduction by Lifelong Learning Centre Manager, Claudette Jones, the evening began, and participants started to explore. You could see Sagamok youth moving quickly between booths as they hurried to get papers signed. Each booth had a representative ready to sign, and with every signature, the chance of winning a prize grew. Although the youth may have been encouraged to visit the Trades Fair to collect signatures, the representatives also made sure to share helpful information along the way. Many organizations were there:

- \* Cambrian College, Sault College, and Sagamok's Lifelong Learning Centre (Education).
- \* GIP Interpaving, Barclay, and Z'Gamok (Construction).
- \* Glencore, Thiess, KGHM, Vale, and Magna (Mining).
- \* UBC Local 2486 and LIUNA Local 493.



No matter what stage members were in regarding their careers, the event offered something for everyone. Instead of learning through word of mouth, general research, or bits of information picked up here and there, being able to talk directly with representatives provided participants the chance to learn and ask experts follow-up questions. Meeting people and networking was a very valuable part of the event. For example, Eric Giroux of the International Union of Operating Engineers accepted a



resume on the spot from someone who was brave enough to ask about future job opportunities for themselves and their friends. Meeting potential employers in a relaxed setting was helpful because it lets attendees be themselves, make real connections, and ask questions right away about whether the job or company was a good fit for them.

On the 26th, community members had another chance to learn about jobs, specifically workplace safety. Hosted by our partners at Hydro One, the event took place at the Lifelong Learning Centre, where people could talk with various organizations and their representatives. Whether you had questions about safety, daily work life, or school, someone was there to help and give quick answers.

Trade Fair exhibitors included:

- \* Waasmoowin,
- \* Valard Construction,
- \* Canadian Unions of Skilled Workers,
- \* NATT Safety Services,
- \* Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario,
- \* Labourers' International Union of North America (L.I.U.N.A),
- \* PC's Wild Rides
- \* The Canadian Union of Skilled Workers

For anyone who has attended similar events, familiar faces like Eric Giroux were there. He often represents the International Union of Operating Engineers at Job Fairs and is always happy to start conversations about careers and Job Safety. New people, like Carissa Mills from NATT Safety, were excited to introduce themselves and share what NATT Safety Services offers. The event was welcoming and full of people eager to learn and teach. It gave everyone a chance to stop by, talk about possible careers, explore current job options, or ask about safety. Opportunities at events like these are valuable and should be used. Miigwech to everyone who took part, hosted booths, and stopped by!



# Safety Day

Safety is a serious topic, but who says that it can't be enjoyable? At the New Community Hall, Matheson and Barclay Constructions held a workplace safety event in partnership with Sagamok's Planning and Infrastructure Department for National Safety Week 2026. On May 5th, subcontractors, suppliers, and clients gathered to attend lectures delivered by the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA), presenting a great opportunity to discuss the importance of safety and safe workplaces.

In the evening, Holly Baril from the IHSA gave a lively presentation. Holly's charisma and professionalism stood out as she mixed important facts with friendly conversation. Her approach sparked a lot of engaging discourse around health and safety. She explained that health and safety at work is more than just ticking a box. It's really about building a culture where safety is part of everyday life. Holly shared positive stories, noting she has been "impressed by the level of safety that is now being implemented" in many workplaces. The event stayed lighthearted, with Holly asking questions like "Do you know what correct procedures are?" and getting quick yeses. When she asked one person if he actually followed the procedures, he joked, "But that isn't the question," which made everyone laugh.





The event provided an open and supportive environment for discussing serious safety topics while allowing for lighthearted moments. Encouraging open dialogue on subjects that often seem routine helps these conversations happen more organically and, in turn, foster safer workplaces. Safety Day included demonstrations, educational sessions, and opportunities to connect with industry peers. Thank you to Holly, Matheson Constructors, Barclay Constructors Limited, and Sagamoks Planning and Infrastructure Department.

