Our community Christmas spirit is stronger than ever as we adjust to the global Pandemic. Adaptability is synonymous with all our community events over the last 9 months. Instead of in-person Christmas celebrations, we now have new traditions, that include virtual events and activities. The entire administration has hosted a variety of events to brighten our lives.

The Family-Well Being Team hosted a variety of events such as 12 Days of Christmas, Ugly Sweater Contest, Christmas Family Photos, Youth & Elder Christmas Dinner and more.

The Early Learning program hosted Children’s Baking Night along with Christmas-themed contests such as gingerbread making, cookie making, homemade ornament making and more.

Shawanosowe School showed their Christmas spirit on Spirit Days such as Whoville Day. Their annual Christmas concert is going virtual this year. A recorded session of the Christmas concert will be shared with the community on December 16, 2020. Watch for the link!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Season’s Greetings WRFN
During the holiday season we ask community members to prepare and to help prevent COVID-19 from entering our community.

This virus can be fatal, and how we respond to it depends on our individual actions. We are all responsible for reducing risk of infection and we can work together to protect our most vulnerable community members.

Symptoms of COVID-19:
May have little or no symptoms. Symptoms can be similar to the cold or flu. May take up to 2-14 days to appear after you have come in contact with it. Most Common Signs of Infection include:
• Fever
• Cough (Dry Cough)
• Shortness of Breath / Difficulty Breathing

Prevention and Treatment to Avoid Transmission of COVID-19:
• Frequent hand washing with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
• Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
• Coughing or sneezing into your upper sleeve, rather than into your hands, or into a tissue and discard the tissue promptly into a waste bin.
• Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
• Staying home when you are sick.
• Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces, tables, countertops, door handles, light switches, toilets, sink, faucets, cell phones, remote controls, computer keyboards, toys, and money.

What will you do if a member of your family becomes sick and needs care?
• Talk to your employer about working from home if you need to care for a family member at home.
• If you become ill, self-isolate for 14 days, and arrange COVID-19 testing if you suspect close contact or exposure to persons with COVID-19.
• Tell family, friends and neighbours that you are making plans to prepare for COVID-19 and share your plan with them, as they may want to make their own plan.
• Encourage a buddy system with persons in your close social bubble, and agree to check in on each other and run essential errands if you become sick.
• Build on the kits you have prepared for other potential emergencies.

Buy non-perishable food items such as:
• Dried foods, such as pasta, flour, sugar, etc.,
• Canned foods

Also purchase ahead of time:
• Pet food
• Toilet paper
• Facial tissue
• Feminine hygiene products
• Diapers (if you have children who use them)

To prepare for self-isolation at home, you should have on hand:
• Soap
• Facial tissue
• Paper towels
• Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
• Housekeeping cleaning products
• Regular detergents for washing dishes and doing laundry
• Fever-reducing medications, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
• Plastic garbage bags for containing soiled tissues and other waste

How to Self Isolate:
Call ahead of time and notify a health care provider. This will help the health care provider (doctor, nurse, or paramedic) to take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
• Your health care provider will advise you if hospital care is appropriate based on the severity of your symptoms.
• If you have mild illness, you should stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days, and activities outside of the home should be restricted except for getting medical care. DO NOT go to work, school or public areas, and avoid using public transportation.
• Separate yourself from others, including pets in your home.
• Stay in a specific room and away from others in your home.
• Wear a facemask that covers your nose and mouth completely.
• Cover your coughs and sneezes.
• Frequently wash your hands often with soap and water.
• Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
• Avoid sharing personal items – dishes, cups, utensils, towels or bedding.
• Clean all “high touch” surfaces everyday.
• Monitor your symptoms.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOUR ILLNESS WORSENS. (such as if you have difficulty breathing and/or have chest pain).

How to Care for Those Who are not Well:
• Households should stay in another room of the home should be restricted except for getting medical care. DO NOT go to work, school or public areas, and avoid using public transportation.
• Separate yourself from others, including pets in your home.
• Stay in a specific room and away from others in your home.
• Wear a facemask that covers your nose and mouth completely.
• Cover your coughs and sneezes.
• Frequently wash your hands often with soap and water.
• Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
• Avoid sharing personal items – dishes, cups, utensils, towels or bedding.
• Clean all “high touch” surfaces everyday.
• Monitor your symptoms.

Model Basic Hygiene and Healthy Lifestyle Practices:
• Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
• Sick people should wear a facemask when around other people.
• Wear a facemask and disposable gloves when you have contact with a sick person and dispose of the facemask and gloves after using them
Mental Health and Addictions Worker - Michael Aelick

Aanii, the Mental Health and Addictions Program certainly has been busy planning and delivering services to our community members, as well as, planning some upcoming events for the New Year!

Over the past few months, we have been busy delivering various events, such as:
- Community gardens and food security
- International Overdose Awareness Day, August 31st
- Suicide Prevention Day, September 10th
- Orange Shirt Day, September 30th
- Mental Health Week, October 5th – 9th
- World Mental Health Day, October 10th
- Anti-Bullying Hike, November 10th
- National Addiction Awareness Week, November 22nd – 28th.

Health Centre staff also participated in professional development to enhance our mental health program:
- Mental Health and Addictions courses, Canadore College.
- “Let’s Talk Cannabis”, Thunderbird Partnership Foundation.
- Trauma Informed Training, Thunderbird Partnership Foundation
- Zoom Training provide safely and effectively telephone and video services.

What’s New for 2021? Ongoing Enhanced Mental Health Services:
- All staff will be trained in Mental Health First Aid in 2021.
- Agreement with Public Health Sudbury and Districts to delivery of a Harm Reduction Program.
- Staff will soon distribute Naloxone Kits and educate on Naloxone use, this will be done before the end of the fiscal year.
- Staff will be trained to provide staged screening and assessments to provide timely referrals to Ontario Treatment Centres, this a partnership with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. To be completed before March 2021.

Referrals will include a staged screening and assessment process:

**1st Stage Screener**
- Brief Screener
  - 5 to 10 minutes
  - Ages 12 and up
  - Covers mental health & Substance use

**2nd Stage Screener**
- MMS (18+)
  - 15 minutes
  - Ages 12 and up
  - Comprehensive, cover 9 domains
  - Detail on substance use/treatment history
  - 60 to 90 minutes

**3rd Stage Assessment**
- GAIN 5-3 MI ONT
  - Ages 12 and up
  - Covers 10 life areas

The Whitefish River First Nation Health Centre wishes all community to be safe and take care of one another and your loved ones during the Christmas Holiday and well into the New Year.

There is no shame in requesting a Naloxone Kit, if you require one call your nearest pharmacy.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the Health Centre at 705-285-4354 or by e-mail at maelick@whitefishriver.ca.

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**Mental Health and Addictions HELP LINES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warm Line (6:00 pm to 12:00 am)</th>
<th>1-866-856-9276</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Line of Health Sciences North (24/7)</td>
<td>1-877-841-1101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Hour Sexual Assault Line</td>
<td>1-888-875-1323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haven House (24-hour women’s shelter)</td>
<td>1-800-465-6788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telehealth (24/7)</td>
<td>705-377-6160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids Help Phone (24/7)</td>
<td>1-866-868-6888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCCMM Anishinaabe Police daytime</td>
<td>705-377-7139 - or dial 911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk4Healing (24/7) support for Aboriginal Women</td>
<td>1-855-554-4325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line (24/7)</td>
<td>1-855-242-3310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.hopeforwellness.ca">www.hopeforwellness.ca</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kina Gbezhgomi Child and Family Services (24/7)</td>
<td>1-800-268-1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assaulted Women’s Helpline 24/7</td>
<td>1-866-863-0511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Women Talk for Healing</td>
<td>1-855-554-4325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Crisis Line Ontario</td>
<td>1-800-531-4055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connex: 24/7</td>
<td>1-800-531-2600</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBTQ+2S YOUTH LINE 24/7</td>
<td>1-800-268-9688</td>
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<tr>
<td>SENIOR SAFETY LINE 24/7</td>
<td>1-866-633-4220</td>
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<tr>
<td>OHMS COURT OUTREACH JUSTICE PROGRAM (SUDbury-MANITOULIN) 9-4 MON-FRI</td>
<td>1-866-285-2642</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**CASUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**Medical Transportation Drivers**

The Whitefish River First Nation (WRFN) Health Centre is seeking qualified and motivated individuals for the position of Casual – On-Call Medical Transportation Driver. Under the direction of the Health Manager, the Medical Transportation Driver will work side by side with the Medical Transportation Coordinator to ensure planning and delivery of transportation services is efficient and effective.

**Areas of Responsibility:**

- a) Operates, maintains and sanitizes the medical transportation vehicle
- b) Collects medical transportation data
- c) Inputs data into database for the purpose of reporting
- d) Maintains log book of transportation, medical supplies and safety checks and sanitization of the vehicles
- e) Hours of service will include Monday to Friday as well as weekends and statutory holidays
- f) Other duties, as deemed appropriate from the Health Department

**Qualifications**

- i) Minimum Grade 12 Diploma
- ii) Valid Ontario Driver’s License
- iii) Clear Driver’s Abstract
- iv) Valid Standard First Aid and CPR (or willingness to obtain)
- v) Clear Criminal Reference Check
- vi) Knowledge and understanding of First Nation language and culture (or willingness to learn)

**Upon Hiring**

- a) Completion of the Defensive Driver Certificate Program
- b) Completion of Standard First Aid and CPR course

**Application**

Interested and qualified candidates should submit a Letter of Intent and resume to the attention of:

CONFIDENTIAL: MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION DRIVERS

Whitefish River First Nation, 17A Halton Road, P.O. Box 108, Birch Island, ON P0P 1A0

Email: info@whitefishriver.ca Fax: (705) 285-4332

Applications must be submitted by January 11, 2021 by 4:00 pm and must include two work reference names.

Note: Applications will be accepted for the position of Medical Transportation Driver until December 15, 2020.
Seasons greetings from Community Economic Development! Here is a year in review from the community economic development department:

The Whitefish River Development Corporation (WRDC) held its Annual General Meeting on January 15th at the WRDC Building.

On January 17, 2020 Economic Development and Indian Agriculture Program of Ontario hosted a Maple Syrup Seminar at the Whitefish River First Nation Community Centre.

On January 18, 2020 the Consultation Coordinator hosted a community discussion at the Community Centre on rekindling our connection to the land. The Consultation Coordinator has been receiving and reviewing consultation materials regarding legislation and policy changes, and notifications from proponents.

Mnidoo Mnising Employment and Training, WRFN Ontario Works and Economic Development worked together to bring in Business Entrepreneurship Skills Training in February 2020. The training will be delivered by Canadian Centre for Aboriginal Entrepreneurship certified BEST Trainer.

Coordinated the February 2020 and the November 2020 Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement Vote. Including the communications, 3 in person information sessions and 4 information sessions via zoom.

Due to the possibility of a Stage 4 community wide shut down we were tasked with coordinating the COVID 19 Food Security Program from March until December 2020. During that time we assembled non-perishable food and supplies for each household. This task included ordering, receiving and repacking food items.

When the program begun, there were shortages of key supplies and food, so we had to be resourceful to locate a variety of items. In addition, we received non-perishable donations from Second Harvest and Hydro One.

As WRFN went into a state of emergency, we began sorting and distributing produce received from the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program to households within the community once a week.

In effort to assist those most at risk we ordered, sorted and delivered groceries once a week to the seniors over 65. Most recently, we distributed the non-perishable food and supplies to each household that we had accumulated since March.