Miigwech to all the participants for contributing to the ongoing development of a positive and safe work culture!



## *From Healing to Helping: We Celebrate a Milestone in Charlene Sterling-Owl's Journey*

On May 27, Sagamok's Charlene Sterling-Owl graduated from First Nations Technical Institute's (FNTI) Mental Health and Addictions Program. She attended the ceremony in North Bay at Canadore College, with her Dad, Sister, and oldest Grandchild by her side. Those weren't the only family members Charlene had with her for this important day. "My daughter was with me," shared Charlene, "I wore my necklace with her picture on it."

Charlene's daughter, Charisse, was lost to an overdose. For a long time, Charlene coped by staying busy. "I just kept going and going and going," she shared. Eventually, she decided it was time to focus on her own growth and education. She enrolled in the Mental Health and Addictions program through FNTI, completing her studies at home while continuing to raise her oldest grandchild.

The program requires dedication and structure. Students complete two courses each month. The first week focuses on foundational learning, the second week includes live online classes, the third week is dedicated to assignments, and the fourth week allows students to wrap up their work before beginning the next course. "You really have to structure yourself," Charlene shared.

Despite facing many challenges over the two-year program and finding plenty of reasons to quit, Charlene persevered. The evening before graduation, FNTI hosted a special reception where students met faculty members, shared a meal, and celebrated their accomplishments. During the event, Charlene received the Resiliency and Achievement in Indigenous Education Award.

Reflecting on what she has learned, Charlene had this to say: "I always thought my job as a parent was to fix things," she reflects. "I learned that I couldn't fix [Charisse], but I now have a better understanding of why addiction occurs, the trauma underneath it, and the impacts it has on the brain."

Today, Charlene continues to honour her daughter's memory through acts of kindness and community events. Every April, around her daughter's birthday, she organizes activities like free swims or family bowling, that bring families together. Each November, around the anniversary of her daughter's passing and during Aboriginal Addictions Awareness Week, Charlene organizes another community initiative. Last year, volunteers prepared and delivered a hot meal and candy bags filled with her daughter's favourite treats to Elders and members of the community who are struggling.

Looking ahead, Charlene plans to continue her education by enrolling in the Social Service Worker fast-track diploma program beginning in January. She expects to complete the program by the end of 2027. "I want to be able to advocate for people who don't have support systems," she shared. "Sometimes families need to step back, and people need someone in their corner."

In closing, Charlene had this to say: "We all live our own lives. Accomplishing something, especially in memory of someone you love, makes it all worth it. We are our own change. Keep pushing forward."



Charlene was quoted in a Facebook post by FNTI on June 6:

### FNTI Alumni Spotlight - In celebration of Indigenous History Month!

*“My educational journey with FNTI has been amazing. My journey was a new learning experience and distance education allowed me to remain at home within my community, and to continue raising my oldest grandchild, whom we lost her mother through an overdose. Our journey of grief and loss has been a rollercoaster, and my heart shifted in careers to want to support other people in their lives that may be struggling.*

*The Mental Health and Addictions program has educated me in many aspects of Mental Health and Addictions, and I now have a better understanding of its effects. I encountered trials along the way, however, FNTI as a whole from when I applied to the MHA program, through to my graduation day, were so amazing.*

*The support and encouragement along the way from each person who was part of this journey is what kept me grounded and going, allowing me to believe in myself that I can do it! The most rewarding piece of my education journey is receiving the Resilience and Achievement Award in Indigenous Education. My education journey will continue. I have applied for another program and continue to encourage others to apply with FNTI and start their educational journeys!”*



*Charlene receiving the Resilience and Achievement Award in Indigenous Education during a dinner held by FNTI the night before graduation*

*FNTI Student Support, Chuck (right), and Cultural Support, Kara (left), who were with Charlene every step of the way during the 2-year MHA program.*



# BE BEAR WISE

Bear sightings are on the rise as they search for food, especially blueberries. Most bears are simply traveling to those areas and may cross yards and roadways along the way. To prevent a bear from making a pit stop at your house, it's best to **keep garbage and recycling properly secured** in a bear-proof container or stored inside your house, garage, or shed.