From the beginning of April to the end of June, we made a total of 2103 deliveries to the homes. The most recent deliveries were to distribute the nonperishables and supplies gathered since the beginning of the pandemic.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the Administration Office at 705-285-4335 or by e-mail at sandyj@whitefishriver.ca.
Hello Everyone, What a year it has been! I hope you have been keeping safe. These last few months I have been keeping busy with a few different initiatives.

I started courses on Renewable Energy Projects and Community Energy Planning through British Columbia Institute of Technology.

I have also completed a survey with all WRFN staff. The WRFN Staff Energy Survey was developed to gather feedback from WRFN staff and help to encourage further discussion about energy related initiatives within the community. The WRFN Staff Energy Survey was open September 25th, 2020 to October 16th, 2020. There were 44 participants in total.

October, I was invited to speak on an IESO webinar with two other fellow Community Energy Champions. Each panelist shared how we got into energy, and explained the challenges and successes we have experienced in advancing energy issues in the First Nation context. We also discussed how we have been managing during COVID.

I also hosted an energy-themed pumpkin carving contest during the month of October. Each participant was given an energy-themed stencil (or they were free to create their own) to carve on their pumpkin. Every entry received a $50 ToysRUs Gift card. Chi-Miigwetch to those who participated!

Through the month of November I attended a webinar series about energy planning and implementation with fellow Community Energy Champions from other First Nation communities. These webinars help us to continue to build and enhance our skills together as CEC’s.

Last month I provided new furnace filters December to those community members who reached out to me with their furnace filter measurements. There were a total of 12 filters handed out. Remember to change your furnace filters every 3 months to ensure the best air quality in your home!

Currently, I am working on a video for the community about energy saving tips for your home- it will be debuted around the spring. I hope you all are keeping safe and checking in on one another. Until next time! Baamaa pii minwaa!

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the Administration Office at 705-285-4335 or by e-mail at kendra.mcgregor@whitefishriver.ca.
Seasons Greetings and Merry Christmas from the Housing Department! It has been quite the year since COVID-19 was declared as a pandemic in March. Despite the pandemic, the Housing Department remained busy over the past year.

**Elders Residence Project**

Whitefish River First Nation hosted an open house for community members to view our new “Elders Residence” by appointment only on December 1, 2020. The project started in August 2019 with a completion date of April 2020. Currently, it is set up as a “COVID-19” station. As Whitefish River First Nation is still in a state of emergency.

This project was approved by Chief and Council to submit an Expression of Interest to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation on April 3, 2018. Additional funding was funded by Whitefish River First Nation and Indigenous Services Canada. Special thank you to Ann Scotton, Regional Director General for Ontario.

**The project team consisted of the following:**


Art Jacko, Band Manager – Project Team Leader

Architect: Perry and Perry Architects Ltd.

Project Managers: FNR Inc.

Engineers: Nicholls Engineering

Contractor: Lignum Builders Ltd.

The “Elders Residence” is a multi-unit building for WRFN band members over the age of 60 and able to live independently. The building features six (6) one-bedroom apartments and two (2) two-bedroom apartments. The apartments are all inclusive with hydro, heat, central air, satellite TV and internet.

A major feature of the building is the common area which includes a kitchen and dining area. The kitchen is fully equipped with microwave, stove, refrigerator, cookware, coffee maker, bakeware, dishware, cutlery and more. The dining area has seating for eight. There are also four wingback chairs and a large SMART TV in the common area. The common area is available for bookings by tenants of the building for various functions and gatherings.

A resource room with two computers and internet access is available for tenants of the building as well. The building and premises also feature: two offices for staff, two laundry rooms, two accessible washrooms, and gazebo with seating to access the environment.

**CMHC Section 95 Project #11**

Our current new project consists of 4 new rental units being built on the Maple Heights subdivision. These will be two-bedroom rental units with full basements to accommodate housing needs in the community. The project commenced on October 4, 2020. This project is being completed by contractor Lignum Builders Ltd.

**CMHC – Rapid Housing Initiative 2021**

The Housing Department is currently working on the next project with a deadline of December 31, 2020. It is a new program which will include the construction of a minimum of 5 units as per the program guidelines. We are proposing to build 2 units with three bedrooms and 3 units with four bedrooms. This is a total different program from CMHC Section 95 unit which originally was to provide the minimum of 5 modular homes as part of the National Housing Strategy. However, the guidelines have recently changed to include other options. More information will follow once we receive confirmation of the project.

**Housing Renovations 2020-2021**

With the closure of suppliers and access to homes many of the major renovations were put on hold. We were able to access funding for renovations from different resources ISC Enhanced Housing Initiative- $80,000; CMHC Supplementary Program 1- $45,000.00; CMHC Renovations (RRAP) - $16,000.00. Some material and supplies were limited such as pressure treated. Some material was put on back order for six months.

We were able to manage to complete all the major planned renovations like exterior landings, windows, doors, roofing, flooring and kitchen cabinets with our local contractors:

- Phil Bowerman, Bowerman Construction & Maintenance
- Paul McGregor, Arrow Point Construction
- Eric Jacko, Stan McGregor, Craig McGregor and Reg Nahwegahbow

Chi Miigwetch for all the local contractors keeping safe and for assisting to get the more renovations done before Christmas and before the snow flies.
Wow! It has been quite the year! In addition to the Housing Manager’s report, our office also remained busy with the following:

**Housing Loans – Paid in Full**
Congratulations to our new homeowners! We had eight band members make their final payments for their housing loans. Four loans were paid off in the first quarter; and the other four were paid off in the second quarter.

**CMHC and Band Rentals – Stats**
At the end of the first quarter, we had 41% of tenants in CMHC and band rental units with rental arrears. This number was high due to the COVID-19 office closure and postponement of rental payments. At the end of the second quarter, we had 11% of tenants in CMHC and band rental units with rental arrears. This number decreased as our office reopened and resumed operations in July 2020. We are still in the third quarter of the 2020/2021 fiscal year. An update on the third quarter results will be provided next month.