## If You Encounter A Bear...

### **CALL 911 OR YOUR LOCAL POLICE**

If the bear poses an **immediate threat to personal safety** and exhibits threatening or aggressive behaviour.

### **CALL THE BEAR WISE REPORTING LINE**

For all non-emergency bear sightings.  
1-866-514-2327 or TTY 705-945-7641

More information at [www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com](http://www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com)

## **i** what is an e-bike?

A **Surron** (e-bike) is a vehicle that has:

- To be an e-bike, the vehicle must have functional pedals, a max 500W motor, a top speed of 32 km/h, and a max weight of 120 kg.
- They are treated as motor vehicles (restricted-use motorcycles), requiring registration, insurance, and a license to operate on public roads, otherwise they are limited to private property.
- To be street legal, a Sur-Ron must be registered and plated as a Limited Speed Motorcycle (moped/motorcycle), requiring a Class M license.
- A power-assisted bicycle, also called an electric bicycle or e-bike, is a bicycle with an electric motor.

## **i** rules & regulations

**To operate an e-bike under the terms you must:**

- Be at least 16 years old
- Wear an approved bicycle or motorcycle helmet

**You are not permitted to:**

- Ride on municipal roads, sidewalks, bike paths, bike trails or bike lanes where e-bikes are prohibited

Similar to bicycles, **all Highway Traffic Act rules of the road apply** when riding e-bikes. Penalties will also apply to violations of the pilot regulation (fine of \$250 to \$2,500).



**Sagamok Justice Program**

705-865-1884

610 Sagamok Rd, Unit #2

[www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com](http://www.SagamokAnishnawbek.com)



<https://www.ontario.ca/page/riding-e-bike>

# TALENT SHOW



Biidaaban students had the chance to showcase their talents at this year's talent and art show. On May 26, starting at 1 p.m., students from several grades took to the stage to demonstrate a wide range of interests and abilities. From Early Learning through grade 8, students performed songs, dances, and played instruments for an enthusiastic audience of their peers, as well as parents, grandparents, and staff!

As you entered the school from the stinging sun outside, into the dimly lit gymnasium, you couldn't help but be greeted with nostalgia. The sound of the shuffling chairs and the hushed murmurs of many conversations echoed around the room. The space was filled with anticipation. The event began with rehearsals; as the gym filled up, students stood on stage, tuning guitars and practicing rhythms. Some enjoyed playing familiar tunes, while others played repeating melodies as an inside joke that made their friends laugh. Even though performing can be nerve-wracking, most students seemed calm and confident (or at least they did a good job hiding their nervousness)!

The practicing performers consisted of a singer, two guitarists, a drummer, and a teacher. Roughly 30 minutes after the doors for the event opened, the audience started to pour in. People spoke amongst themselves as they entered—students who would perform later, sat in front of the audience to watch the first acts. Sitting on the floor near the stage, they waited patiently for their turn and enjoyed the show.

After teachers and staff finished setting up the equipment and loading all the songs from YouTube as backing tracks for the students, the first performance featured the Early Learner classes, who danced to the nursery rhyme "Follow the Rainbow." They waved strips of red, blue, and different coloured cloths in time with the music. Some of the little ones on stage were very focused and steadfast in concentrating, while others seemed to dance to their own song, prompting laughs from many of the parents. The following group from the same grade danced to "Axel F" by Crazy Frog. Wearing Mickey Mouse hats, they sang and danced in unison. Some shy, and some eager to be at the center stage, you could see such a distinct portrait of all their personalities in such a small performance.



As the afternoon developed and the event continued, the show featured a wide range of student performances. From Alicia Keys and Benson Boone to The Weeknd, Baha Men, and The Lion King; there was plenty of musical variety. Some students played guitar by themselves, while others performed as whole classes using boom whackers—hollow plastic tubes that make different pitches when struck. A few students also tried non-musical performances such as puppetry and stand-up comedy.

Taking a moment to reflect on the twelfth act, the students telling jokes on stage, I noticed an interesting twist. In a non-mean-spirited way, the audience of students in the front row began to force laughs as the performers told their jokes. Each punchline sparked a wave of exaggerated laughter, which soon turned into real grins on the performers' faces. You could see the genuine smile on each performer's face; each time the audience would fake laugh, and in turn make the performers laugh, too. An interesting dynamic began: the audience and performers fed off each other's energy, blurring the line between stage and seats. This spontaneous back-and-forth made the act feel like a shared inside joke that everyone in the room got to see. The students on stage would share their material, and the audience would organically join in, creating a back-and-forth between the performance and the audience that highlighted the whole act.

As the show closed, the audience and the parents were reminded why moments like this matter for everyone. They give students a chance to express themselves, be creative, and learn new skills while having fun. For parents, the talent show gives them a chance to support their children's creativity and emotions while watching them perform... Biidaaban's talent show highlighted the best aspects of what a variety show is all about—Miigwech to everyone who came out and to all the students for their great performances!

# NIIGAANIIN

## BBQ



On May 11, community members gathered at the Niigaanin office, as they were offered free meals provided by the department. While often known for being a direct service delivery partner for Ontario Works, ODSP and Service Ontario, the team put together a great evening and continued their legacy of assistance; this time by providing free meals for staff and community members.

On the back porch sat a grill, where members of the Niigaanin team would intermittently swap in and out. Filled with the smell of fresh burgers and sausages, the team did an excellent job at maintaining a great flow of meals as the community and staff rushed in for their turn. Condiments, beverages and toppings were laid out across a table in the center of the office, open for everyone to take. The BBQ provided a great environment for both staff and community to come together and connect.



However, events like these are just a treat, as Niigaanins' main focus is providing Sag-amok with essential social services. Services Manager Robyn Recollet took some time to highlight the roles the team provides: as a service delivery partner, they can connect members directly to important programs, assist with their setup, or offer crucial resources. From vision care to helping members get a drug benefits card, Niigaanin helps however they can. Even offering emergency assistance for unexpected situations, such as a fridge failing or a furnace breaking down.

With the community BBQ, Niigaanin highlighted their broader goal of bringing the community together and providing practical support, big or small. Miigwech to their team and their continued efforts to support and improve the community!



# From Local Beginnings to National Recognition: Z'gamok Receives Indigenous Community Business Award



Written By Ashlyn Rowland and originally published by Z'GAMOK ENTERPRISES INC.

What began as a small community-driven venture has grown into a nationally recognized Indigenous enterprise. This month, Z'gamok Enterprises Inc. (Z'gamok) was honoured on a national stage, receiving the Indigenous Community Business Award at the Indigenous Prosperity Gala in Gatineau, Quebec - a recognition of Z'gamok's commitment to economic growth, community wellbeing, and creating opportunities for future generations.

From May 5–7, representatives from Z'gamok Enterprises Inc (Z'gamok) attended the Indigenous Prosperity Forum hosted by the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association (NACCA) at Lac-Leamy in Gatineau, Quebec. This year's forum theme, "SOAR," celebrated thriving Indigenous businesses and the importance of equitable access to capital, care, and economic opportunity for Indigenous communities across Canada.

Representing Z'gamok at the forum and Indigenous Prosperity Gala were Paul Eshkakogan (President), Will Sayers (CEO), and Ashlyn Rowland (Communications & Marketing Manager), alongside members of Sagamok Anishnawbek Chief and Council who attended in support of Z'gamok. During the Indigenous Prosperity Gala, Z'gamok was honoured with the Indigenous Community Business Award.