**CMHC & Band Rental Payments - Second Quarter 2020/2021**

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<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>68</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUGUST</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPTEMBER</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Housing Waiting List**
The housing waiting list has grown over this past year. There are currently 25 new applicants on the housing waiting list. There are applicants looking for single units and family-sized units. Please note that our office is unable to disclose where an applicant sits on the housing waiting list. There are no rental units available at this time. We thank all applicants for their continued patience.

Please keep your file active by contacting our office with any changes or updates before it expires after one year of it being completed.

**Wills with Fred Bellefeuille**
The Housing Department held monthly Will Making outreach clinics with Fred Bellefeuille, Barrister and Solicitor. There were 64 “Wills” and “Power of Attorney” documents completed during our program. Clinics were held from March 2019 to February 2020. Unfortunately, future dates were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to welcoming back Fred for will making clinics in the future!

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**What is Jordan’s Principle?**
Jordan’s Principle was created to ensure First Nations children and youth across Canada have access to funding for health, social, and educational needs. Jordan’s Principle is a legal rule in Canada, meaning families can access this funding without prejudice.

**Types of Services Cover Under Jordan’s Principles**
Between July 2017 and October 31, 2020 Jordan’s Principle has approved more than 750,000 products, services and supports. These supports include funding for speech therapy, medical equipment, educational supports, mental health services and more.

**Who can apply for Jordan’s Principle?**
Any parent or guardian can apply at Indigenous Affairs by calling 1-855-572-4453 or by email at InfoPubs@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca

Requests can be submitted by:
- A parent or guardian caring for a dependent First Nations child under the age of majority in the child’s province or territory.
- A First Nations child above 16 years of age.
- An authorized representative of the child, a parent or guardian.

A request can be submitted for multiple families or guardians by a community or service provider, who can request services, such as:
- Respite care
- Wheelchair ramps
- Support programs
- Educational Assistants
- Transportation to school

For more information, contact Jordan’s Principle Call Centre: 1-855-JP-CHILD (1-855-572-4453). Here they will provide you with more information about Jordan’s Principle, request funding for children and youth support, application form, seek reimbursement, or start appeal.
The toddlers and preschoolers at Maamwe Kendaasing Early Learning & Innovation Centre enjoy a sunny morning on their tricycles in the parking lot.

Kieston shows off his adorable Gingerbread Village for the Gingerbread Contest.

Breaha and her beautifully coloured artwork for Remembrance Day.

Isla takes charge in the kitchen during Children’s Baking on Zoom with the Early Learning program.

Caleb is all smiles with his delicious sugar cookies from Children’s Baking.

It was a spooktacular display at the Halloween Parade!

The WRFN Housing Department staff feeling festive and wishing everyone well this holiday season.
The Family Well-Being Team served up a BBQ luncheon drive-thru style during their grand opening.

The convoy of floats on Rainbow Ridge Road for a socially-distanced Halloween Parade.

The lucky winners from the Family Well-Being Team’s fishing derby!

WRFN community members enjoyed an ATV tour with Mukwa Tours.

Lila watches Nakia carefully put sprinkles on their creations during Children’s Baking.

Some happy participants despite the rain at the fishing derby at J&G Marina.

Natasha and Caleb took home an Instant Pot as their prize from the fishing derby.

Dakota took home the prize for the scariest costume as part of Family Well-Being’s spooktacular contests!

The Family Well-Being Team served up a BBQ luncheon drive-thru style during their grand opening.

The convoy of floats on Rainbow Ridge Road for a socially-distanced Halloween Parade.
Who could have predicted what the year 2020 had in store for us and the rest of the world, the COVID-19 Pandemic has certainly taught us resilience and patience. In many of the Monster Garage articles “Mother Nature” is referred to many times, with the covid-19 pandemic Mother nature has forced the world to slow down and take a breath. Although the corona virus has caused many a hardship with lives lost worldwide, it has also forced us to stay home with your family and to protect them.

As senior management with an essential worker status the public works crew and I did not stop and continued to deliver the necessary services to our community.

As many First Nations are determining what services and functions are essential to the continuity of operations a strategy for essential services was developed to promote and secure the health, safety, security, economic and mental well-being of our community. Disruptions to the flow of essential services and essential workers could result in loss of life, the First Nations Strategy supports the principle that critical infrastructure roles and activities can be carried out in a responsible manner at all levels of our community. Responsibilities for critical infrastructure for Whitefish River are shared by leadership and managers of all critical assets. In order to carry out and keep critical assets functioning through any threats, it is the work of essential workers that will keep our community resilient and strong.

Along with Health, Social Services and local government, public works department is deemed essential. Throughout the Pandemic the public works crew did not and could not stop services, from the regular operations of the water treatment plant, the delivery of fresh potable water, regular curbside garbage collection and keeping our community clean and fresh the public works crew did not stop. Working alongside the security detail for the community check points for the protection of our most vulnerable, the public works crew did not stop. Koodoos to the crew and the helpers and students that kept the continuity of our village.

As the summer approached, we and the world learned how to protect ourselves and our neighbors, regular hand washing and the wearing of the face mask will help contain and slow the spread of the virus. With this news leadership was made to promote and secure the health, safety, security, economic and mental well-being of our community. Disruptions to the flow of essential services and essential workers could result in loss of life, the First Nations Strategy supports the principle that critical infrastructure roles and activities can be carried out in a responsible manner at all levels of our community. Responsibilities for critical infrastructure for Whitefish River are shared by leadership and managers of all critical assets. In order to carry out and keep critical assets functioning through any threats, it is the work of essential workers that will keep our community resilient and strong.