The award recognizes a community-owned enterprise that builds sustainable prosperity for its Nation through strong business performance, effective governance, and a deep commitment to Indigenous wealth creation and community values.

Over the years, Z'gamok has grown from a small janitorial contract into a major employer operating across the construction mining, and aggregates sectors. Guided by Anishinaabe values, Z'gamok continues to focus on creating long-term employment opportunities for community members, investing in local initiatives, and supporting economic growth within the community.

During Z'gamok's award acceptance speech, CEO Will Sayers acknowledged the many people who contributed to Z'gamok's success, including Dawn Madahbee-Leach from Waubetek, who nominated the organization for the award. Included in the acceptance speech was a chi-miigwetch to Sagamok community members, Z'gamok staff and management, privately owned businesses from Sagamok, Z'gamok's clients, Sagamok Chief and Council and the Board of Directors for their continued leadership and support.

Will proudly boasted "It was their vision, their strength - and this cannot be understated - their courage that brought us here today, this award belongs to you"

Will also reflected on what success means for Z'gamok in a video interview moving forward.

"Success means creating lasting economic opportunities for future generations, supporting our employees to grow in their careers, and ensuring the benefits of our workflow back into the community." - Will Sayers

Receiving this national recognition highlights the continued growth and impact of Z'gamok and reflects the strength, resilience, and vision of the Sagamok community.

## Remember to use **free curbside collection** on **Thursdays!**

Allowance of up to 45lb per bag.

Please have bags to the curb by 7:00am.



The Landfill is for Sagamok homes exclusively, and only intended for bulk waste such as metals, furniture, electronics wood waste, and tires.

## Biidaaban Attends MSS Powwow



On June 4, 2026, teachers and students from the after-school Powwow Group at Biidaaban were bused to Manitoulin Secondary School (MSS) in M'Chigeeng. The bus arrived, and student dancers began preparing, donning their regalia for the Grand Entry at 11 a.m. The Powwow was led by Rachel Goodfellow, an MSS staff member. Neighbouring schools and community members were welcomed to attend, and the event was supported by a substantial turnout!

Biidaaban Grade 4/5 Teachers, Jason and Pamela Solomon, along with EA Jennifer MacGregor, set up a sunshade for their students; a welcome relief from the scorching sun shining brightly upon the Powwow grounds. As dancers, drummers, students, teachers, and onlookers poured onto the field behind MSS, the excitement began building momentum, matching the rising beat and intensity of the drummers' warm-up songs.



The Powwow grounds occupied the field behind the school and were surrounded by forest. Area schools and visitors arrived in clusters and gathered around the circle. Dignitaries, police services, and dancers from various communities throughout the region set up around the perimeter of the circle, wherever comfortable. Generations – from babes in arms to Grandparents -- were present to participate in and enjoy the Powwow! As introductions and welcome greetings were made, dancers were invited to line up in the customary order: assembling oldest to youngest (so younger ones learn from the older/experienced

ones), beginning with the men/boys and followed by the women/girls, starting with traditional dress dancers, followed up by jingle, grass, and fancy shawl dancers. Dancers were invited to enter through the Eastern Door of the arena, and as they assembled there, their excitement and nervous jitters grew in anticipation of their performance. The drums beat rhythmically in the background, echoing off the nearby forest; their deliberate sound creating a focused and inviting space that draws everyone in. Faces around the cordoned circle revealed smiles, and eyes wide and alight with intrigue, amazement, and wonder at the myriad colours, the jingles, and the swirling, vibrantly coloured cloth and ribbons of the regalia dancing freely around the circle.



The event, a living history, unfolded before us -- beautiful, honourable, traditional -- flooding all of the senses simultaneously.