More communication was received from funding providers and by late summer and staff returned to some of their regular duties. With this news leadership was made to promote and secure the health, safety, security, economic and mental well-being of our community. Disruptions to the flow of essential services and essential workers could result in loss of life, the First Nations Strategy supports the principle that critical infrastructure roles and activities can be carried out in a responsible manner at all levels of our community. Responsibilities for critical infrastructure for Whitefish River are shared by leadership and managers of all critical assets. In order to carry out and keep critical assets functioning through any threats, it is the work of essential workers that will keep our community resilient and strong.

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More communication was received from funding providers and by late summer operations were operating almost normal. Early fall Whitefish River received information that we would qualify for a “temporary transfer station”. For the past year or so my office was working with consultants on a solid waste study for our community. This study was to help guide us on what WRFN is to do with our solid waste (aka garbage). At the conclusion of the study it was determined that transferring our solid waste off the reserve would provide the lowest risk to the area for contamination and help reduce the cost of operating a solid waste program. Working along with FHR Consultants a minor capital application was submitted for the cost of setting up a temporary transfer station, cleaning up the current landfill site and the development of Ministerial Type Service Agreements for the Solid Waste program and Recycling. These agreements once approved will deem that the Federal Government will cover 80% of the cost of these operations. The Minor Capital Application has been approved in principle and we are awaiting for the official letter of approval from ISC.

Some changes have already started at the landfill site with clean up and cover of the existing garbage, the majority of the operation will stay the same with the exception of no more dumping into the landfill, the drop off bunker will remain with members still sorting their recyclables.

Regular household garbage can be dropped off in the current concrete bunker where it will be loaded into 40 yard bins and hauled off site by a contractor. Smaller bins will be provided for bulky waste and construction waste. More information and operations will follow in the new year.

A class 1 water treatment review course was offered at our local WTP. This course was prepared in conjunction with the UCMM Hub program and the OFNTSC Circuit Ryder program. 4 trainees were given review of various water treatment operations and math courses to help with the written exam scheduled for Thursday December 10, 2020, Whitefish River’s had 2 participants and 2 from our neighboring community of AOK. Good luck to the 4 participants.

With Christmas just days away, the public works crew took some time to develop an on-call schedule for the winter months and for the Christmas break. Like the early part of the pandemic, public works does not take a break, services will still be needed to be delivered throughout the holidays and roads will need to be cleaned and clean for travelers. There will be no changes to the schedule for water delivery, curbside garbage collection and the Landfill operations.

Hoping everyone has a Merry Christmas and is ready for the New Year. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this report do not hesitate to contact my office or drop a line at publicworks@whitefishriver.ca.

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EXTENDED CHRISTMAS BREAK

December 17, 2020

Dear Shawnawasus School and Minatii Keendahxii Families,

As the holiday approaches, WFNF Chief and Council approved extending Shawnawasus School and Minatii Keendahxii Christmas break. Unfortunately, during this holiday season, we must work together to limit the potential spread of COVID-19. As a precautionary measure, please be advised that for Christmas break will be extended until Monday, January 18, 2021.

We take the health and safety of our students, staff, and community very seriously. We also must balance the importance of education for our students. So, Shawnawasus School staff will be providing students with homework packages for the extended break. Students will be provided with paper-based and hands-on activities on Friday, December 18th.

While everyone understands the importance of traditions and celebrations during the holiday season, please look for ways to celebrate safely and follow community, and public health measures to protect yourself and your loved ones. We all have a responsibility to do the best we can to stop the spread of COVID-19. We want to take this time to thank our families for their continued support during these unprecedented times.

Wishing you all a healthy and safe holiday season.

Michelle Mantinwachi
Principal
Shawnawasus School

Malinda Mantinwachi
Early Learning Supervisor
Manitii Keendahxii

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WHITFISH RIVER FIRST NATION
BUS CANCELLATION PROCESS

1) Notification Received
   - Email notification received from Sudbury Student Services Consortium
   - Education Manager acknowledges receipt of email

2) Review Sudbury Student Services Consortium Announcement
   at www.businfo.ca
   - If Esperanza Buses are cancelled - Esperanza School bus is cancelled
   - If Maricheta Buses are cancelled - Shawnawasus School has been cancelled

3) Send Notification
   - Send notification to Bus Manager, Shawnawasus School Principal and Bus Drivers

4) Notify Community Members (to be done by 7.00am)
   - Post on authorized social media ensuring to identify between Esperanza and Shawnawasus Bus
   - Notify parents through school email

Phone contact the Education Department if you have any questions or if you wish to be notified via text, email or phone call at 705-286-4335 or 705-465-9555
education@whitefishriver.ca
Aanii! Seasons Greetings and Happy New Year!

As the holiday season is upon us, it’s a perfect time to reflect on the past year. As I look back on 2020, it is amazing how we were able to adapt to the many changes, such as how the Administration conducts daily business while we are in a pandemic.

As for myself I had a change in my role within the Administration from Executive Assistant to Education Manager since August 31st. I am very excited to be working with the Education Department Team and the Education Committee.

Thinking back to March, April & May, it was a little bit insane, assisting with the Per Capita distribution process and being a part of the Community Control Group as well as filling the role as Acting Education Manager, it was a crazy time but very rewarding to be able to be a part of such a great team who worked so hard to keep the Community safe while still keeping the office available to the members.

**POST SECONDARY STUDENTS REMINDERS**

We have 77 students who are funded for 2020/2021 academic year. They are attending College/Universities from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island. We are wishing you all the best in your studies.

**Assistance for Technology**

Please contact the Education Department to confirm your intention to continue in the Winter semester and you must report your progress/transcript from the Fall Semester before receiving living allowance on January 28, 2021. Travel – the additional $200 Christmas break allowance will be distributed on January 28th for students living away from home.