Head veteran, Howard Debassige, was the Flag Bearer of the M'Chigeeng First Nation eagle staff; Taylor from Aundeck Omni Kaning (AOK) was the Emcee for the Powwow, and Sunset was the Arena Director. The Powwow opened with a warm welcome to all in attendance and



a land acknowledgment of the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples as the stewards who have protected this land since time immemorial. Opening words were shared by MSS Principal, David Wiwchar. Jean Debassige, a retired MSS teacher and current school Trustee, offered the opening prayer in Anishinaabemowin. Several drum groups performed during the powwow, and Biidaaban's Mr. Jason Solomon and student Cruz participated with their group, Black Bull Moose, in the opening honour song. Once the opening procession was complete, guests entered the circle when the time was right for them, to share in the togetherness and gifts of the Creator in the outdoor arena – the sun, the sky, the grass, the trees, the birds, the water behind us. Miigwech, miigwech, miigwech, we acknowledged with mind, body and spirit united. The drums, the songs, the dances, the enjoyment continued. Spot dances were held with random winners receiving gift cards and prizes, and the festivities carried on into the afternoon.

Pamela and Jason Solomon have been offering an after-school Powwow Club for several years. Beginning in January, Pamela said, “It is about offering a fun, safe space for students to come out and have fun dancing” while absorbing whatever they take in about Powwow traditions, protocol, etc. “Everyone is welcome even if you’re not a dancer,” Pamela emphasized, adding “Many sit and just observe, and eventually students join when comfortable.” She went on to explain how her and Jason’s two oldest daughters, Acadia (woodland and jingle dress dancer) and Nyssa (fancy shawl dancer), have been coming out to the after-school program to share the jingle dress teachings passed on to them by their grandmother, Eleanor Pine Baa. The group learns a variety of dances, including feather pickup, two-step, round dance, and more. Pamela said that they approached MSS about bringing the Biidaaban dancers to their Powwow, and the response was ‘the more the merrier.’

Their group of 40+ dancers also attended the Espanola High School Spring Powwow in May and will perform at the upcoming Biidaaban Powwow on June 19. The after-school group has grown over the years, seeing more and more younger dancers/participants coming out! Pamela reminds students that they can join at anytime. Both she and Jason, along with their family, enjoy helping students to learn about and have fun taking part in this ancestral practice. Miigwech to them for their dedication, for sharing knowledge about Powwow dancing and protocol, and for creating a fun, safe space for students to engage with and learn more about this timeless tradition. The Biidaaban student dancers provided a wonderful addition to the Powwows they participated in, danced beautifully, and conducted themselves respectfully on each occasion. They represented Sagamok and Biidaaban Kinooaagegamik reverently in their beautifully designed regalia, presenting their individuality through their dance, as well as their school community’s cohesiveness by being aware of one another, supporting one another, and interacting together while dancing within the circle. The students’ attentiveness and respectful listening towards Mr. & Mrs. Solomon was exceptional, and they all thoroughly enjoyed the outing together with their classmates. Miigwech to the students for their commitment to the Powwow Group, for the learning students gained in this cultural setting, and for being positive ambassadors of Biidaaban.



# Biidaaban Junior Girls Basketball

## May 4, 2026 - Way to go, Eagles!!

Coach Mark Aizenberg, gave the following summary regarding the spring basketball season at Biidaaban:



“The junior basketball team did an incredible job at the Elliot Lake tournament! A huge congratulations to both our boys and girls teams for representing us with heart, determination, and sportsmanship. The boys played hard every game, showing grit and teamwork all the way through.

And a special shoutout to our girls team for bringing home the championship! It was a hard-fought battle against Our Lady of

Lourdes, and you showed true resilience and strength right to the final buzzer. We are so proud of all of you — your effort, teamwork, and dedication truly paid off. Way to go!”

Biidaaban’s Junior Girl’s Basketball team went on to compete in the 2026 Sacred Heart Royals Basketball Tournament on Thursday, May 7, 2026. The girls demonstrated dedication to the sport/team by consistently attending practice, showing determination during game time, and putting in a lot of hard work. They WON the tournament! Congratulations, Eagles!!

Top Row from left to right:

D. Ritchie, C. Southwind, L. Paibomsai

Middle Row from left to right:

O. Plume-Trudeau, (Coach) Laura Dam, P. Piercey, K. Chakasim

Bottom Row holding the banner:

K. Wells, R. Abitong

Photo supplied by Mark Aizenburg.

# Medicine Walk

On a brilliant, azure-blue sky day, Mr. Beamish's Ravens and Mr. Hannah's Outdoor Education class, along with Teacher Apprentice, Ms. Clairmont, participated in a hike at McLean's Mountain on Manitoulin Island. Situated between Little Current and Aundeck Omni Kaning (AOK), the site of this educational outing offered Espanola High School students an opportunity to go on a reflective journey. The journey began with glimpses of the shelves and rock cuts of the Precambrian shield, Whitefish River First Nation territory, and the famous swing bridge at Little Current while en route. Creator's classroom unit today, organized by student Daniel Morningstar, invited Wiikwemkoong's Sophie Pheasant to facilitate a medicine walk.

The experience began with Sophie engaging students in a discussion of the four directions of the medicine wheel, and where we were positioned accordingly. A large cloth medicine wheel was spread out on the ground, facing the correct direction in relation to the colours:

- White to the North (symbolic of the moon, winter, and elder stage of life);
- Yellow to the East (location of the sun rise, symbolic of new beginnings, childhood);
- Red to the South (symbolic of warmth, element of fire, summer and youth); and
- Black to the West (symbolic of the setting sun, the element of water, autumn and adulthood).

Through gentle stretching and focusing our attention, we brought ourselves and our minds into the space we were inhabiting and towards our purpose for being there. With arms stretched skyward, we pivoted first toward Mishomis (Grandfather) Sun and then to the ever-visible Nokoomis (Grandmother) Moon, offering gratitude and expressing our internal intentions for the medicine walk ahead. Sophie reminded everyone that even in the middle of the wild terrain, we can feel supported by Grandfather Sun and Grandmother Moon, always there to protect us with their comforting presence, and connect us to creation. The spring wind still held a chill as it rustled the golden grasses beneath our feet, and the aundeck (crows) squawked their presence, as they drifted sideways through the sky, haphazardly entering our sight, watching us with curious and deeply observant eyes.



With Sophie leading the expedition, students hiked the Skyline trail, offering spectacular panoramic vistas of Little Current, the La Cloche Mountain Range, and the North Channel of Lake Huron. The hike led everyone along the high, forested ridge of the mountain, with Sophie pointing out various plants and tree species along the way. Her knowledge was shared to help students identify the plants and trees used in traditional medicines, the places where they grow, the proper seasons to for harvest, and to learn about their healing benefits, which are still used today. Some of the plants included:

- Wild leeks (a source of nourishment tasting much like an onion) which grow near Maple trees and sprout from the earth in springtime;
- Trout lily (a speckled pattern on oval-fish shaped leaves that mimic a trout and have a small yellow star-flower in spring);
- Poplar buds with their notable aroma when crushed open;
- Red willow (used for pain relief and the main ingredient used in the pharmaceutical Aspirin);
- Aspen bark (used as sunscreen);
- Juniper berries/bushes (used for flavouring meats; tea remedy); and
- A few remaining cedars (medicine for healing, tea, cleansing) framed the view at the conclusion of the hike and the precipice of the trail.



Returning to the medicine wheel, participants were invited to choose from a selection of wooden beads to thread onto a leather strip. The beads were meant to symbolize the walk we had completed together, and each person was invited to share a couple of memorable moments or pieces of knowledge gained from the day. The circle of reflection allowed everyone to connect in a special way, understand each other a little bit more, and perhaps recognize something that had gone unnoticed but was brought to their attention through the joy it sparked in the speaker. Most expressed a great sense of freedom and connection to the universe experienced through the simple act of the gratitude prayer to the sun and moon at the very start of the hike. Daniel offered some words of gratitude and meaningful reflection to close the medicine walk in a good way. Everyone was invited to take a pinch of semaa (tobacco) using their left (heart) hand, to present to their favourite part of the hike and offer an intention there.