**Reporting and Compliance Conditions for Sponsorship**

i. A student’s sponsorship will be placed on hold when the student has not provided WRFN requested documentation pertaining to their sponsorship;

ii. The hold will remain in place until either all conditions for sponsorship are in compliance with this PSE policy; or 30 calendar days from the hold being placed;

iii. If the student is in non-compliance after 30 calendar days, the student must have their sponsorship terminated;

iv. For graded courses; students must maintain a minimum of 60% or C in their term grade point average (GPA);

v. For course placements; students must achieve a passing grade;

vi. Failure to achieve the minimum GPA and/or placement pass, may result in sponsorship probation, or sponsorship termination;

vii. Sponsorship probation is the result when a student does not meet the minimum term GPA, as evidenced by the semester final grades or not adhering to the thesis progress report schedule. A student placed on sponsorship probation must submit a revised Education Plan that must be approved by WRFN prior to sponsorship reinstatement consideration. The revised Education Plan will review the learning conditions in the previous semester, practices going forward, and outline how the student will achieve the minimum term GPA, or get caught up on their thesis schedule.

viii. Sponsorship termination can be the result when a student does not achieve the minimum term GPA for a second semester in a row, as evidenced by the semester final grades, or not getting caught up on their thesis schedule.

ix. Students will be notified by registered mail if their sponsorship is placed on hold, sponsorship probation or sponsorship terminated. The letter will also indicate the duration of the status change.

b. Student withdrawal or Sponsorship termination: If a student withdraws from their selected program of study indicated on their relevant 2020/21 sponsorship application, or has their sponsorship terminated, the student will not be considered for sponsorship until May 31, 2021. The student will be informed in writing by registered mail of this decision.

c. When a revised /and/or updated education plan is required, as per this policy, the Education Director will have discretion to:

i. Extend tuition allowance to the next scheduled WRFN PSE intake deadline or a maximum of 2 consecutive semesters beyond the WRFN PSE intake deadline;

ii. Extend living allowance to the next scheduled WRFN PSE intake deadline or a maximum of 2 consecutive semesters beyond the WRFN PSE intake deadline.

iii. The Education Director will report any discretionary changes or extensions to the Band Manager.

**Care Packages**

We have care packages for our Post-Secondary students, please provide your mailing address and your t-shirt size to our office if you have not done so.

**Technology Assistance**

If you haven’t accessed the additional funding of $1,500.00 to assist with technology purchases, equipment, counselling or any other expenses that you may have incurred due to Covid-19, please do so as soon as you can.

**ESPLANOLA ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY STUDENTS**

We have one school bus travelling to Espanola as the number of students attending AB Ellis, Sacred Heart and Espanola High School has decreased.

**Attendance**

Regular attendance is very important – a student’s over-all growth increases significantly over time when they attend regularly and have strong connections to all aspects of classroom and school learning. Research demonstrates there is a powerful link between successful learning and regular school attendance. Here are the stats for our students attending Espanola High School, AB Ellis and Shawanosowe School. Congratulations to the Shawanosowe School students 90% plus average daily attendance. WTG!

**Chromebooks**

In the new year we will have limited Chromebooks available for our students, if your child requires a device please call Keisha McGregor, Education Assistant at 705-285-4335 ext. 209.

**Late Bus**

If your child requires the after school bus, they can advise Ed Pitawanakwat in the morning if they require the late bus.

**School Bus Cancellation**

With the development of the Whitefish River First Nation APP we will be able to send notifications directly to your mobile devices advising of any bus cancellations.

**Food Hampers**

We continue to provide weekly healthy snacks to our students who attend school in Espanola. If you have any suggestions as to what you would like to see in your hamper, please call Keisha McGregor.

**LIBRARY**

The Library and Resource Centre is open Monday to Friday 12 pm to 6 pm. If you should require access at another time, please feel free to call the Education Department at 705-285-4335 and we would be happy to open the building for your use.

The library will be closed from December 21, 2020 to January 11, 2021. If you do require access during the holidays please text 705-863-0555 to make arrangements.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact myself at the Administration office at 705-285-4335 or via email at lecollet@whitefishriver.ca or Keisha McGregor, Education Assistant at keisham@whitefishriver.ca, we are here to help.

Chi-migwetch!
The Bobcat

While this year has been challenging for the community of Whitefish River First Nation and the students, staff and families of Shawanosowe School, there were many ongoing activities which highlighted the determination of everyone to support each other through this unprecedented time.

JANUARY 2020
The New Year started with a bang! Students and staff alike enjoyed the activities provided by special guests from Elephant Thoughts. It was a week of exploration and experiments for each class and the community. Miigwetch to Georgina Recollet for including Shawanosowe School in this initiative.

In addition to Elephant Thoughts, students and staff were able to enjoy an impromptu trip to Sudbury for Bowling! The school heating system presented some challenges, however, the students and staff enjoyed some fun activities during this time with movies in the gym and bowling in Sudbury.

The students also held a “Bloom Monday” Art Show with paintings they created in the style of Metis artist, Christie Belcourt. Their paintings were on display and refreshments provided for visitors.

FEBRUARY 2020
Shawanosowe students and staff celebrated a much anticipated yearly milestone as we reached the 100th Day of School.

Families were invited to a Valentine’s Day Luncheon with table service provided by the Grade 5/6 class. Job well done!

Shawanosowe School also received a special guest with a visit from the Minister of Indigenous Affairs, Mark Miller. Senior Kindergarten student, Olivia Pelletier presented him with a Shawanosowe School beaded medallion.

Shawanosowe School also hosted the annual Skating Party as part of the Whitefish River First Nation Annual Winter Carnival.

Another special guest that visited the school was Anishinaabe Comedian and Artist, Stephanie Pangowish. She visited each classroom to teach bead-work and drama.

MARCH 2020
The World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic on March 11, 2020 and as a result, Shawanosowe School was closed.

Shawanosowe School staff held a We Miss You Parade for the students and families of Shawanosowe School while observing all safety protocols.

APRIL 2020
Shawanosowe School households had the opportunity to participate in an Easter Door Decorating Contest.

MAY 2020
Shawanosowe School acknowledged Red Dress Day as households were encouraged to place a red dress in their window in honour of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Staff celebrated the women and caregivers in the lives of our students with the delivery of hanging floral baskets for Mother’s Day.

JUNE 2020
Staff additionally took the time to recognize the men and caregivers in the lives of our students with the delivery of gift cards for Father’s Day.

Similar to schools world-wide, Shawanosowe School held a Drive-by/Virtual Graduation Ceremony for our Grade 6 Graduating students and the Senior Kindergarten Graduates. Students were all safely able to pose for graduation photos and receive their diplomas and awards. Family members and community members near and far were able to watch the event online.

SEPTEMBER 2020
Shawanosowe School safely celebrated Every Child Matters Week with a schedule of events. The week ended with a social distancing walk to the community arbour where each student was able to offer tobacco in honour of the students and survivors of residential school.

OCTOBER 2020
Students and staff were able to partake in the first of many Take Me Outside Day initiatives. As a result of COVID-19, land-based learning has propelled forward in many schools. While Shawanosowe School has always encouraged and engaged in outdoor learning, it has become a greater priority for the safety of our students and staff during this time.

Students and classrooms were still able to safely celebrate Halloween at the school. A Google Meet Parade was held where each student was able to show-case their costumes.

NOVEMBER 2020
Shawanosowe School commemorated Treaty Week with in-class activities. In addition, the classes took advantage of the many learning opportunities which were provided virtually this year.

Each class had activities in honour of Remembrance Day. The staff also organized a school-wide Remembrance Day Ceremony via Google Meet.

DECEMBER 2020
The students and staff enjoyed Grinch Day with many Grinch themed activities, treats and movies. Virtual Christmas Concert, “How the Grinch Stole our Christmas Concert!”
This year has been a very different year for our community. We began the year off with a new department called Family Well-Being. Situated at 212 Rainbow Ridge Road (or the old Daycare), five staff began providing family and youth-specific services and programming. The team is comprised of the Family Well-Being Manager – Leslie McGregor, Band Representative (on-reserve) – Arlene Pitawanakwat, Band Representative (off-reserve) – Carmen Pitawanakwat, Family Resources Worker – Paige Jacko, and Youth Support Worker – Crystal Clark McGregor. Although there is five staff currently in the department, we are hoping to add four more staff in the New Year.

The vision of the new department is to meet a shared vision for the Whitefish River First Nation community of thriving, engaged, and vibrant families. We will accomplish this vision by deepening supports for families so that they are committed to one another, express appreciation and affection, spend enjoyable time together, manage stress and crisis effectively, and have a sense of spiritual well-being.

Our mission statement is to increase our children’s connection to family and community by supporting positive change and lifestyles for our families in order for our children to flourish, our families to be healthy and vibrant, and our programs and services remain child and family-focused.

This year was also unique in that a world-wide pandemic influenced how we were delivering supports and programs to the community. Despite having to work from home from the end of March until June, the Family Well-Being Team continued to support families and individuals in the community. We developed resource information documents on where to get COVID-19 testing, food banks, mental health services, etc.

As we could not visit families face to face, the staff called, texted, messaged, or emailed families to stay in touch. Not seeing the families was very challenging, and we had to think of creative ways to reach out and connect with our families. As the spring ended and summer began, we started to visit families face to face, and it was good to see people. Although we were still limited in our services, we continued to offer our support and encourage families to work together.

During the year, the Family Well-Being Team supported our Community Control Group (CCG) activities. We helped develop the Mental Health Strategy, assisted in the gardening program, developed and reviewed the Hazard Information Risk Assessment document, created forms and screening documents, drafted building re-opening plans, and developed communication pieces for the community.

Over the past year, the Family Well-Being team has assisted over 46 families with Band Representative services and 26 with family supports.

Our successes include the closing of child welfare files (12), keeping children within their extended families (3), and youth service agreements (4). Our challenges included: encouraging parents/families to work on their personal development; finding other foster, customary care, or safe homes within the community; and encouraging families and youth to reach out when they need assistance or before their problems become a crisis.

In terms of our programming, we held 30 family events including: Community Scavenger Hunt, Mukwa Adventures Community Ride, Family Spa Packages, Grab & Go BBQ with Back to School Supplies, Medicine Pouch Making, Movie Night Boxes (2x), Family Fishing Derby, Mystery Food Boxes (2x), Soap Making Kits, Trivia Nights (3x), Virtual Jingle Dress Making Program, DIY Family Flag, Creative Writing, Spirit Dance Routine, Photo Voice Walk, Pumpkin Carving Challenge, Halloween Food and Drinks, Best Scare Video, Halloween Parade, Emotional Intelligence Video, 12 Days of Christmas Card, Family Board Game Night, Youth & Elders Christmas Dinner, Christmas Family Photos, & Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest.

The number of families participating in the events totals 825. This number means an average of 27.5 families per event participated.

We also held ten youth-specific events, including Story Telling with Esther Osche, Internet Safety, Grizzlies Movie Showing, We Matter Presentation, Eshmat Ma’iingan Program, Swimming Session, Youth Men’s Drumming, Human Trafficking presentation, Cultural Supports with an Elder, and Elders & Youth Christmas Dinner.

A total of 95 times youth participated in these events, with an average of 9.5 youth per event.

We hope that families and youth continue to participate in our events as we move into the New Year.
Ice Safety
With the upcoming ice fishing season I would like to remind people of the ice thickness safety chart (left). Please exercise extreme caution when accessing the ice.

Snow Mobiles
For all of our snow mobile enthusiasts we have to ask to please Do Not Ride on Private Property. Stick to the roads and trails.

Check the weather before heading out on your trip. Bring a buddy or make sure someone knows where you’re going and when you will be back. And always wear appropriate clothing. Stay safe and happy sledding.