The following summary was submitted by Daniel Morningstar, giving his student perspective on his involvement with organizing and facilitating the outing:

“When Mr. Beamish first brought up the trip assignment, I was nervous. However, after a few days of brainstorming, Mr. Beamish and I came to a selection impasse and chose to reach out to Sophie Pheasant for a Medicine Walk. After a few weeks of planning and communicating among the three of us, we chose a date and time. Mr. Beamish added, “We’ll be there rain or shine.” His motivating words uplifted my spirit, and I was no longer nervous. After we selected a date and time, we had to plan transportation, so we asked Mr. Hannah’s outdoor education class to join us on the trip so that we could reserve a bus. Mr. Hannah agreed almost immediately! Mr. Hannah asked me to go to his class and explain what we will be doing on the trip to encourage attendance.

I found myself nervous again, however, I still went to his class and found that his class wasn’t full of strangers but people I’ve interacted with throughout my time at EHS. I explained to them what we were doing and they sounded excited when I left. Mr. Beamish and I finished forms and handed them out and went to pick up water bottles for the students. The day of the trip arrived, and we loaded up the bus and headed out to McLeans Mountain Lookout, where we met with Sophie and started introductions. Sophie took the lead and we went across the road atop the hill where she had set out her bundle and everything she would need for the day. We started with stretching and a prayer. Sophie then led us into the beginning of the bush and showed us Wild Leek; an onion. We picked some, and a few of the students tried taking a bite. It was fun and brought laughter. We then hiked up the trail and proceeded to acknowledge plants and medicines that were used for healing and miijim (food). The trail became a circle that led to a steep hill that we climbed and joked about together at the top.



We came to a lookout where we observed the lakes and the Reservations in sight. We then moved on, back to where we started, taking turns sharing one thing we were grateful for learning today. Everyone made their round and it was a nice icebreaker, even if a few of us were still nervous. I brought a bag of Semma (tobacco) and shared a few words about it “We grab medicine with our left hand because it is closest to our hearts, it connects them. It is important to remember that it is not how much you have or take but what you put into the medicine that matters. The same as our children or the plants we grow, we have to put our good thoughts into them for them to sprout.” After my words, we ended and returned to the bus, I handed out the exit tickets (evaluation) that Mr. Beamish and I had made, along with pencils. We went to 3 Cows for lunch, and everybody got some food or ice cream. It felt like a short bus ride back to the school, mostly because I slept through it. We got off the bus and acknowledged that it was fun and educational.”

Mr. Beamish provided the following summary regarding the educational value of the outing:

“The Medicine Walk connected directly to the Ravens Program curriculum by blending outdoor education, physical health education, and Indigenous cultural learning. Many students are working toward Physical Health Education and Outdoor Education credits, and this land-based learning experience provided an opportunity for students to participate in outdoor activity while developing plant identification skills and learning about medicinal uses of local plants.


The activity also supported the cultural focus of the Ravens Program through teachings connected to the Medicine Wheel. Students are currently completing their Medicine Shields, where they earn beads through participation in field trips and experiential learning opportunities. For this Medicine Walk, students earned a black bead in the Mental quadrant of the Medicine Wheel, recognizing their participation in a learning experience focused on plant knowledge, observation, and understanding medicinal properties.”

Miigwech to Daniel Morningstar, Sophie Pheasant, Mr. Beamish, Mr. Hannah, Ms. Clairmont, and the students, for inviting everyone to take part in this culturally meaningful, physically invigorating, and informative excursion.





**SAGAMOK ANISHNAWBEK**

**NEWS** 

**CONTACT:**

I.T. and Communications Department  
[newsletter@sagamok.ca](mailto:newsletter@sagamok.ca)