Net Setting
Early in the COVID pandemic. The Lands Department was setting the net and donating fish to community. If this is something people are interested in continuing we could have some community nets that can be used for community harvesting purposes. The only piece of equipment we don’t have is a jig board.

Whitefish River Walleye Program
In the beginning of 2020 we started talks with the MNRF about the Whitefish River Walleye population. Due to the COVID Pandemic there was no work done on with the Whitefish River Walleye Program. Now we are starting to pick up these talks again. We are currently at the goals and objectives stage of developing a Lake Wide Walleye Management strategy.

WRFN has taken a more active role in the Walleye rearing pond located in Whitefish Falls. This year we look to pick back up with our Walleye Stocking initiative. Pending approval from funding we would like to practice Walleye Culture. This is harvesting eggs directly from the walleye and, growing those eggs in our micro hatcheries and then releasing them back into the Whitefish River.

We are looking for volunteers to get involved with the Walleye program. If you’re interested in lending a hand to the Whitefish River Walleye project please contact the WRFN Lands Department.

Recreational Leases and Permits
During WRFN State of Emergency, an Emergency Management Order regarding Recreational Leases & permits was declared which stated that tenants were not to use their rental property during the state of emergency. The Lands Department scheduled Tenant Escorts for tenants to complete property inspections and/or retrieve Essential items from their camps. This continued until September, when the Emergency Management Order was amended to allow Cottagers and their immediate family members to access their camps during certain phases of the State of Emergency, provided they contact the Lands Department and adhere to WRFN Travel protocols. We will continue with the Cottage Monitoring plan during the winter.

Fishing Site Monitoring
The fishing sites and marinas in WRFN were also closed during the state of emergency, and were monitored daily for activity during the months of May, June and July. Miigwetch to our community members for also assisting with the monitoring by contacting the administration office.

Land Allotments
There was a total of 9 recreational and 2 residential land allotment requests. There were zero comments and 1 is still posted for comments. You can see these land allotment postings when they are posted on the Whitefish River FN website. For information about the WRFN Land allotment policy and to check what land is available for allotment please contact the WRFN Lands Department.

Requests for Surveys
Requests for surveys for land allotments were also postponed during the spring and summer, and the Community Control Group assessed the requests for survey work to be completed and it had been determined that Survey work is low risk and now requests for Surveys can be resumed. Applicants who have submitted a request for a Land Allotment previously can now resume having survey work done.

Hunting Workshops
In 2021 the WRFN Lands Department will be looking to host some hunting related workshops. We would like to get a course for WRFN members for their PAL (possession and acquisition license). And we will look to host a deer hide tanning workshop. If you are interested in being involved with either of these workshops please contact the Lands Department.
Good news! We are pleased to announce that the next phase of our Robinson Huron Treaty (RHT) land claim has begun. In this phase with the Province, we’re going to get our land back!

As you’ll remember, we were successful in reaching a historic agreement with Canada on our RHT in the first phase of this process. That agreement - which you ratified with 96% support - was worth $102 Million to our First Nation.

Now we are embarking on negotiations with Ontario on the return of up to 10,14 square miles of land identified in our specific claim. The province has signalled a willingness to settle this outstanding claim is wonderful news. And it’s an opportunity we won’t squander. Getting our land back has always been central to our mission.

In the coming months we will focus our community discussion on our land. We are of this land, all of us together, and we will need to speak with one voice if we are to get it back. It’s up to us to do the heavy lifting to clear a path for future generations to enjoy and protect what is rightfully ours. Stay tuned for more information, everyone!

Since March we have also been very active dealing with COVID-19. The key document was the declaration of the state of emergency because of the global pandemic. Since then our Incident Commanders have put our Emergency Response Plan into effect. This has taken the bulk of our effort from our administration and our Council.

During COVID19, we completed the following milestones:

1. Distribution of PCD ($25,000.00) to over 91% of eligible recipients according to the terms of our Nigaan Nabidaa Trust document.
2. Finalized the Construction of our $3.5 Million dollar Elders Centre, a significant project that we have worked on for 20 years.
3. Construction of 4 new houses for our growing community, these houses are being built on Maple Heights Road.
4. Approval for the Design of a 15 lot subdivision with a total estimated value of $3.0 Million dollars.
5. A number of smaller projects aimed at improving our community landfill site, cemetery and recreation fields.
6. Vote on the Anishinabek Nation Governance Agreement for resources for Language, Culture, Citizenship, Elections and Band Support resources.

The biggest news is however the negotiations with Ontario on our lands. Season’s Greetings!

Band Manager - Glenn Forrest
December 15, 2020

A PLACE OF VISIONS AND DREAMS
COMMUNITY NOTICE

Out of abundance of caution, Chief and Council have extended the seasonal break from December 18, 2020 and returning on January 11, 2021. The additional time off will allow each of you to spend quality time with your loved ones. However, please ensure to continue to follow all public health measures to protect yourself and your loved ones.

This will mean the Administration Office, Shawanosowe School, Early Learning Centre, Family Well-being Center and the Health Centre will be closed during this time.

The water delivery schedule will remain the same and garbage curb side collection will start on Wednesday at 8:00 am. Landfill hours are as follows: Wednesdays 8:00 am-6:00 pm and Saturdays 8:00 am – 3:00 pm.

On-call contacts can be reached through the Administration Office automated phone system. Please keep this list readily available when calling the office. You can either call 705-285-4335 or 705-280-0458 to get the prompting.

Press 0 to Reception & Administration
Press 1 to Public Works/Maintenance
Press 2 to Housing
Press 3 to Lands & Membership
Press 4 to Family Well-being
Press 5 to Ontario Works
Press 6 to Health Department
Press 7 to Band Manager
Press 8 to Finance
Press 9 to Education

Wishing you all a happy holiday. Stay home and stay safe!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Glenn Forrest, Band Manager

WRFN Remains in a state of emergency

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